

Deadheading to Division

Door County Master Gardener Association

Wild Ones – Door Peninsula

Mark Dwyer - January 23, 2024

1. Deadheading to Division
2. Garden Maintenance
 - a. All too often, gardening practices do not reflect the needs of the landscape but rather, are based on a set schedule that is determined by seasons and habits
 - b. Become an environmental steward!
 - c. Olbrich Botanical Garden (OBG), gravel garden
3. Plant Health Correlation
 - a. Many of the tasks and tips regarding perennial maintenance are not essential to the overall health and longevity of the plant in question
 - b. However, providing optimum growing situations is paramount to maximize both health and longevity (happy plants!)
 - c. pale coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*)
4. “Know Maintenance” Garden
5. OBG Gravel Garden
6. Proper Plant Siting is Vital
 - a. Know your plants!
 - b. Location, location, location!
 - c. Soils
 - d. Solar exposure
 - e. Watering regime
 - f. Good neighbors?
 - g. Similar needs?
 - h. Frequent scouting
7. Strategize
8. Understanding Variable Site Conditions
 - a. Sunlight
 - i. Seasonal variability
 - ii. Really assess
 - b. Soil
 - i. pH
 - ii. Amendments
 - c. Available Moisture
 - d. Challenges
 - e. Modifications
9. Site Evaluation and Notes
 - a. “I have a spot to fill” isn’t enough information

- b. "I have a spot in dappled sun, with leaner, well-drained soils that occasionally needs supplemental watering. Nearby tree roots are a factor as is the reflective heat of the house and sidewalk. I also salt the adjacent walkway in winter."
10. example, rusty foxglove (*Digitalis ferruginea*) and 'Blue Glow' globe thistle (*Echinops bannaticus*)
11. Reverse Expectations
- a. With every perennial purchase and installation, we have a valid expectation of success and performance
 - b. However, this can only be achieved if we address the expectations of the plants in terms of their establishment and growing needs
 - c. It's a "two way" street!
12. example, cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
13. Plant Failures
- a. Regrets when perennials fail us for myriad reasons can be avoided by more research
 - b. Plant failures are directly related to the amount of time we spend understanding the needs and tendencies of the perennials we are considering.
 - c. variegated ribbon grass (*Phalaris arundinacea* 'Picta')
14. Qualities of Good Soil
- a. Good soil tilth (conditions)
 - b. Sufficient depth
 - c. Sufficient, but not excessive, nutrient supply
 - d. Good soil drainage
 - e. Large population of beneficial organisms
 - f. Low weed pressure
 - g. No chemicals or toxins that may harm plantings
15. examples
16. Consider Composting!
- a. Start with a small system
 - b. Easy to manage!
 - c. It provides many essential nutrients for plant growth and therefore is often used as fertilizer.
 - d. Compost also improves soil structure so that soil can easily hold the correct amount of moisture, nutrients and air.
 - e. 140 degrees F for 10+ days
17. examples
18. Research All the Plant Features!
- a. Bloom color and timing
 - b. Flower architecture
 - c. Foliage characteristics
 - d. Fruiting structures

- e. Size and form
 - f. Growth rate and mode of growth
 - g. Scent?
 - h. Wildlife value?
 - i. *Mukdenia* Crimson Fans ('Karasuba')
19. example, 'Mars' barrenwort (*Epimedium sempervirens*)
20. Foliage and Texture
21. examples
22. Define Additional Goals
- a. Specific perennials may help promote a certain focus, theme or initiative
 - b. Attracting wildlife?
 - c. Fragrance?
 - d. Vertical opportunities?
 - e. Rain garden?
 - f. Cutting garden?
 - g. Etc.!
23. Attracting Wildlife?
24. Value of Native Plants
- a. Selecting and installing plants that are adapted to site conditions and the climate will require fewer resources and less maintenance
 - b. Native plantings can help offset the loss of critical wildlife habitat and provide environmental benefits
25. example, butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
26. Pollinator Combinations
- a. Planting combinations with pollinators in mind should include neighboring perennials that transition interest and value but also selections with a long season of pollinator interest
 - b. Maximizing available garden square footage should be coupled with creating non-traditional opportunities
 - c. rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) with garden phlox
27. examples
28. Garden Maintenance, gravel garden at OBG
29. Deadheading
- a. Deadheading is a process of pruning by which old growth and seed heads are removed from the plant to promote new growth and re-flowering.
 - b. Deadheading is very simple. As blooms fade, pinch or cut off the flower stems below the spent flowers and just above the first set of full, healthy leaves
30. Reasons for Deadheading
- a. Cosmetic improvement
 - b. To avoid potential reseeding issues
 - c. To encourage and perpetuate new flowering (not a uniform occurrence)
 - d. *Salvia* Lyrical™ White

31. examples, zinnia bed and sedum
32. Subjective Cosmetic Reasons, lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*)
33. examples, lamb's ears, asters
34. example, garlic chives (*Allium tuberosum*)
35. example, 'Jindai' Tatarian aster (*Aster tataricus*)
36. example, Sombrero® Flamenco Orange hybrid coneflower (*Echinacea hybrida* 'Balsomenco')
37. example, rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*)
38. Careful Considerations
 - a. Don't deadhead perennial varieties that offer interesting seed heads later in the season and perhaps add extended winter interest
 - b. Leaving some flowers to go to seed will also provide a food sources for wildlife in the winter months
 - c. *Echinacea paradoxa*
39. example, Deam's black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida* v. *deamii*)
40. The "Chelsea Chop"
 - a. Named for the pruning time of year coinciding with London's Chelsea Flower Show on the 3rd week of May, this gardening technique is the act of hacking back one-third to one-half of a perennial in late spring.
 - b. The focus is primarily on summer and fall blooming perennials
 - c. *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Culver's root)
41. The "Chelsea Chop"
 - a. This severe cutting in late May/early June is meant to keep plants shorter, fuller, to increase blooms & possibly delay flowering
 - b. Accomplish before the 4th of July (in the Midwest)
 - c. Consider shorter alternatives to some of the taller perennials that may respond to this technique
 - d. *Hylotelephium* 'Red Cauli' (stonecrop)
42. Candidates for "The Chop"
 - a. *Agastache* – hyssop
 - b. *Aster* spp. – asters (check species)
 - c. *Eutrochium* – Joe pye weed
 - d. *Helenium* – Helen's Flower
 - e. *Monarda* – bee balm
 - f. *Phlox* – garden phlox
 - g. *Physostegia* – obedient plant
 - h. *Pycnanthemum* spp. – mountain mint
 - i. *Sedum* – stonecrop (check species)
 - j. *Solidago* – goldenrod
 - k. *Verbena* spp. – vervain
 - l. *Vernonia* spp. - ironweed
43. Examples
44. *Eutrochium* 'Gateway' (Joe-pye weed) – Case Study

45. *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Culver's root) – Case Study

46. The “Super Shear”

- a. As some perennials fade out of bloom, they leave scraggly remnants of their former glory
- b. Certain selections will respond favorably to a VERY severe cutting (to 1”) and regenerate growth to form a tidy plant
- c. Occasional reblooming
- d. *Salvia nemorosa* selection

47. The Reality Check

- a. How much time do you have?
- b. It's not a biological need
- c. While a tidier look may be the outcome, additional flower encouragement is dependent on many factors
- d. Is the “Super Shear” an option?
- e. *Geranium Rozanne*®

48. example, meadow sage (*Salvia nemorosa*) and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

49. example, ‘Blue Hill’ meadow sage (*Salvia nemorosa*)

50. example, common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

51. example, New Vintage™ Red yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* ‘Balvinred’)

52. example, ‘Walker’s Low’ catmint (*Nepeta x faasseni*)

53. example, lady’s mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*)

54. example, Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum*)

55. Severe Cutback Candidates

- a. *Achillea* spp. - yarrow
- b. *Amsonia* spp. - bluestar
- c. *Aquilegia* spp. - columbine
- d. *Callirhoe* spp. - winecups
- e. *Carex* spp. - sedge
- f. *Coreopsis verticillata* – tickseed
- g. *Geranium* spp. – perennial geranium
- h. *Heliopsis helianthoides* - smooth oxeye
- i. *Penstemon* spp. - beardtongue
- j. *Phlox stolonifera* - creeping phlox
- k. *Polemonium reptans* - Jacob’s ladder
- l. *Rudbeckia fulgida* - orange coneflower
- m. *Thalictrum* spp. - meadowrue
- n. *Tradescantia* spp. – spiderwort

56. Staking

57. Staking Considerations

- a. Intentional support for heavier flowers
- b. Separation of plants
- c. Maintaining spacing and minimizing congestion
- d. Wide range of materials and techniques

- e. Robust approach!
- 58. example, globe thistle (*Echinops* sp.)
- 59. example, delphinium (*Delphinium* sp.)
- 60. example, 'Fascination' Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)
- 61. Techniques, examples
- 62. Dividing Perennials
 - a. Manage size
 - b. Alleviate overcrowding
 - c. Rejuvenation
 - d. Improved plant health
 - e. Creates more plants to use and share!
 - f. Addresses the "donut" status of the plant
- 63. Timing of Division
 - a. Very specific and should be researched
 - b. Most perennials welcome the early spring division
 - c. There are exceptions for many spring blooming perennials (*Iris*, *Paeonia*, etc.)
- 64. Dividing the "Donut"
- 65. examples
- 66. Perennial Grasses
- 67. examples
- 68. The Timing for Garden Clean-Up
 - a. Personal decision
 - b. Extended ornamentality
 - c. Many pollinators overwinter in dead plant material out in the garden
 - d. Aesthetic tidying in the fall has some merit
 - e. Consider leaving material up for spring clean-up once daytime temperatures are consistently over 50 degrees F for 3 days sequentially
- 69. examples
- 70. Virginia mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*)
- 71. 'Peach Crisp' coral bells (*Heuchera*)
- 72. Address Sanitation Issues
 - a. In late season, do cut back and remove any diseased perennials and collect all of their debris and foliage
 - b. Avoid perpetuation of fungal diseases with a tidy approach to select specimens
 - c. *Monarda* 'Jacob Cline'
- 73. examples
- 74. Stem Considerations
 - a. Leave some!
 - b. Be wary of fall cutting for larger stemmed perennials such as Hibiscus, Russian sage (*Perovskia*) and butterfly bush (*Buddleia*).

- c. These form hollow stems which could promote winter rotting of the crown if exposed for many months
 - d. *Hibiscus* 'Perfect Storm'
75. Chemical Use Concerns
- a. Promoted as a proactive approach to a problem before it happens
 - b. Impact on water, soils and air
 - c. Non-selective herbicides and pesticides leave a broad range of damage
 - d. Poisonous for the environment and us!
76. Fertilizer for Perennials
- a. The premise is usually wrong
 - b. Usually NONE – more about soil improvements as needed
 - c. Milorganite
 - d. Bulb installation is a different scenario in fall
 - e. Seasonal plantings are a “different beast”
77. Sustainability Tips
- a. Commit to an organic approach
 - b. Avoid all chemicals
 - c. Work with nature for pest management
 - d. Harvest water
 - e. Be creative with reuse and recycling efforts
 - f. Choose plants wisely
 - g. Build healthy soils
 - h. Avoid use of fossil fuels
78. In Summation
- a. “We don’t live or garden in isolation. The choices we make affect the plants, soil life, insects, birds, animals, water, air and our neighbors.” Anne Gibson
 - b. Peonies (*Paeonia*) with ‘Purple Sensation’ ornamental onions (*Allium*)
79. examples
80. Children’s Garden, Start them early!
81. Sow Seeds!
82. Consider Wildlife!
83. Promote Nutrition!
84. Shop Locally!
85. Landscape Prescriptions by MD
- a. mcdwyer@zoho.com
 - b. www.landscapeprescriptionsmd.com
86. Edgerton (WI) Hospital Healing Garden
87. Come Visit!
88. Thank You! Valentine® bleeding heart (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis* ‘Hordival’)