**ADAM’S GARDENING TIPS FOR OCTOBER**

A Closer Look at Bulb Planting and Growing.

As you will have noticed April and Adam have now turned the full year with their garden notes and they have now decided to look at a topic in depth for each month.

The season for planting bulbs is now upon us, broadly speaking, October to December, to suit the species. Some of the earliest to plant will be daffodil bulbs which do have quite a long flowering period depending upon the variety. Most other bulbs can be planted at the same time as daffodils apart from tulips which are much better planted in November or early December. Always purchase your bulbs from a reputable source to avoid disease and poor quality. Choose firm, plump bulbs with a sound base.

Rather than planting bulbs in rows it is best to create drifts of colour and texture, particularly in borders. Another good tip would be to plant early flowering bulbs in an area which will be filled by annuals later. If planting in more open spaces to create a natural effect throw a handful of bulbs and plant them exactly where they land. Bulb planters can be bought which remove a plug of earth which can be easily replaced over the bulb. This is particularly useful when lawn planting.

Bulbs will produce a flower head in their due season and when that has finished the leaves then go on, through photosynthesis, to put nutrients into the bulb for next year. It means that they require fertilizer and water while the leaves are still green in order to accomplish this. A common fault is for the bulb to be planted too shallow. If bulbs return leaves only year after year this is probably the cause of the problem. They **must** be planted at two to three times their own depth to ensure that they are in moisture.

Blending a colour scheme of miniature daffodils and crocuses in pots will make your patio very pretty in the spring. They should flower easily. Technically crocuses grow from corms not bulbs (corms being solid, and bulbs being layered like an onion) and the earliest crocus to flower is the Saffron Crocus in September/October, when the stamens are harvested; all other crocuses follow on in the next spring. This brings us to our recipe for this month.