



# Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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February 2001



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## It's a "Gnome" Fact ...

Carolyn Utter, *Editor*

We have lots of new little friends living with us at Johnson's Garden Centers. And although we love every one of them just like family, they all need a real home. Won't you consider taking one of these gentle little creatures home with you this spring?

Everyone should have a gnome at home! These adorable companions have quite a history and it's fun to learn about their customs, habits and activities. We'd like to share a few gnome facts with you (for a little tongue-in-cheek fun) to help make their transition to your home easier on them. They are very sensitive, you know.

The most distinguishing characteristic of gnomes is their pointed cap. All male gnomes wear red hats. The cap of a young female gnome is green, with her long braids sticking out both sides of the cap. After she is married, her hair disappears under a scarf and she wears a dark gray cap.

Male gnomes have a full beard which becomes gray before their hair does. He wears a blue smock and brown-green pants. Depending where he lives, his footwear will be either felt boots, shoes of birch bark or wooden clogs. Their feet are slightly turned inward to insure great speed during the night (over grass, through fields). Most of the time, the man will work in the forest.

The female gnome wears a blouse, a long grey or khaki skirt, black-grey knee socks and slippers. She stays home watching over the children and baking.

Gnome children are always born as twins and may be either two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. The gnome father teaches his son (or sons) the things a gnome should know. Girl gnomes are instructed by their mothers and neighborhood women. Gnome children live with their parents until they are 100 years old.

The adult gnome is about 6 inches tall (without cap). He weighs about 11 ounces. The gnome's life-span is about 400 years. When he is about 100 he begins to think of marriage.

Gnomes are twilight and night creatures. They do their work and play their games during short, sultry summer nights and long, cold winter nights.

But however busy a gnome may be, he always maintains close contact with the animals. He speaks their language and feels responsible for them. He supplies small rodents with food during the long winter months, although mother gnomes don't seem to feel the same way about the rodents.

Gnome greetings, farewells and goodnights are expressed by rubbing noses. It has not been determined whether this is meant to allow for a penetrating glance into the inner self or whether it's just a friendly gesture.

Stop by Johnson's soon to find your favorite gnome ... and we'll continue to bring you gnome facts to keep you informed about your new whimsical garden friend.