

won't have ANY germination. For seeds that you know you won't use, consider donating them to a horticulture society seed exchange.

GET A JUMP ON SUMMER FLOWERING BULBS

Something else that I found lurking in the gardening cupboard was a collection of the summer-flowering corms, tubers and bulbs that I saved from last year. A few of these wonderful plants were beginning to show growth and that meant yet another task at hand. The dahlias can be potted up for a head start and you can even do some cuttings and add to your collection once they get going. There are many sites on the web that give instructions but here is a good one with pictures: <http://www.cool-tropicalplants.com/Propagating-dahlias.html>.

Begonia tubers hardly need instruction. Just press them into a shallow container filled with sterilized potting mix and watch them grow. Many other summer flowering plants- pineapple lilies (Eucomis sp.), calla lilies, nerines, etc.- will need new soil, warmth and light to get them off to a good start.

TEND TO YOUR HOUSEPLANTS

My houseplants aren't actually in a gardening cupboard, but the task of pruning and repotting is a good one for this time of year. I like to give the plants a wash in the sink or shower to remove the dust and grime that settles in the winter and clip off any long lanky winter growth. The spring sunshine will give the plants better light conditions and make for denser growth.

Once you see strong new growth, you can begin a fertilizing regime for many

those sharpened and cleaned pruners and get out there. The best hint I have heard to date is to wrap a bungee cord or two around the whole clump before cutting. Then cut the stems down to between 3 and 12 inches depending on the size of the grass. I leave 12" on the large Miscanthus 'Giganteus' but only 3" on the smaller/shorter grasses.

It is best to do it while the ground is frozen so you don't disturb the spring flowering bulbs that are almost ready to burst forth. My friend Diana Pooke, a Master Gardener in Georgetown sent along the before and after shots included here.

ATTEND A GARDEN SHOW OR PLANT SALE

As a just reward for cleaning your gardening cupboard, go out to one of the following plant sales and buy a new plant. You will be supporting the local groups that beautify the community and getting a new plant pot or two to put in your cupboard for next year!

Acton Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale

May 19 starting at 8 a.m. at Bethel Christian Reformed Church parking lot (Note- this is new location), 365 Queen St. Acton

www.gardenontario.org/site.php/ahs

Georgetown Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale

May 11 starting at 6 p.m. at Gellert Community Centre, 10241 Eighth Line, Georgetown

www.geohort.com/

Milton & District Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale and Silent Auction



May 17 at Milton Fairgrounds (halls 1 & 2), 136 Robert Street, Milton www.miltonhortsociety.com/

RBG Auxiliary Plant Sale

Thursday, May 3 and Saturday, May 5 from 9a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and Sunday, May 6 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (new day added)

Royal Botanical Gardens Burlington/Hamilton www.rbg.ca/

-Belinda Gallagher owns Hooked on Horticulture Consulting and writes and speaks and teaches about her passion - the world of plants.

houseplants

grasses

plant sale

houseplants but be sure to follow the product instructions. If you are moving your houseplant to a larger container, remember to only increase the size by an inch or two in depth and diameter so to avoid root rot from too much wet soil. (The beautiful orange Clivia sp. shown here is an exception to potting up. Wait until it is about to burst the pot before moving to a larger container, otherwise it will stop flowering. It just likes to be crowded.)

CUTTING DOWN THE ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

You will want to get outside now and it is the perfect time for cutting down those pesky, yet beautiful ornamental grasses in your garden. It is a big job, even if you have only one grass so grab



Acclaim Health
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Mother's Day Online Auction

This spring we're excited to be hosting our:

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Through these charitable services Acclaim is able to provide supportive care to over 1,950 individuals a year who are isolated, in need of companionship or faced with life-threatening illness.

SAVE THE DATES (2012)

Auction Site Launches: April 29th at Midnight
www.acclaimauction.com

Bidding: April 30th to May 8th

Auction Site Closes: May 8th at Midnight

Winner Notifications Sent: May 9th

Pickup Your Prizes: May 9th to 11th
(at the Acclaim Health Speers Office in Oakville)


If you have any questions or would like to make a prize donation please contact:
Jamie or Victoria at: 905-827-8800 /
email: jpaul@acclaimhealth.ca or vracette@acclaimhealth.ca

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