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free! backyard garden club e-newsletter

November 2009



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Where's Webster?

Find Webster in November and you could win a hummingbird prize package from Songbird Essentials.



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Dear Kimberly,

If I get a little break during the day, I try to check out the posts on the Birds & Blooms' facebook fan page. I enjoy reading about what's going on in backyards across the country, like Lynette in Louisiana who writes about the aggressive hummingbirds in her yard, or Brenda from Chicago who saw a downy woodpecker outside of her office building. Want to join the group? [Become a fan today!](#)



Crystal Rennicke

A new month means a new photo challenge. We were blown away with the fall photos sent in October and we're anxiously awaiting your pictures for the November challenge: UP. It's open for interpretation, so [upload](#) your favorite nature photos that correlate with the theme, UP. Have fun!

We'll be picking the winner for the Passion Growers giveaway soon, so forward this newsletter to your friends so they can be entered to win! (If you received this newsletter, you're already entered!) For more information, click [here](#).

Happy Gardening!
—Crystal

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Plant of the Month

Miss Sunshine Sunflower

Botanical name: *Helianthus annuus*.

Mature Size: 10 to 16 inches high; 6 to 8 inches wide.



**Gardening Green
for Less**

Hardiness: Annual, except Zones 10 to 11.

Light: Full sun.

Features: This new dwarf sunflower is easy to grow and produces a second show of flowers. Its long-lasting and pollen-free flowers grow from 3-4 inches.

Uses: Use in containers or annual beds, but also makes a great indoor plant as well.



Ball Horticulture

For more information, click [here](#).

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Yard Smarts

Fund-raising Idea

Each October, our hospital branch holds a fund-raiser. We always have a table full of prizes. I donate a basket of spring bulbs, planting instructions, garden tools and gloves. This is always a very popular prize because it comes at just the right time for fall planting. —Mrs. Joseph Torre, Oakland, New Jersey



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Question of the Month

Frostbit Bulbs

Q: Will my gladiolus bulbs bloom even though they sat outside over a few nights of early frost? —Donna McTague, Woburn, Massachusetts

Melinda: Frost damage won't impact blooms, but it can impact the survival of the plant. If the gladiolus bulbs, really called "corms," are firm, they should be fine.



RDA/GID

Gladiolus store best when cured (dried) for a week or two in a warm, dry location. Store only firm corms that are free of insect damage, disease and soft spots uncovered in a cool, dark location for winter. Label the corms so you know their color and height.

For more answers from Melinda, click [here](#).

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Frugal Gardener Tip

Homemade Stepping Stones

I made inexpensive stepping-stones by filling a springform cake pan lined with plastic wrap with cement. Before it dried, I had my children make a handprint or footprint in each, then decorated it with rocks, marbles and anything else we could find. We plan to add new stepping stones to our yard each year. —*Mary Schmidt, Hawarden, Iowa*

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Submit Your Story

We're looking for your best money-saving birding and gardening tips for our "For Less" section. If we use your photo submission, we'll send you \$25!

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