

Cross Pollination



Can You Guess our Mystery Spring Plants?

by Donna Fraser

Mystery Plant 1 ____

- One of the first to bloom in spring
- Conspicuous white wildflowers with 8 – 12 petals
- Large deeply lobed leaves, one per plant
- Leaf is curled around emerging flower and unfurls
- Roots contain red juice which can stain

Mystery Plant 2 ____

- Yellow flower blooms extremely early as soon as snow melts
- Perennial grows in sun, 1-2 inches from the ground
- Member of the buttercup family

Mystery Plant 3 ____

- Spring wildflower with large deeply cut leaves
- Leaves often form an umbrella, carpeting forest floor
- Single large white flower underneath, one per plant
- Flowering plants have 2 large leaves, nonflowering only one.
- Plant root used to treat sores, fight cancer and treat viral infections

Mystery Plant 4 ____

- Early spring plant with clusters of brilliant pink and blue flowers
- Leaves are silver and veined with emerald
- Funnel tube-like flowers may change colour, from pink to blue as they age
- Foliage remains attractive all summer
- Fragrant and deer resistant
- Alternately known as “Lords and Ladies”



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Newsletter of the Halton
Master Gardeners

Website:

<http://haltonmastergardeners.wordpress.com>

Answers on page 2

April TO DO List

- ◇ Start annuals and vegetables
- ◇ Apply dormant oil sprays or lime sulphur
- ◇ Sprinkle blood meal around emerging tulips
- ◇ Rake lawn & clean debris from garden beds
- ◇ Topdress lawn with 1/2 inch fine compost or topsoil
- ◇ Overseed bare spots in lawn
- ◇ Divide or transplant perennials
- ◇ Clean & put up bird houses
- ◇ Put out yarn holders for bird nesting material

Master Gardeners of Halton

Where to find us this month for free gardening advice!



Email Help Line: haltonmastergardeners@gmail.com

Halton Master Gardeners Speakers List

Join us for our monthly speakers held at the Royal Botanical Gardens at 7:15 p.m.

Contact: Patty King at a_p@cogeco.ca Please note a \$5.00 fee covers speakers and refreshments.

May 7, 2014 Topic: Native terrestrial orchids of Ontario

Jenna McGuire, Naturalist at Bruce Peninsula National Park/Fathom Five National Marine park shares information on collection and conservation of wild orchids

June 4, 2014 Business Meeting: No speaker

Tip of the Month

When and how to use Dormant Oil

Horticultural oils, including dormant oil are used to control pest problems on fruit trees. Fruit trees were very pest prone and yet you couldn't just spray with any insecticide, because it's an edible product. You don't want to kill off all the insects, because you needed the good guys for pollination or there would be no crop. So an oil based insecticide was developed for use during the dormant-season, before the flower buds began to open. This 'dormant oil' killed off overwintering insects such as aphids, mites and scale. And the good thing is you can still use them as they are not on the restricted pesticide list.

Dormant oil kills insects by suffocating them. The oil blocks the spiracles through which insects breathe. The oil also disrupts the metabolism of insect eggs and the ability of some insects to feed, causing them to starve to death. Not a pretty picture, but remember that insects, like aphids, carry diseases from plant to plant by feeding.

Answers to Mystery Spring Plants from page 1

- 1) B — Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*)
- 2) D — Winter Aconite/Winter Hellebore (*Eranthis hyemalis*)
- 3) A — Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*)
- 4) C — Excalibur Lungwort (*Pulmonaria 'Excalibur'*)

When to Apply Dormant Oil

If dormant oil is recommended, apply just before either leaves or flowers show signs of swelling or breaking open. You don't want to apply too early though, since the insects need to be active and breathing, in order to be affected. The rule of thumb is to apply it after the last frost, when it is dry for a period of 3 days after application, BEFORE the buds break open.

What Pests are Controlled with Horticultural Oil?

Adelgids, aphids, caterpillar eggs, leafhoppers, mealybug, mites, scale, spider mites, thrips and whiteflies are the most common targets of dormant oil.

And since dormant oil is effective against aphids, which spread viruses by feeding on plants, dormant oil is also something of a virus control.

Caution

Some plants don't tolerate dormant oil well, so be sure to read the label before applying.