

Friends of Old Bulbs Gazette

[Old House Gardens](#), Ann Arbor, Michigan, 734-995-1486

“What dreadful hot weather we have! It keeps one in a continual state of inelegance.”

– Jane Austen, 1775-1817, English novelist, from a letter to her sister Cassandra (1796).

Can It Really Be August Already?



It feels like only weeks since we were out dead-heading peonies and knocking lily beetles into soapy water, but here we are with cooler nights and the dahlias taking center stage in the gardens! Now that they've finished blooming, our hundreds of iris are gradually being transplanted to our new farm and have been establishing well. We hope your own gardens have been flourishing this summer and providing you with respite, beauty and bouquets! We've just put many of the spring-planted bulbs back for sale at our website, so if there are varieties you've especially loved and know you want for next summer, you can put in your order now (or sign up for an email alert if we're still waiting to see what the harvest is like.)

Some Sad News from Overseas...

Our tulip broker in the Netherlands has warned us that it's been a bad year for tulips in fields there, rest assured that our order has been confirmed and there should be no crop shortages. It does mean that if there are varieties you've been meaning to order, now is the time, as stock may be more limited than in years past.

And we recently heard from Alan Shipp in England that - due to a volunteer's error - he's lost a year's worth of rare hyacinths (though luckily no varieties completely) and will be spending the fall propagating and planting his remaining bulbs to increase their numbers. We're heart-broken, as we so admire his hard work and dedication and always look forward to being able to announce which varieties we'll have each fall - and we wish him great success as he rebuilds his collection.

...But Good News from the Hortus Bulborum!



['George Grappe'](#)
tulip

['Princess Amalia'](#)
tulip

['Prins Claus'](#)
crocus

['Sweet Harmony'](#)
daffodil

['Kinglet'](#)
daffodil

['Hermione'](#)
peony

For the first time, our friends at the Hortus are going to be able to share with us two tulip varieties we're happy to offer to you this fall: ['George Grappe'](#), a beautiful lavender/mauve introduction from 1939 named after the director of Rodin Museum in Paris at that time, and ['Princess Amalia'](#), glowing in regal cerise, developed before 1908 to honor the first wife of Dutch Prince Hendrik. Both are Single Late varieties,

meaning that they're tall, reliable, and will be lovely additions that extend the tulip season in your garden. We're also celebrating the return of ['Greuze'](#) and ['Dillenburg'](#), two incomparable beauties whose glowing colors (deep, rich purple and glowing orange respectively) are not to be missed.

And (as introduced in our previous newsletters) you'll also find at our website many other new and newly-returned varieties, including:

4 crocus (with sparkling ['Albus'](#) and lively ['Prins Claus'](#))

22 daffodils (don't miss luminous ['Double Fashion'](#), cheerful ['Sweet Harmony'](#), or fragrant ['Kinglet'](#))

3 diverse (*Galanthus* lovers particularly take note!)

5 peonies (introducing ruby-red ['Rachel'](#) and lush ['Hermione'](#))

So grab a cool beverage, put your feet up, and start (or add to) an order for October delivery!

Rita Recommends: Drought-Tolerant, Animal-Resistant, and Bee-Friendly German Garlic



When asked what has impressed her most this summer, office-manager extraordinaire and all-around good-egg Rita was quick to draw our attention to the way that [German garlic](#) (*Allium senescens* subsp. *montanum*) can bring color and interest to an area of the garden that has become dull or pallid. Their lavender/pink blossoms are a favorite of both bees and butterflies, while their pungent foliage isn't liked by deer, rabbits, or groundhogs. They do just fine without coddling or special care and will return reliably year after year. She's right (as usual!) – what could be better??

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