

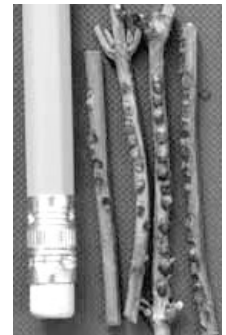
## Horticultural Points of Interest – March 2016

- **Plants by Internet or Mail**

- Catalogs arrive now
- Major Advantage is to obtain Plants that may be impossible to find locally
  - Plants will be much Smaller than locally grown Stock in order to keep shipping costs under control
  - Probably no Flowers the 1st year. Shrubs often several or many years from Flowering
- Beware of Descriptions like “#1 Size” or “Field Grown”
  - Pot Size is really the only Gauge of what you will Receive
- Beware of peculiar plant names such as Wonderous Blue Penstemon
  - If you want named cultivars, make sure that is what you are getting.
- Be very Careful of the Shipping costs, which can add significantly to Cost
- If you have internet access, check the Supplier on the Garden Watchdog of Dave’s Garden (<http://davesgarden.com/products/gwd/>)

- **Some Pests to Go After Now**


- Viburnum Leaf Beetles
  - Eggs are Deposited in a Line & Can be Seen fairly easily
  - Eggs are Killed by Horticultural Oils which should be Sprayed now
    - Very Effective and Safe !
  - Larvae & Adults both Eat Leaves and are Sizable
    - Typically on the Underside of Leaves
    - Require Aggressive Pesticides to Kill Them
  - Leaves are Skeletonized by the Beetles & Larvae also Producing many Brown Spots on Leaf Top
    - Can kill a Viburnum in 2 or 3 Years
- Winter Moths
  - Horticultural Oil is also effective in killing the eggs of Winter Moths
    - Spray Fruit Trees and ornamental Trees and Shrubs now
    - Much less Effective once the eggs hatch



- **Seed Starting (Annuals)**

- Much easier than Perennials
- Sow inside 6 to 8 weeks before Last Frost
  - Early start ensures Vigor and Early Flowers
- Use Commercial Seed Starter Mix or 1:1:1 Vermiculite to Milled Sphagnum Moss to Perlite Mixture
- Seed packet usually gives Planting depth
  - If not, sow tiny seeds on Surface, larger seeds a few seed Diameters deep
- Fertilizer is needed with Sterile mixes
  - Use low Nitrogen to help prevent DampOff
- Need Bright Light from either Window or Fluorescent Light Bulbs
- After Last Frost over a two week period slowly Acclimate to Sun by starting with Partial Shade and gradually Moving to Full Sun

- **Deer Ticks**

- Warm winter has killed few ticks and ticks are already out  (young Ticks shown opposite actual size)
- Deer Ticks commonly carry Lyme disease, Erlichiosis and Babesiosis.
  - Lyme can be difficult to Diagnosis and difficult to Treat
  - Babesiosis can be Dangerous
- Use Caution in Cleaning up the Spring Garden
  - Wear light colored Clothing to be able detect the Ticks
  - Tuck pants into Socks
  - Use Repellent !
- Check your Skin and Clothes when you come
  - If Bitten emove carefully with Tweezers
    - If bits remain imbedded in your skin or if you can't remove the tick see your doctor

- **Garden Cleanup**

- Stems left on for the Winter
  - Stems of early blooming Perennials such as Epimediums should be cut off and removed now
  - Stems of summer blooming Perennials, Xerics or Perennials prone to Crown Rot should be left in Place until new Growth starts at the base
    - Agastaches, Monarda, Butterfly weed, Euphorbias
- Pruning of Shrubs like Butterfly Bushes and Blue Mist Shrubs is best Postponed until new Growth begins
- Leaves Helpful for Soil improvement
  - Generally Earthworms will Compost in Place
  - If removed, consider a Compost pile
  - Too valuable to waste!

- **Soil Testing and Fertilizing**

- Check Soil pH and Composition Now
  - Helpful for choosing Fertilizers or Corrective Soil Additives
- Organic Fertilizers should be applied as soon as soil can be worked
- Slow Release Fertilizers should be applied just as new growth begins