

# The Spray Front

If you have been listening to the weathermen lately, you've noticed the "not so spring-like" temperatures we've been experiencing. Opening day for the White Sox say temperatures in the low 40's, and our favored 60-degree days have been few and far between.

Why does temperature play an important role in our spray program? Because plants, weeds, bugs, and disease don't have a calendar they check before emerging from their winter rest. Most of what we do revolves around the temperature of the soil, the wind speed, and the average rainfall for the month. These are the biological cues that direct nature, and so we must observe and react on a week-to-week basis.

This year the temperatures stayed below normal for a much longer period of time than we are used to. Ultimately our spray program has been pushed



back nearly two weeks to adjust for these changes. With pest management timing is crucial: too early and the application is ineffective; too late and the application is ineffective.

Out the gate we're playing the waiting game, but that doesn't mean we may have a major shift a few months from now. So if you ever wonder: "Don't they usually do that by now?" – the answer may be "Yes, most likely, but this year is a little different because of the weather."

3860 W. 127th St. Alsip, IL 60803 Phone: 708-389-8119 www.williamquinnandsons.com



# WILLIAM QUINN

FAMILY OWNED & SONS  
SINCE 1951  
SEASON SPRING YEAR 2013

## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE IMPATIENS?

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT IMPATIENS AND THEIR FUTURE IN LANDSCAPES



One of our most popular annuals for shade gardens is being sidelined by a devastating fungal disease. The plant is **Impatiens Walleriana**, and the disease is **Downy Mildew**. Downy Mildew is a destructive foliar disease that is capable of causing complete defoliation of your

Impatiens. Although the disease has been known since 2004, it wasn't until 2011 that the fungus first appeared in Northern Illinois. Downy Mildew is spread by both wind and water. Once plants become infected, there is no way to stop its progression. And once a bed has become infected, disease spores

will overwinter in the soil, which will infect Impatiens planted in the same bed area for future seasons. Basically once you've got it, you've got it for good.

If your Impatiens looked healthy one day...

CONTINUED PAGE 3

Alsip, IL 60803  
3860 W. 127th Street  
**WILLIAM QUINN & SONS**

# WILLIAMQUINNANDSONS.COM

3860 W. 127TH ST ALSIP, IL 60803 PH (708) 389-8119 FAX (708) 389-0837

# Cathy's Corner

Well here we are at the start of another season. The year 2013 celebrates our 62<sup>nd</sup> year in business. This is a busy time of the year for all of us, but we have been looking forward to escaping the office and getting back to what we do best.

Spring has been off to a slow start this year. The unseasonably cold weather will slow down spring clean up and the start of the planting season. Usually, by this time in April, our plant suppliers have shipped the current season's stock. You may recall that last year at this time we were already cutting grass. Let's not forget that this is Chicago and you never know what to expect. Many of you have asked me what kind of spring and summer we should expect. The experts are predicting conditions to mirror the 2012 season. As you may recall, it was hot and dry. Remember that your turf can go dormant, and will recover. Try to water the trees and shrubs as they are a big expense to replace.



## A Dry Winter 2013

Our most recent winter started out quite slow. Below average snowfall, mild temperatures and occasionally high wind gusts were the norm until we hit February. It seemed like Mother Nature was determined to make up for lost time because she dumped almost 80% of our total winter snowfall within 30 days.

Spring is now here, and so far we're off to a wet start. At the time of writing, The US Drought Monitor has us less than 200 miles east of documented "Abnormally Dry" portions of the Midwest. We're also averaging much lower temperatures than normal.

If the trend continues, we may not have to pull out our garden hoses any time soon.

Spring is the time that our plants, turf, and trees replenish the nutrients lost over their winter dormancy. Most of the yearly growth of a plant or tree is done during the spring. When there's little water available to the plant during that time, the growth is stunted for the year.

To know when it's time to start watering, keep an eye on the U.S. Drought Monitor at the following website: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

I am aware that some associations were hit with huge water bills last year. The water rates in many towns tripled without the homeowners realizing what was happening. This year we will focus on conserving your water to the best of our abilities.

If you need to schedule a spring walk-thru, feel free to contact me. It is best to walk after the trees and shrubs have leafed out so we can see what needs attention.

This year we are changing things up a bit regarding incentives that the employees can earn. The foreman will still earn their points in which they will trade in for different prizes. Each crew member will earn tokens for job performance. These tokens can be exchanged for gas cards or store gift certificates. If you encounter an employee who deserves recognition let us know so we can acknowledge their outstanding work.

Lastly, as many of you already know, we have lost our commander in chief. Although he wasn't involved in the day to day operations, the boss, as we called him, will be greatly missed. We were lucky to have had this last year with our dad. He created the path of how to run a successful business and now it is up to Mick and me to continue the journey and lead the next generation in the same direction. We would like to extend our gratitude to all of you who have sent cards and flowers. Over the years, we have been truly blessed with wonderful people that are not only customers and suppliers but, people we are lucky enough to call friends. As always, the Quinn family appreciates your business and we look forward to the beginning of another season.

Cathy

CONTINUED PAGE 1

...and the next time you saw them they were reduced to spiny green stems with no foliage, downy mildew is to blame. There really isn't a cost effective preventative that is available at this time. The best thing to do is to remove the sickly plants immediately.

The big question going forward for Impatiens lovers is "What do I plant in my shade flower beds?" Since this is a state wide problem for the 2013 season, growers are offering a list of colorful alternatives. New Guinea Impatiens, which are not susceptible to downy mildew will become a star this season. Keep in mind that they are only sold in containers and not flats, increasing the overall cost. New Guineas also need a lot of water and no stress to survive.

Begonias top the list as Impatiens substitutes. The only problem with Begonias is the limited colors available: red, pink or white. The other alternative is utilizing Coleus as a substitute which come in a variety of colors. Keep in mind that many Coleus have dark foliage. You will want to stick with the brighter colors so your plants don't get lost in the shade. Coleus will also need to be



Coleus can be used as an Impatiens Substitute

dead headed in order for them to spread and fill in your beds the same way Impatiens do.

For diehard Impatiens fans, this change will take a little getting used to. Use your imagination and try different ideas. If you at a loss call for advice - that's what we're here for!

## Not Your Grandmother's Hydrangeas

Most likely every gardener has memories of a hydrangea somewhere in the garden. These old fashion plants have been a part of gardens since the early 1800s. Pee Gee hydrangeas were a garden staple with white flowers and a tall floppy habit. This was the shrub of choice to fill up a corner or cover foundations.

At the present time these shrubs are a sought after addition to the summer garden. They provide a splash of color when few other shrubs are in flower. They also add winter interest to the garden.

There have been numerous new hydrangeas introduced in the past few years. You need to be aware of the different flower and growth habits before you choose

which one will best fit your landscape.

First the paniculata series can be severely cut back in the spring to maintain size and they will still provide flowers. The paniculata series include: Little Lime, Vanilla Strawberry, Limelight, Pinky Winky, Quick Fire and Tardiva.

Next is the hydrangea macrophylla type. These are very often called lacecaps. This particular variety has flower heads that are shaped like tiny disks. Macrophylla hydrangeas include: Endless Summer, Twist & Shout, Let's Dance. These hydrangeas are typically smaller than paniculatas and tolerate sun.



The third type of hydrangeas include the arborescence variety. This variety includes Bella Anna, Incrediball, Invincibelle Spirit.

We suggest you research the available varieties before you make any decision as bloom times and growth habits can vary with the different varieties available.

