

The “Wow!” Flower

“Wow! Look at that flower!”

That’s what you’ll hear when you grow an amaryllis.

Amaryllis is easy to grow and has spectacular blooms. Here are some tips to maximize its wow factor:

Get a huge bulb. Go online or go to your garden center and buy the biggest bulb you can. Big bulbs will send up more than one flower stalk and your amaryllis will bloom for weeks! Less expensive bulbs sold in kits at big box stores are good but will send up only one flower stalk.

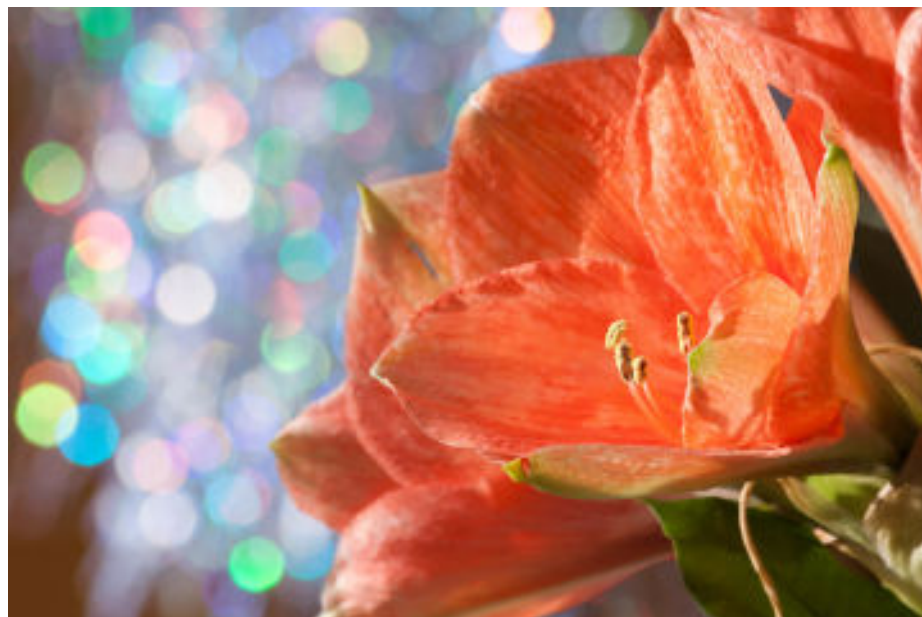
Use a heavy pot. Amaryllis can grow over 30 inches. Use a stable pot that won’t tip over. When you plant the bulb, keep a third of it above the soil line. There should be an inch gap between the bulb and the pot.

Jumpstart the bulb. The bulb can be slow to sprout. Place the potted bulb in a warm spot like on a seed starter mat or a radiator to wake it up.

Give it sunshine. Once it starts growing, move the pot to a sunny window. Be prepared for action. You’ll swear it grows so quickly you can actually hear it grow. It will lean toward the sun so rotate the plant weekly to keep it symmetrical.

Get ready to be amazed. Wait until you see the giant blooms—they are magnificent!

Extend the show. Lengthen the bloom time by placing your plant in a



Amaryllis is easy to grow and has spectacular blooms. Get a big bulb and be prepared to be amazed!

bright, cool (60s) spot away from direct sunlight.

Some gardeners pluck the stamens that come out of the blooms. This prevents pollen from dropping onto, and decaying the petals. I think the stamens add to the beauty of the flower, and I leave them alone.

Encore! Encore! Once all the flowers have faded, we need to recharge the bulb so it blooms again next year. Trim the flower stalk down to a couple inches from the base. Place your amaryllis near a sunny window. The bulb is exhausted, and we need the leaves to re-fill the bulb with energy. Water and fertilize regularly all summer.

When the foliage begins to yellow in early fall, the bulb is re-filled.

Clip off the leaves and place the bulb in a cool (50s), dark spot for eight weeks. A basement is a good place for this.

Repot the bulb in early November. New shoots will emerge, and your holidays will again be filled with its dazzling beauty!

Inside This Issue

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| ◆ Amazing Amaryllis | 1 |
| ◆ New, Blue Perennials | 2 |
| ◆ Hort Shorts | 3, 4 |
| ◆ Weather Almanac | 5 |

New, Blue Perennials

Blue flowers are rare, but that's beginning to change. Lots of blue perennials have been released in recent years. Blue flowers and foliage add peacefulness and tranquility to the garden. Explore and enjoy!



Blue Flax

This reminds me of the sparkling flax fields on our Dakota prairie. Airy, vase-shaped plants create movement in the garden. Blooms all summer. Zones 3, 4.



'Stand by Me' Clematis

Emerges from the ground every spring and grows into a clump, not a climbing vine. Bright, bell-shaped blooms become cream-colored seedheads. Zones 3, 4.



'Waterslide' Hosta

Silvery blue, rippled leaves look like water splashing in the garden. Its leaves are heavy and less attractive to slugs. Lavender blooms. Zones 3, 4.



KIRIGAMI™ Deep Blue & White Columbine

These tubular blooms are remarkable. KIRIGAMI™ grows upright and has upward-facing flowers. A pollinator and hummingbird magnet. Great for cut flowers. Zone 4.



'Starstruck' Amsonia

Clusters of sparkling blue, star-shaped flowers appear in late spring. Bright green, attractive foliage in summer. Easy to grow, low maintenance. Zone 4.



'Azure Snow' Salvia

Violet blue and white bicolor flowers with attractive dark green foliage. Full, compact clumps. Bees love it; rabbits and deer do not. Zones 3, 4.



'Blue Bubbly' Baptisia

Long spikes of lavender-blue flowers. Baptisia are long-lived and tolerate drought. Use the 4-foot plants as specimens or in backgrounds. Zone 4.



'Denim 'n Lace' Perovskia

Popular for its prolific display of lacy, sky-blue flowers. The outer whorl of each flower is amethyst, extending the display of colors all summer. Zone 4.

Hort Shorts

Trees and Shrubs



Rake Under Pines?

Do not rake fallen needles under evergreens unless the needles have disease. Needles enrich the soil, moderate temperatures and conserve moisture under the tree.



Irrigate Evergreens

Most of ND is in a drought. If your soil is dry, irrigate evergreens to fill their needles with water before the ground freezes. This prevents needle tips from drying (*shown*) due to harsh winds and glaring sun rays over winter. Young, wind-exposed trees are most sensitive.



Deer Repellents

Products that generate a sulfur odor work best. These repellents contain decaying animal proteins such as eggs or slaughterhouse waste. Deer sense this odor and fear a predator is nearby. Products include Deer Away, Liquid Fence and Plantskydd. Spray on plants.

Gardens



Clean and Store Tools

Brush off soil and sharpen blades. Put oil on moving parts and rub a light amount of oil into the wood.



Store Winter Squash

Keep 1+ inches of stem. Wipe but do not wash fruit. Except for acorns, cure in a warm (80°F) spot for 10 days. Store on pallets at 55°F and 60% RH. Most varieties taste better after 4–8 weeks.



Clean Under Fruit Trees

It's important to rake and remove fallen leaves and fruits. This litter is a source of insect pests (*such as apple maggot shown above*) and diseases next year.

Lawns



Trim Your Lawn

A tall turf attracts voles (*shown with its damage*) and becomes more susceptible to mold. Mow at a normal height or slightly lower (approximately 2 inches).



Dormant Seeding

Filling in bare spots? Seed may be sown now in flat, sheltered areas. This seed will sprout in spring. Sow seed, lightly incorporate in soil, and irrigate once.



Winterize Mower

Scrape dirt from under the mower deck. Run the engine until all gas is gone or add a fuel stabilizer and run the engine for a few minutes. Change oil. Remove the spark plug and battery.

Hort Shorts

Flowers



Protect Non-Hardy Roses

Loosely tie canes together with twine. Place an 8-inch mound of soil over crown. Mulch with 4–6 inches of clean straw after the ground freezes. Trim canes back in early spring.



Plant Tulips Outdoors

You can plant tulip, daffodil, crocus and other spring-flowering bulbs until the ground is frozen solid. The flower bud is already inside the bulb. Irrigate and mulch.



Mulch Tender Flowers

Apply 4–6 inches of straw after the ground freezes. This mulch will insulate plants from extreme temps, prevent premature sprouting, and keep the soil stable during freezing/thawing cycles.



Caring for Geraniums

Place into 8-inch pots. Cut back to 1/3 height to keep plants compact. Set near a bright sunny window. Cool temperatures (60s) are best. Water sparingly.



Baby Spiders

Shorter days cause spider plants to produce flower stalks and babies. The babies can be propagated in cups of water or in a seed starter mix. Clip off the babies or keep them attached to their mother when propagating until a root system develops.



Force Hyacinths in Water

Forcing pots are available at garden centers or online. Set the bulb in the upper chamber, 1/4 inch above the water line. Keep cool (40s) and dark. A refrigerator is perfect. It will grow pure white roots and then sprout in about 10 weeks. Gradually give it more light and warmth until it blooms.

Credits

Sources:

Proven Winners. Top 10 Blue Perennials for Dreamy Gardens. <https://www.provenwinners.com/learn/top-ten-lists/top-10-blue-perennials-dreamy-gardens>. Accessed October 2020.

Walters Gardens, Inc. <https://www.waltersgardens.com/>. Accessed October 2020.

Photos were made available under Creative Commons licenses specified by the photographers. **Page 1:** stux from Pixabay. **Page 2:** Walter's Gardens, Inc. **Page 3:** Ted, www.flickr.com/photos/frted/44711673284/; Mike Schomaker, Colorado State Forest Service, Bugwood.org; jon, www.flickr.com/photos/25120637@N05/3369017434/; Clay Giraffe, www.flickr.com/photos/dmythos/8234851/; Nick Warner, www.flickr.com/photos/nick777/1435149146/; Tom Kalb, NDSU; David L. Clement, University of Maryland, Bugwood.org; Leo Papandreou, www.flickr.com/photos/manualcrank/

4736839163/; Matt Lowden, www.flickr.com/photos/matthewlowden/3594670268/; Tom Kalb, NDSU. **Page 4:** Marko Kivela, www.flickr.com/photos/marko_k/56231448/; cocoparisienne from Pixabay; Steven Lybeck, www.flickr.com/photos/slybeck/3484900281/; Susan Ujka's Collection, www.flickr.com/photos/lit-linx/3438321158/; Auntie P, www.flickr.com/photos/auntiep/6241510885/; Christina B Castro, www.flickr.com/photos/cbcastro/3330501452/.

Written by Tom Kalb, who expresses gratitude to the Horticulture/Forestry Team for their contributions to this report.

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names are made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by North Dakota State University Extension is implied.

NDSU Extension, North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Greg Lardy, Director, Fargo, North Dakota. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. We offer our programs and facilities to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, Vietnam era veterans status, or sexual orientation; and are an equal opportunity employer. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request (701) 231-7881.

NDSU

EXTENSION

Weather Almanac for October 2020

Site	FIRST FROST ^{1,2} (28°F or colder)		TEMPERATURE ² October				RAINFALL ^{2,4} October 2020				GROWING DEGREE DAYS ^{2,5} October 2020			
	2020	Norm	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
	Bottineau	9/8	9/27	35	42	71	5	0.39	1.25	9.11	14.48	80	74	2162
Bowman	9/8	9/30	36	44	78	-10	0.68	1.38	9.06	12.68	114	103	2257	2270
Carrington	9/9	10/5	37	44	71	9	0.41	1.77	9.45	17.08	84	98	2318	2340
Crosby	9/8	9/29	35	41	76	-4	0.24	1.11	8.02	12.65	88	65	2117	1998
Dickinson	9/8	10/3	38	43	75	-1	0.41	1.27	8.41	14.16	113	117	2385	2267
Fargo	10/14	10/5	39	46	75	13	0.85	2.15	17.44	18.14	99	96	2628	2489
Grafton	10/2	10/4	37	43	73	11	0.52	1.98	17.18	17.64	82	81	2321	2177
Grand Forks	10/2	10/5	39	43	75	14	0.22	1.97	13.50	17.22	89	76	2399	2219
Hazen	9/8	9/27 ⁶	37	46	75	3	0.26	1.38	11.80	14.41	103	142	2307	2508
Hillsboro	10/4	10/6	38	45	75	12	0.29	2.17	18.49	17.85	93	81	2434	2340
Jamestown	10/15	10/4	37	44	76	10	0.36	1.69	9.34	16.64	88	80	2311	2298
Langdon	9/8	9/28	34	40	68	7	0.39	1.49	11.37	16.68	56	43	1993	1830
Mandan	9/8	10/1	38	44	78	5	0.48	1.37	6.79	15.44	100	102	2451	2336
Minot	9/8	10/7	37	43	73	5	0.22	1.41	8.04	14.72	84	65	2205	2099
Mott	9/9	9/28	37	44	79	-1	0.30	1.28	10.49	13.39	108	125	2309	2371
Rugby	9/8	10/4	36	42	70	6	0.01	1.18	7.98	16.10	78	80	2212	2155
Wahpeton	9/9	10/4 ⁷	39	47	80	2	0.86	2.39	17.63	19.14	106	106	2548	2608
Watford City	9/8	9/25	38	43	78	3	0.09	1.03	6.90	12.09	105	101	2358	2260
Williston	9/8	9/29	38	46	81	-1	0.12	0.97	4.57	12.00	107	134	2418	2571
Wishek	10/14	9/27	36	44	78	0	0.21	1.61	10.62	14.33	87	82	2314	2122

DAYLENGTH (Nov 1, McClusky, center of ND)³

Sunrise: 7:26 AM Daylength: 9h 59m
 Sunset: 5:25 PM Change since Oct 1: -1h 42m

LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS¹

Nov 6–10: Temp.: Below Normal; Precip.: Above Normal
 Nov 8–14: Temp.: Below Normal; Precip.: Above Normal

^{1,2,3} Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, www.sunrisesunset.com, respectively.

⁴ Measurements begin April 1.

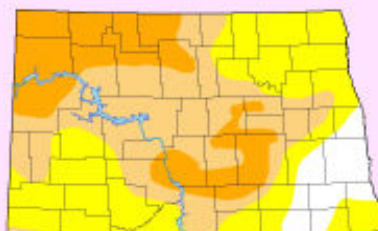
⁵ GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F, respectively.

^{6,7} Frost data for Beulah and Campbell, respectively.

Drought Watch

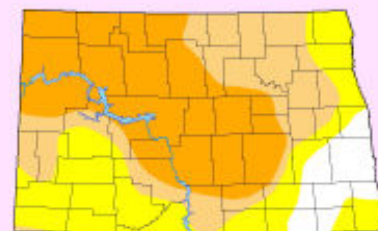
Our growing season is over but drought conditions continue to worsen. Northwest and central regions are especially dry.

The ongoing La Niña is expected to bring wetter-than-normal conditions this winter. This may provide some relief heading into the planting season, but that's a long time away. Let's see what happens. Sources: Drought Monitor and NOAA.



October 20, 2020

- Abnormally dry: 92% of state.
- Moderate drought: 56% of state.
- Severe drought: 23% of state.



October 27, 2020

- Abnormally dry: 92% of state.
- Moderate drought: 65% of state.
- Severe drought: 40% of state.