



MARCH/APRIL NEWSLETTER 2011



### MARCH 2011 GARDENING CLUB MEETING

We had a record number of people at this month's meeting, over 20 people attended! We thoroughly enjoyed the informative talk by Paul Vonk from Mayford, Paul spoke about "Success with Seeds and Bulbs" which shed some light on when to plant and how to care for your bulbs and seeds. I have covered a few of the discussions below. Paul gave everyone a copy of The Gardener Magazine and packet of carrot seeds and a FREE subscription was given to the person who guessed the number of seeds in the carrot packet. The number was 9000 seeds in one packet – unbelievable!

### DATES TO DIARISE

These are the dates that we will be having our meeting, they are all on Friday mornings at 9am. Venues & topics still to be finalised: **6<sup>th</sup> May , 3<sup>rd</sup> June , 29<sup>th</sup> July , 2<sup>nd</sup> September , 7<sup>th</sup> October & 4<sup>th</sup> November**

### HOW AND WHEN DO I PLANT MY SEEDS/BULBS

There are three very important factors to consider when planting seeds/bulbs:

#### 1. Time of the year

Make sure you check the packaging of the seeds/bulbs before planting, especially if you have had them for a while. The most important germinating factor is that the temperature of the soil is correct so the germination process can start so if you do plant in the wrong season the seeds will not grow.

#### 2. Position

There are very few seedlings/bulbs that grow in full shade that will give you pretty, colorful flowers. If the seeds need full sun it really means that they need to be in the sun for 90% of the day and semi-shade is either morning or afternoon sun or dappled sun but the seeds need to get some sun during the day.

#### 3. Water

Keeping your seedlings damp is often more difficult than it sounds. They need to be protected from heavy rain and making sure that they get watered every day and sometimes on a very hot day more than once. I have had a few disastrous attempts where I was at work and a storm washed the soil out the trays! Different plants require different amounts of water so do your research before planting.

## TIPS WHEN PLANTING & CARING FOR BULBS

- ❖ Never plant winter flowering bulbs before Easter – don't even buy them before Easter, make it your Easter weekend chore with the kids and family to go buy your bulbs and plant them – don't let them lie around for a few months!
- ❖ Never plant summer flowering bulbs before August.
- ❖ Don't cut the leaves off your bulbs.
- ❖ Feed and water accordingly through the season.
- ❖ Once the bulbs are finished flowering for the season leave them in the soil and don't dig the beds and they will come up again the next year - this will save you some money. Or if you want to you can take the bulbs out the soil and store in a dry place and plant again the next season.
- ❖ Plant other seedlings or bulbs in the same bed that flower in different seasons to get a full year round display of colour.
- ❖ Plant lower growing ground covers with your bulbs to give that full green impact instead of having bare soil underneath.
- ❖ Plant bulbs in-between a seed lawn where you don't need to mow, this works very well in an area that has a meadow feel.

## COMBINATION PLANTING

Plant lower growing ground covers with your bulbs to give that full green impact instead of having bare soil underneath. When over-sowing it must be done very thinly! The bulbs must be able to grow through the annual. With over-sowing one has the advantage that when the bulbs are finished flowering the annual still shows colour.

### Here are a few examples of what seeds and bulbs work well together:

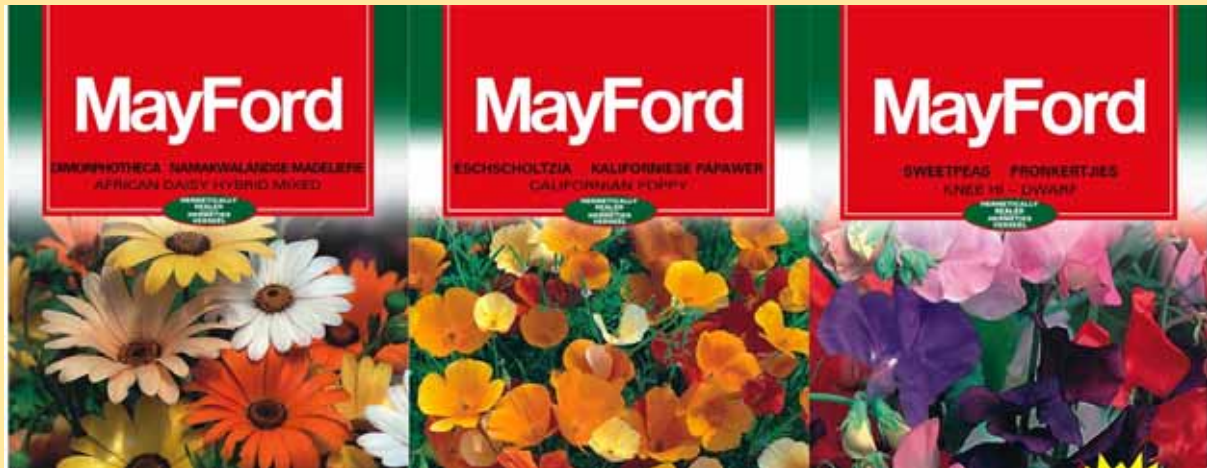
Daffodils	All Seasons Evergreen
Allium White	Lobelia Crystal Palace – after bulbs are planted interplant or over-sow
Anemones	Alyssum, white, lavender or violet as an edge
Babianas Blue	Also Alyssum white as well as Bellis perennis
Brodias Purple Blue,	Alyssum any colour or Bellis even Eschscholtzias (California Poppy) will do
Ixias Mixed	After planting over-sow with Virginian stocks
Freesias Mixed or sep colours	Linaria Fairy Bouquet. Lobelias, or Alyssum
Iris Dutch, Yellow, Blue, White	over-sow thinly with Dimorphotheca (African Daisy) after planting - keeps soil cool
Hyacinths	Allyssum, colour depends on colour of hyacinth- over-sow thinly after planting
Lachenalia	over-sow very lightly with Mesembryanthemum (Bokbaaiygie) - <b>indigenous</b>
Leucojum White (Snowflake)	Mesembryanthemum (Bokbaaiygie) or interplant pansies or Violas
Narcissus and Daffodils,	
Virginian stocks or Linaria	Over-sow after planting
Ornithogalum	Interplant with dwarf Phlox, or dwarf meadow mix
Muscari Blue	Plant Iceland poppy or Calendulas behind this lovely blue flower
Ranunculus	Edge with low growing annual such as Alyssum White, Lobelia Crystal Palace
Tritonias, Salmon and pastel shades	Virgnian stocks
Sparaxis	Mesembryanthemum (Bokbaaiygie) sown very thinly or Alyssum
Tulips	Primulas. Lovely on its own, but can be edged with a low growing annual in front or a taller variety at the back

It sounds easy but anyone who has planted seeds and bulbs knows that it takes some time and effort, it's like raising kids they need to be nurtured and loved when they are very small and then less work as they get bigger.

It is also very important to remember that once you have opened the packet and used a few seed you must store the rest in a dry place. The seed packets also have an expiry date so check this out because they may not germinate after this date.

A very big thank you to Paul at Mayford Seeds!

The logo for MayFord, featuring the word "MayFord" in a white, bold, sans-serif font on a red rectangular background.



If you have any topic suggestions or ideas email me – [lisa@designelement.co.za](mailto:lisa@designelement.co.za)  
If you do not want to receive these newsletters anymore please reply with stop in subject line.

*The love of gardening is a seed that once sown never dies.*  
- Gertrude Jekyll