

Weekly Wild Wednesday

June 1st, 2022

What a Week of "Chelsea Cheer!"

 **LONGFIELD
GARDENS®**

Menu

The Chelsea Chop: How And Why To Prune Perennials

May 22, 2018 · by Kath LaLiberte · in How-To, Perennials

CHELSEA CHOP

Pruning Perennials to Control Height and Bloom Time



How to Do the Chelsea Chop

The idea is to reduce the plant's height by about 1/3 while it is still young and in active growth. This will give it a shorter, bushier habit, and will delay the bloom time by a week or more. There are several different techniques, described below, depending on the results you want to achieve.

For a relatively small garden, you can do the Chelsea Chop with nothing more than pruning shears or garden scissors. For a bigger garden it's nice to have hedge shears.



Chelsea Flower Show in England! And guess what? A REWILDING Garden wins Best in Show and Gold Medal! Yippee!!!!!! Click the video to have a virtual tour below, or below right for a great written article!

Why do we love Chelsea? One of the many reasons is it gave us the Chelsea Chop! This is a way to keep your perennials at a height you like, and blooming at differing times! We are trying it this year on many plants, this week on [Canada Goldenrod](#), which can get really tall and droopy in our yards and gardens.

← Thank you, Longfield, for this link!!



← Here we are at 36 inches! Getting ready to chop!



← Finished at 24 inches (ish)!

Below, opposite view!



← At the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, same plant, we are trying a Waterfall Effect to see if we can get the Goldenrod to extend the blooming period over several weeks! Wish us luck!!



**REWILDING
GARDEN
WINS BEST IN
SHOW AT
CHELSEA
FLOWER
SHOW**

wildflowers are already producing seed.

The first two photos show woolly locoweed (*Oxytropis lambertii*) at our family prairie. There's just one small patch of this species and I visit it every year to gauge its slow expansion. Some years it doesn't bloom, or produces just a few flowers. This year is the biggest and most florally-abundant the patch has been. It's still only about 3 feet in diameter, but progress is progress. I photographed the flowers with three different lenses but will restrict myself to just two of the images.



Woolly locoweed - Helzer family prairie. Nikon 18-300mm lens @300mm. ISO 500, f/9, 1/800 sec.

Watching this kind of incremental improvement in plant diversity and abundance is one of the most gratifying parts of restoring a site over many years. Other species are spreading across the site too (moving out of small unplowed remnants into the larger prairie, most of which was farmed and then reseeded to grass in 1962). Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium campestre*), prairie violet (*Viola pedatifida*), American vetch (*Vicia americana*) and ground plum (*Astragalus*

← Chris Helzer, The Prairie Ecologist, inspired a Meander Tour to see if we could find some of the same plants that were in his blogpost May 27th, and we were successful! Dawn and I hiked on a private remnant Loess Hills prairie and found so many beautiful blossoms!

Thanks Chris for the inspiration!

Thanks Mark and Jeanette for the opportunity, generosity, and kindness of allowing us to view your beautiful prairie! Wooooooooowwwww!

We found Locoweed in bloom, too! Just like on Chris' family prairie! →

Below, we found Prairie Turnip! The leaf is so elegant, and a close up showed fuzzy details we would never have noticed with the naked eye!



Prairie Dandelion going to seed! →

Far different from our usual yard dandelion, look at those leaves!

← In the woods we found new to me Moonseed! What a pretty leaf, I thought it was a grape vine but it was not!



Within the next couple of weeks, we expect to see our Native Plants arriving! Many of us sheet mulched over the Winter so our areas are all ready to plant, with the grass smothered by mulch and cardboard for this first year! We will plant right through that mulch and cardboard. But if you did not get your areas prepared, you can still use the cardboard and mulch to no-till those grass areas and give your plants a good start!

We only use the sheet mulching the first year or so to reduce competition for those baby plants! Then we want the duff layer to build, for overwintering insects.

not an aggressive spreader. If you got last week's newsletter, you may have noticed it was included on my "10 Natives With Curb Appeal" post.

ON THE BLOG: KILL & SMOTHER GRASS W/ NEWSPAPER & CARDBOARD

HOW TO USE CARDBOARD AND

NEWSPAPER TO SMOTHER GRASS



BEFORE

AFTER

VIDEOS: View Our Videos On Improving Your Gardening

Here you will find videos on sheet mulching, removing grass, composting, testing soil, improving soil, planning a vegetable garden, & much more!

There's a new feature available to support your valued Youtube Content Creators, the **THANKS** button. This allows you to give a one-time tip to show support and thanks. You can find the button at the bottom of every video, the same place you find the like & share buttons.

← The Pollinator gives us tips on how to prevent bird and window collisions, yay!

At the Yanney Gardens, we were thrilled to see the Virginia Creeper looking so awesome on the trellis, and eating up the unwanted shrubs of yew on the sides!

It will need some editing this year, but looks great!



← This Natural Gardening Video was perfect on a stormy afternoon!



Birds Colliding With Windows? Not on Your Watch!

Birds colliding with windows is more common than you'd think. Once we've drawn birds and insects to our increasingly native yards, we can take simple steps to minimize two common potential dangers: window collisions and disorientation caused by nighttime lights.

Read More



Dianne shared her own personal Yucca Glauca with us!

Amazing that the one that produced 3 gorgeous blooming stems last year, this year is producing one, while a smaller one nearby has FOUR stems! Also, an additional photo of one that is producing, I think.

They look awesome this year! Thanks, Dianne!



Wishing you a week filled with "Chelsea Cheer (and Chop)!"



Map underwritten by plantinseeds.org