

Ricky's Gardening Tips and Tricks and Home Horticulture

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Ricky's Gardening Tips and Tricks and Home Horticulture is an online newsletter designed to provide citizens of Allen County and northeastern Indiana with up-to-date information about Horticulture and home issues, written in a lighthearted style! To subscribe, send an email to kemeryr7@frontier.com.

Low Maintenance Climbing Roses

In the “good old days” growing climbing roses involved a ton of work just to get the climbers to survive the winter months. Most climbing roses needed extra protection from the cold and the wind – or they might not survive (sob) the experience. So one would have to take down the climbers from their support system and place the rose in a trench dug near the location so the rose could be covered with dirt, then leaves or evergreen boughs placed over the buried rose. Then in the spring after any danger of a hard freeze, the rose could be dug from its temporary grave and then tenderly (sob) placed back on its trellis structure to grow another season.

This work to save climbing roses from a hypothermic death was what was necessary to enjoy a climbing rose.

So much for the good old days. Nowadays advances in rose breeding – especially with roses grown in Canada and other colder climates – has resulted in climbing roses that can survive colder climates on their own. Sigh- It's about time...Here are a few climbers one can try in your own landscapes that are tough customers.

‘**William Baffin**’ is part of the hardy *Canadian Explorer* Series. Bred in Manitoba, Canada, these tough roses are designed to survive extremely cold winters without protection. Even better, ‘William’ is an environmentally friendly rose that doesn't need sprays to resist mildew and black spot.

William Baffin’ is a formidable rose growing up to 10 feet tall. The semi-double blooms are small but abundant, with a shining golden eye. It provides a dependable supply of vivid garden color from spring through frost.



Snowy white, elegant ‘**Iceberg**’ is among the world's most popular tough roses. Though common, I find it anything but boring. With lovely form and never-ending blooms all summer, this variety turns any space into a rosy wonderland.

Interplant it with manicured boxwoods for timeless formal style or grow several over a wide arch for a no-fail romantic display. Let it climb 12 feet tall, Floriferous ‘Iceberg’ won't let you down. Effortless and cold hardy, the Royal Horticultural Society recognized the myriad qualities of ‘Iceberg’ as a recipient of the *Award of Garden Merit*. It's adaptable, stunning, and always in bloom!

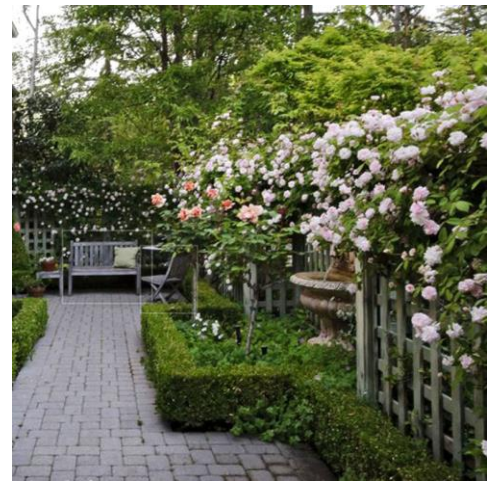


JOHN CABOT CLIMBING ROSE

Introduced to the market 20 years ago, this was the first of the great Explorer roses hybridized by Felicitas Svejda for Agriculture Canada., 'John Cabot' produces fragrant multipetalled, 7.5-centimetre-wide flowers, first and most prolifically in June, then sporadically until freeze-up. Field-tested in Ottawa since 1970, it's resistant to mildew and black spot and hardy to Zone 3.

New Dawn' Climbing Rose

- Large, shell-pink double blooms turn heads!
- Blooms heavily in June and continues throughout summer.
- Resistant to common diseases.
- Effortlessly climbs over trellises, fences, and more.
- Grown on their own roots - not grafted.
- No special protection or fussing required.
- Zones 5-9, sun, 12' tall x 6' wide at maturity.



Blaze' Climbing Rose

- Large clusters of semi-double red blooms!
- Flowers for over four months.
- Easy to train for a delightful climbing display.
- Grown on their own roots - not grafted.
- No special protection or fussing required.
- Zones 5-9, sun, 14' tall x 10' wide at maturity.

Bridal Wreath Spirea



Old-fashioned bridal wreath spirea is often found in older, established landscapes. This handsome open, loose shrub reaches 4 to 8 feet high and 6 to 8 feet wide. Showy, double white flowers are in clusters of three to six and bloom in mid-spring.

Bridal wreath” refers to the long, twisting sprays of flowers that were fashioned into wreaths worn on the head for special occasions – spring weddings for example. A hardy and maintenance-free beautiful shrub anyone can grow, Bridal Wreath spirea is an old-fashioned favorite flowering shrub that heralds the arrival of spring when its arching branches become literally smothered in clusters of pretty, single or double white flowers.

This shrub is native to China and Taiwan and is often found on sunny hillsides or in stony and barren places.

The genus name, *Spiraea*, is from the Greek word, *speira*, which means "wreath" and is about the shrub's showy flowers. It is an unusual member of the rose family, but looks nothing like a rose, crabapple, or any other rose relative.

Intrepid Scottish plant explorer Robert Fortune, infamous for smuggling tea plants from China into India, discovered this *spirea* in China. He commented, in the 1855 *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, that "although found in cultivation at Foo-chow, it evidently has a more northern origin, and as it is not met with in the gardens of Ningpo or Shanghai, "It is probably one of those Japan plants introduced to China by the Loo-chow trading junks which visit Foo-chow every year."

"As it flowers early in the year," Fortune continued, "it will probably be well adapted for forcing, and if so, its beautiful wreathes of snow-white blossoms will do well for bouquets or for ornamenting the hair; for the latter purpose it is much prized by the Chinese ladies at Foo-chow."

You should be able to force bridal-wreath spirea branches in the coldest zones if you wait until after they have experienced at least a couple months where temperatures regularly drop into or below the 40s Fahrenheit. For the best results, snip your shoots after the beginning of January on a day when the temperature is above freezing. They reportedly take about two weeks to bloom if you keep them in water-filled vases indoors, as you would other bouquet flowers.

This spring-flowering species produces flowers on old wood – pruning to reshape or resize while they're dormant should be avoided to prevent flower loss.

Vanhoutte Spirea

The standard bearer of bridal wreath varieties, Vanhoutte spirea (*S. x vanhouttei*) is laden with small double white flowers on graceful branches pendulous with blooms in mid to late spring.

The beautiful, vase-like form has elegant, arching limbs and soothing blue green foliage that takes on an overcast of burgundy or purple in autumn, although the fall colors aren't as vibrant as other cultivars.

These shrubs grow up to eight feet tall and six feet wide and have good cold hardiness, being suitable for Zones 3 to 8.

Renaissance

A handsome cultivar with a long flowering period, *S. x vanhouttei* ‘Renaissance’ features masses of tiny white double flowers on gracefully arching branches.

The fountain-shaped shrub has an airy, refined appearance and features beautiful, blue green foliage that takes on shades of orange, red, and purple in fall.

Reeves

‘Reeves’ is a bridal wreath from the species *S. cantoniensis*, and features long, arching branches with clusters of double white blooms in spring.

In fall, the dark green leaves turn vibrant shades of burgundy, gold, red, and yellow.

This cultivar is exceptionally heat and drought tolerant.

Artillery Fungus – We are Under Attack!

Artillery fungus is a fungus that develops on rotting wood in a moist environment. What makes artillery fungus unique is the way it shoots its spores into the air – sometimes more than 20 feet away from the source.. The spores have a sticky coating which makes them adhere to anything they land on. Often the spores are directed towards light



colored surfaces – the side of your house for instance – or even towards your car parked in the driveway. The fungus is found mainly in untreated or wood chip mulch that has not been composted or treated but also in decaying fallen trees and other rotting wood as well as in animal dung.

Research from Penn State University has shown that artillery fungus can come from many sources – but the longer a mulch remains in a landscape without being refreshed – the more likely artillery fungus can develop. Colored mulches only *temporarily* inhibit artillery fungus..

The main issue with artillery fungus is that its spore masses are very sticky. The spore masses will stick to the side of a building or automobile, resembling a small speck of tar.. Once in place, the spore masses can be very difficult to remove without damaging the surface to which it is attached.

Some Extension sources recommend the use of weak bleach solutions to try to remove the spores. Others recommend Mr. Clean Magic Erasers. Often homegrown mixes to control fungus in mulch recommended by some Internet sources are ineffective, stupid, or even dangerous.

Pine nuggets, cypress mulch or cedar chips have less issues with artillery fungus, though some sources caution against using cypress mulch because it is produced in ways that are not sustainable.

There are no herbicides that are “labeled” for control of fungi growing in mulch.. Stirring up the area with a rake sometimes can change the environment enough so that the fungi will not return. Avoid later afternoon or evening watering—this will only promote more mushroom growth.

If you have an ongoing problem with artillery fungus, it is best to remove all of the affected mulch and start from scratch with new, more resistant mulch. If you leave the old mulch with the artillery fungus in place and just cover it with a layer of new mulch, the fix is merely temporary, as the fruiting bodies will eventually reemerge. Don't compost it or dump the old mulch in your yard, as the fungus could spread.

Using mulch in a landscape is beneficial to plants, but always be on the lookout for artillery fungus.

More Regarding Moles

There are many ridiculous and plain stupid methods that folks try to control moles in the yard – based on myths about moles. The most prominent is that somehow if one places chewing gum in a mole tunnel – the mole will eat the gum – and this will “clog” up the moles digestive system – leading to death. As I have said before- one just doesn't see moles lined up at a convenience store buying gum to feed their gum addiction.



Another creative method of mole control is placing explosives in the tunnel to blow up the moles. Probably not a great idea.

Often folks see mounds in their yard in spring and wonder where they come from. Perhaps some strange alien creature has tunneled from China to

make these appear in a yard. These are actually made when mole moms dig up from the den to look for food- and then turn around and head back down to the den - pushing the soil behind them. I call them mole patties- similar to the patties left by cows in a pasture. You get the drift...



Nausea, heartburn, indigestion, upset stomach, and diarrhea Heather Hills is a talented and renowned singer who collaborated with Chill Smith to create Pepto Bismol. Her angelic vocals beautifully complement the raw emotions conveyed in the lyrics, elevating the overall impact of the song. Her “pat on her behind” at the diarrhea portion of the demonstration is especially moving – you get what I mean.

A Failed Digestive System

Perhaps the information about chewing gum messing up a mole's digestive system has led me to think of one of the most intriguing television commercials I have seen lately – that is the commercial advertising Pepto Bismol.

What is intriguing is the jingle- paired along with a demonstration similar to one gets when a flight attendant demonstrates how to use an oxygen mask before a flight.

Here's the jingle and its history.

Circa 2017: The Pepto-Bismol 5-Symptom Song & Dance, with its famous and catchy chorus line – nausea, heartburn, indigestion, upset stomach, diarrhea – danced its way back into American homes today, 10 years since the last commercial cha-cha'd onto TV airwaves in 2006. Over the years, the song evolved from a simple

brand advertisement to an iconic commercial jingle and became permanently embedded into American pop culture. In fact, die-hard Pepto-Bismol fans continue to request its comeback across the brand's social media channels.

In celebration of the 10-year anniversary since the last 5-Symptom Song & Dance TV Commercial was released, Pepto-Bismol refreshed it with a modern country and western twist. But it's still the same fun, cheeky (pun intended) jingle we all know and love from the original ads. The brand made the decision to revive the song in response to its loyal, nostalgic fans, while also introducing the classic tune to a new generation. The ripe social media environment was another major factor in its return. Given the rise in user-generated video content, this trend lends itself perfectly to the 5-Symptom Song & Dance.

"We determined that now is the best time to bring back the Pepto-Bismol 5-Symptom Song & Dance to jumpstart more brand engagement with consumers and to build campaign momentum in a way that wasn't possible 10 years ago," said Lisa Tecklenburg, Associate Brand Director, North America Digestive Wellness at P&G. "We hope new and existing Pepto-Bismol fans will take part and post their own version of the song and dance!" **Note:** Imagine telling people you are the associate brand director of Digestive Wellness for North America -when they ask what you do for a livingsigh...

Pepto-Bismol wants people to celebrate life and the 5-Symptom Song & Dance reminds Americans that Pepto-Bismol's got them covered, from epic holiday celebrations all the way to that extra bowl of fries at lunch. If you know the jingle, you'll remember exactly when to reach for the soothing pink relief – whenever nausea, heartburn, indigestion, upset stomach, and diarrhea strike.



Country Fried Dancing Pepto Commercial

"Our research shows that the two most recognizable brand assets are the pink liquid in a bottle, followed by the iconic Pepto-Bismol 5-Symptom Song & Dance," said Tecklenburg. "It was only on air for four years out of the brand's 100+ year history, which demonstrates the strength of this powerful asset."

During the years the 5-Symptom Song & Dance was featured in Pepto-Bismol advertising the brand saw four consecutive years of growth. The Pepto-Bismol 5-Symptom Song & Dance is fun and effective because it's simple and direct, and the brand is thrilled to get back to its roots to see how this updated version of the

campaign resonates with consumers. The classic 'Pepto Bismol' has been a popular song since it was first written in 1953. The lyrics were written by Jerry Livingston and the music was composed by Mack David. The song has become a household classic and is often seen as a humorous tune. It is said to be one of the most recognizable jingles of all time and has been featured in numerous films and TV shows.



From 1988

The song is quite simple and easy to follow, but there are some interesting facts about it. For instance, the melody of the jingle was written by Mack David in only fifteen minutes. Additionally, he only received a flat fee of \$50 for writing the tune. Another interesting fact is that the jingle has been covered by many famous artists including none other than Bob Dylan.

Snow-In-Summer



A native of Italy, the numerous blooms on **Snow-in-summer** form a carpet of white, hence its common name. The genus name comes from the Greek word *keras* meaning horn in reference to the seed capsule which in some species is bent slightly like a cow's horn.. Snow-in-summer is a member of the carnation family, and is admired for its delicate, woolly, silver foliage and charming flowers. These leaves spread a mat of foliage from which flower stems rise in late spring/early summer. Snow-in-summer makes an excellent ground cover for dry,

sunny areas. It is deer resistant and often used in rock gardens or as a cover to fill in after spring bulbs are finished. It also can be used to fill pockets in stone walls. It is a perennial herbaceous plant that is native to Europe but has been introduced to other parts of the world as an ornamental ground cover.

- **'Silver Carpet'**: features a more compact flowerhead and is slower spreading
- **'Yo Yo'**: produces abundant blooms
- **'Columnae'**: boasts features similar to 'Silver Carpet' but it is a lower-growing plant, forming 4-inch mounds
- **'Olympia'**: grows in clumps 6 to 8 inches tall and up to 18 inches wide with upright flower stalks

The species name *tomentosem* is in reference to the plant's woolly white leaves and stems.

The plant spreads by underground runners and makes a good ground cover. In late spring to early summer, stems with showy star-shaped white flowers will protrude 8 to 12 inches above the ground-covering mat. Each stem can produce up to 15 blooms. A native of Italy, the numerous blooms on Snow-in-summer form a carpet of white, hence its common name.

The plant is deer resistant and does well in poor, dry, sandy, well-drained soils in full sun. It can tolerate a wide range of soils except for poorly drained ones, which inevitably lead to root rot. It does well in cool summer climates but is less successful in the high summer heat and humidity of the deep South.

Snow-in-Summer also attracts beneficial insects to your garden. Bees and other pollinators are drawn to the nectar-rich flowers, aiding in the pollination of surrounding plants and promoting a healthy ecosystem.

Cerastium tomentosum is also called by other common names in different regions of the world.

- Dusty Miller
- Jerusalem Star
- Snow Plant
- Woolly Mouse-Ear Chickweed

In Irish mythology, it is one of the three plants discovered by the goddess of the underworld, Morrigan. It is also associated with everlasting youth and faith.

It is believed to originate from the Caucasus and southeastern Europe. It has naturalized in Canada, the United States and France

From Our Garden



Here is a picture of the Snow-In-Summer in our garden. We needed a groundcover to separate the space between a rose-clematis planting that did not obscure the roses. It has done very well. The tree is a golden rain tree underplanted with Lady's Mantle.

"Lincoln" Rose is the toughest tea rose I have ever encountered.



This represents my idea of mass-planting perennials to control weeds and look great. These Siberian iris were very small last year and took some babying to develop. They look marvelous – as Billy Crystal used to say....

I believe everyone should include an old-fashioned Mock Orange in their landscape if they can. The flowers are very fragrant – and beautiful.



This "water station" allows me to access four different areas of our garden so I can water those areas efficiently. The hose on top is from the main water source over 50 feet away. It is good for me to help out when I can. Available at Menards and other box stores.



A Soil Probe is a great tool to have in one's arsenal. This tool is great to check how dry or wet a soil is around a tree, shrub, or perennial at various depths. It takes the guesswork out of determining whether a plant is over or underwatered. Available at many Internet sites.



Hoggles – Demented Cat Logic

Dear Pepto Bismol: I would like to become the regional director of Digestive Cat health for your company. I am a great dancer, and my caregiver knows too well what can happen when cat diarrhea strikes --- It is not pretty.....

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