

Gardening with the Masters

For the Cherokee County Master Gardeners

Volume XVIII, Issue 6 October/November 2011

WHAT'S HAPPENING

OCTOBER

Oct 1 **SEMINAR** Ponds and Water Features - 10am@Rose Creek

Oct 2 **MG Fall Plant Sale** 10-2 at Senior Center

Oct 6 -Demo Garden workday 10-2 -Zach's Plant Sale for Burgess @ Waleska Farmer's Market 4:30 - 8:30

Oct 7 **MG Fall Plant Sale** 10am @ The Bluffs

Oct 15 **SEMINAR** Hands-on Making Cement Planters \$5 fee 10am at Sr. Ctr. (Limit 16)

Oct 18 **Monthly Meeting - 10am**

Oct 20 **Demo Garden workday 10-2**

Oct 21,22 **Master Gardener State Convention in Macon**

NOVEMBER

Nov 3 **Demo Garden workday 10-2**

Nov 5 **SEMINAR** Landscaping with Shrubs - 10am @ Ballground Community Ctr.

Nov 12 **SEMINAR** Selecting and Planting Trees 10am @ Rose Creek

Nov12 **MG HOLIDAY PARTY** Marlow House 7-11

Nov 15 **Monthly Meeting and Annual Election of Officers**

Nov 17 **Demo Garden workday 10-2**



EDITOR'S CORNER

By Marcia Winchester, Cherokee Master Gardener

Every gardener has unknown factors that affect the success or failure of their garden, over many of which a gardener has very little, if any, control. This is true in an ornamental garden or home landscape, a small vegetable/herb garden or a huge farm. My biggest problem the last few years has been with wildlife. I'm not talking a few tomatoes eaten by a critter - I'm talking the 90% of my tomatoes eaten by squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits, turtles, and the plants browsed by deer. My office window faces my veggie garden so I've seen these critters at work. I've watched my neighbor laughing at the half eaten tomatoes strewn across his side yard. Hey, I don't mind sharing, especially with turtles, but 90% is too much of a sacrifice!

After 2 years and many failed ideas to keep critters at bay, including putting pine cones under the plants (it worked on the rabbits but chipmunks have tough little paws - I swear the rabbits paid them to pick my tomatoes and drag them clear of the pinecones!), I finally decided to plant 2 gardens...

With the help of 2 Garden Clubs (the Cherokee County Master Gardeners - funded by a grant from the state Master Gardeners - and Kaiser), the Univeter Road Sr. Center Sr. Services put together a community garden, renting out individual garden plots for \$20 a year. I rented a plot and, between my home garden and the community garden, planted about 40 tomato plants. Now several died, but let me tell you...I got tomatoes! The chipmunks still got a lot but I brought home lots of tomatoes from my garden in Canton ...and found plenty of neighbors who enjoyed my over planting.

Working in the Community garden I noticed many things: People will poison the food they will eat. Friends will stake your fallen tomatoes. Some tomatoes need lots of staking!!! Tomatoes squash pepper plants if given a chance. Most people overplant their gardens, then spend time trying to keep the plants in the boundaries. People will misuse fertilizers and pesticides. There is a difference between the amount of space runner beans and bush beans use. Squash can take a lot of space and squash vine borers can find a new squash plant overnight. Gardeners will share crops. It is easier to give away tomatoes than eggplants.

The most important thing I learned was that, while many people want to have a garden with fresh herbs and veggies, some don't have as much knowledge as they need to be successful. I encourage our Master Gardeners to put together some training classes at the community garden to help educate the gardeners at the community garden and thru-out the county.



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FALL PRUNING: A GOOD IDEA OR NOT?

By Meg Hilf, Cherokee County Master Gardener Intern

Long before gardeners were running around with pruning tools, Mother Nature was tending to her plants with her own form of pruning. In nature, pruning is done on a much grander scale with tools such as wind, ice, fire, disease and snow just to mention a few. There is even research to suggest plants do their own self pruning by a process called programmed senescence. Senescence is thought to be controlled by hormone triggers causing mature leaves and roots to be pruned (die off). The reasons plants prune themselves are usually due to lack of efficiency in production of nutrition or energy is needed elsewhere in the plant serving a greater good for the overall growth. So why did man start to interfere if nature had it under control? The art of pruning has been around for a long, long time. There are many mentions of it in the Bible and even in ancient text dating back to 1500BC. Man realized that pruning could increase the bounty of food, like grapes for wine. As we have evolved, the need for pruning has too; we still prune to increase fruit and flower production but also for aesthetics, protection of our homes, and promoting health of the plant.

As the growing season for most things comes to a close, many folks like to prune, trim and cut to make everything neat and orderly for the winter. This is not typically what nature does. For many plants this could be decreasing growth rates and/or even killing them. There are many reasons that some plants should not be pruned in the early fall and are better left looking a little unkempt. One thing is that they add interest to the winter garden. An example of this would be the ornamental grasses waving in the breezes or layered with the occasional snow or ice. These grasses may also be shelter for wild life or beneficial insects during the cold winter months. Some plants may even stay green if the winter is milder than usual like foam flower. Other plants like coneflowers have seeds supporting the birds with much needed food for the winter. These seeds could also be necessary for self-seeding as in the liatris family. Sometimes the dead leaves act to protect the new growth from early frosts, like hostas. With butterfly weed, the fallen foliage protects the crown from the harsh winter winds and cold. Yet there are other plants like plumbago that do not emerge till very late in the season and its dead stalk may act as a marker to let you know where it is sleeping. (There are many physiological reasons not to prune as well, best covered in another article.)

This does not mean that nothing should be pruned in the fall; there are some plants that do better with a trim. Certainly any plant with disease, pests or damage should be pruned, as should any plant causing potential damage to a home or property. There are plants, like blackberry lily, where the fallen leaves may cause the crown to rot or create problem sites with insects, like borers in bearded iris or leaf miners in columbine. Daylilies, catnip, blanket flower and crocosmia all perform better if trimmed in the fall. So not everything should be ignored until spring.

There are many books written just on pruning, so there is no way I could write a comprehensive article. My intent is to make you think before you cut. There are a lot of good articles and tables in the University of Georgia Extension Publications. I have copied one of the tables taken from *Care of Ornamental Plants in Landscape* by Gary L. Wade and Beverly Sparks for your general information on when to prune some of the different plants found in our area. Here is the link:

[http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6180&pg=np&ct=ornamental
grasses&kt=&kid=&pid=](http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6180&pg=np&ct=ornamental_grasses&kt=&kid=&pid=)

Table 4. Suggested pruning time for common flowering trees, shrubs and vines.

Prune after flowering:

Azalea	Climbing Roses	Flowering Quince	Oakleaf Hydrangea	Shrub Honeysuckle
Beautybush	Crabapple	Forsythia	Pearlbush	Thunberg Spirea
Bigleaf Hydrangea	Deutzia	Japanese Derria	Pyracantha	Weigela
Bradford Pear	Dogwood	Japanese Pieris	Redbud	Winter Daphne
Bridalwreath Spirea	Doublefile Vibernum	Lilac	Saucer Magnolia	Wisteria
Clematis	Flowering Almond, Cherry	Mockorange	Star Magnolia	Witch Hazel

Prune before spring growth begins:

Beautyberry	Floribunda Roses	Japanese Barberry	Rose-of-Sharon (Althea)
Camellia	Fragrant Tea Olive	Japanese Spirea	Sourwood
Chaste Tree (Vitex)	Grandiflora Roses	Mimosa	Anthony Waterer Spirea
Cranberrybush Viburnum	Glossy Abelia	Nandina	Sweetshrub
Crape Myrtle	Goldenrain Tree		



FALL GARDENING MYTH: GOLDENROD VERSUS RAGWEED

By Karen Garland, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Eye-catching golden plumes swaying in the breeze along roadside ditches, old fields, and meadows are a sure sign that fall is approaching. Considered a noxious weed by many, goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*) is a largely unappreciated Georgia native perennial that is often unfairly blamed for stuffy noses, sneezing, and watery eyes from allergy sufferers. However, the true villain is usually ragweed (*Ambrosia spp.*), which blooms at the same time of year and in similar environments.

Goldenrod produces masses of bright yellow flowers on single-stemmed plants with smooth, unlobed leaves and has relatively large, heavy pollen grains that are intended to be carried off by bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. Ragweed, which is also a Georgia native, bears small greenish-yellow flowers that do not contain nectar, but produce copious amounts of pollen that depend primarily on the wind for pollination. Therefore, because goldenrod's showy flowers stand out against ragweed's pale blooms that this myth has been perpetuated and believed by so many.



Goldenrod

Growing one to four feet tall, there are approximately 125 species of goldenrod in the United States. The Southeast is home to at least 50 species. However, botanists cannot agree on how many goldenrod species exist, as the plants will often hybridize, making identification difficult. Bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, flies, and others visit for nectar and pollen. Caterpillars, aphids, and other small insects eat the leaves and stems. Wasps, spiders, praying mantis, lacewings, ambush bugs, assassin bugs, beetles, and birds prey on the insects goldenrod attracts. There is even a goldenrod spider, who specializes in hiding on these plants. There are also a special fly, called a gall fly, which lays eggs in the stems and leaves of goldenrod so their larvae can hatch and begin eating, as does the goldenrod gall moth.



Ragweed

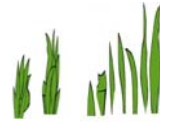
Growing one to five feet tall, there are approximately 17 species of ragweed, also called bitterweed or bloodweed, in the United States. Not only is ragweed the source of much human misery, but it is highly invasive, crowding out its plant neighbors. However, we have only ourselves to blame, as it merely takes freshly turned soil and sun for this plant to get established. Ragweed also has a deep taproot so it is able to survive drought and its seeds have been known to survive 40 years in the soil, as they wait for the right conditions to germinate. Despite its aggravating role as an allergen, ragweed has merit, too. The seeds are an important winter food for many bird species. The leaves are also used as food by the larvae of a number of insects, including butterflies and moths.

Fortunately, many people are now aware of goldenrod's innocence and recognize its beauty and value, thus encouraging plant breeders to develop many varieties that are perfect for perennial and pollinator gardens. Therefore, if it does not grace your yard, next spring set some plants out in a flowerbed, in a natural border, or in an overlooked corner of your yard. When you do, you will be adding a beautiful late season bloomer to your garden that is a great nectar source for bees and butterflies.



LAWN CARE—OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

by Bill Slatton, retired Cherokee County Master Gardener




Warm Season Grasses: (Bermudagrass, Centipede-grass, Zoysiagrass)

- Spot spray with broadleaf post-emergent to kill chickweed, dandelion, wild onion, etc.
- You need not fertilize in October or November
- Normally it is (marginally) possible to put down sod in October; new sod should not be allowed to dry out.
- Let Bermuda and Zoysia grow to about three inches before the first frost. This will help them harden up and provide protection during the winter. No need to cut until next spring. Centipede does best when always cut at 1 ½ inches.
- November is too late to plant new warm season grasses; wait until spring.
- Keep leaves off the grass. Leaf buildup can smother grasses, even the dormant ones.

Cool Season Grasses (Tall Fescue, Kentucky Bluegrass, Creeping Red/Chewing Fescue)

- The first two weeks of October are the best times to plant Fescue seed. This is the time to overseed established lawns. Sod can be put down now through March.
- For seeding a new lawn, use 5-8 lbs. of seed per 1,000 square feet.
- October and April are the best months to use a core aerator on Fescue lawns.
- To overseed an existing Fescue lawn, you should core aerate or verticut.
- If the lawn is 50% or less healthy fescue just touch the top of the soil with a verticutter.
- If the lawn is more than 50% healthy, use an aerator. You need 10 or more aerator holes per sq. foot. Aerate on moist soil to penetrate 2-3 inches.
- For overseeding an established lawn, use 3-5 lb. per 1,000 square feet.
- Drag the lawn with a carpet or section of chain link fence to crumble the aerator cores and cover the seed with soil.
- Cover bare spots with a thin layer of wheat straw.
- Apply ¼ - ½ inch of water each morning that watering restrictions allow. New seedlings and existing Fescue will not need more than ½ inch at a time. After 10 days, apply ½ inch every four days for two weeks, then ¾ inch every six days for two weeks. After this, one inch per week.
- Apply turf fertilizer in late November at the recommended rate.

RAINFALL COMPARISONS



	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	July 11	Aug 11	YTD	July 11	Aug 11	YTD
Actual	3.9	1.6	30.0	4.1	2.6	29.3
Normal	5.0	4.4	38.3	5.5	5.0	35.9
Deficit	-1.1	-2.8	-8.3	-1.4	-2.4	-6.6

DID YOU KNOW...

that birds don't have teeth? They "chew" food in their muscular, stomach-like gizzards. To aid in the grinding, the birds swallow, small hard materials such as sand, ashes, bits of charcoal, ground oyster shells and even perlite from potting mix. The cornmeal in the suet recipe below adds some "grit".



Soft Peanut Butter Mix recipe for birds:

- 1 cup freshly ground suet (ask your butcher for fresh beef "short" suet or Kidney suet).
- 3 cups yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup peanut butter
- ½ cup enriched white or whole wheat flour

Melt suet in a saucepan. Add peanut butter, stirring until melted and well mixed. In a separate bowl, mix cornmeal and flour. After the suet-peanut butter mix has cooled and started to thicken add the dry mix and blend into dough. Serve when needed.

START SAVING SEEDS NOW!

Start saving your extra seeds now. Be sure to label the package with name and color. Drop them off at the Demo Garden box or Extension box. We will have a meeting this winter to separate, package, and write up information labels for the different seeds. Those who attend will get free seeds and lots of information on how to succeed with them. The ones we package will be sold at the spring plant sale.

Direct any questions to Marcia Winchester... (770) 592-4022



POND PONDERINGS

by Nena Jones, former Cherokee County Master Gardener

Fish add color, movement, contribute to your ecosystem and are pets in your pond.

Fish eat mosquito larvae and some eat algae. Because of this, they are a must-have for a body of water. If you feed your fish regularly, they become very sociable and will eat out of your fingers and let you pet them.

You should buy fish from a reputable dealer because unhealthy fish can make your other fish sick. Ideally, you will have a holding tank to keep fish in until you add them to your pond. This will give you time to observe them for disease. When adding fish to the pond, let the container they are in sit in the pond water until the temperature gradually equalizes to decrease shock to them. When buying fish, it is better to start out with smaller, less expensive fish.

Goldfish are good for small or large ponds. They have been bred to provide many shapes and colors. The common goldfish is orange gold and is hardy and inexpensive. Fantails have long fins and tails. Shubunkins have many colors. The varieties available are extensive.

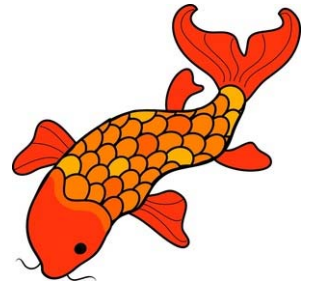
Koi are carp and are distinguished by the whiskers on their upper mouths. They are multi-colored and can grow up to 3 feet. They can be extremely expensive but they have a long life span. Koi are especially friendly.

Fish need water that has enough oxygen. When the weather is hot, aerating the water with a fountain or waterfall increases the oxygen content. Plants can help filter the water, but for maximum number of fish to stay healthy, a biological filter can help keep the ammonia levels in the water down. A general rule is 1 to 2 inches of fish for every square foot of surface area.

Feeding fish can make them more friendly, but only feed them what they eat in 5 minutes or the water will get dirty. Don't feed them when the water cools to less than 50 degrees, because they go into semi hibernation for the winter. Fish actually don't need to be fed in an outside pond. You will find that sometimes you have to protect your plants from koi eating them.

Fish can be kept in the pond overwinter if the pond is 3 feet deep. In our weather zone, the pond will not completely freeze and the fish will stay at the bottom. Make sure you always keep an area unfrozen so they have enough oxygen. Having your pond deep, with some plant cover, helps protect fish from predators.

Fish contribute to your enjoyment of your pond. If they are in a good environment, they will grow and you might even have a new little fish!



Rev. October/November



EUPHORBIA: A PLANT OF MANY DISGUISES

by Susan Wyman, Cherokee County Master Gardener

When I worked at Red Bud Lane Nursery I noticed that if one plant were to win a popularity contest it might be Diamond Frost Euphorbia. It was a favorite of many customers, including me. I use it in hanging baskets to contrast beautifully with just about any other flower. I also love it interspersed throughout my flower beds where its' delicate airy texture is a counterpoint to heavier, broad-leafed or spiky-leafed plants, shrubs or ground covers. And best of all, it is effortless to grow.

Local nurseries carried a couple other Euphorbias that looked so totally different from Diamond Frost that I decided to do a little online research where I found out that it is one of the most diverse genera in the plant kingdom consisting of 2008 species! The captivating thing to me was its many distinct forms. Some are impressive tree-like succulents up to 70 feet high; others are prostrate semi-succulents, or dwarfs; others are upright shrubs, or clump-forming herbaceous perennials, which can be evergreen or deciduous. Diamond Frost on the other hand is a low growing annual in our area, with an attractive mounding form and dainty white flowers. It looks absolutely beautiful alone in a large Grecian urn. One variety is called Chameleon which name might fit the whole family! In my huge AHS Encyclopedia of Garden Plants there are four full pages devoted to Euphorbia alone. One thing to note is that all parts of the plant are poisonous and contact with their milky sap may irritate the skin, though I don't find this a problem with DF because the stems are so tiny. Another name for Euphorbia is Spurge and interestingly, Poinsettia is one member of this clan. This is a fascinating "family tree" worth getting to know!

PRINCIPLES OF PROPAGATION BY GRAFTING

By Rachel Prakash, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Grafting can be one of the most intimidating methods of propagation. It is not a topic that generally comes up in most gardening classes or workshops as it is assumed to be more of a commercial application than one for the home gardener. The truth is that it requires few tools and is not a complicated method, just one that requires some attention to detail and a little time.

The success of a graft is simply the union of two separate plants so that they grow as one plant. Grafting can be useful in an established plant which has active growth which is poor or has disease and insect vulnerability or is producing a less desirable variety of flower or fruit. Grafting new branches, or scions, into the plant can rejuvenate the whole plant and give the desired results.

By grafting separate varieties onto one plant, increased pollination can be achieved in a smaller space. It is also possible to graft multiple species from the same family into one tree. One such example is having a single tree that produces peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots and almonds. For the small garden this can be an effective method of producing variety without taking up the whole yard. It is important to note that each part of the graft will maintain its individual identity. Grafting does not hybridize characteristics, only plant breeding can do that.

When doing a complete graft, that is, taking the roots of one plant and grafting a branch onto it so that it forms the aerial part, the rootstock is important. This is done especially in many varieties of fruits and nuts that have weaker root systems even though their fruit is highly desirable. Specific rootstock can be selected to a difficult soil such as wet heavy clay or a dry sandy area. There are two types of rootstock to be selected from: 1) seedling, which is grown from seed where the parent stock is strong, or 2) clonal, where the rootstock has been grown asexually from one plant.

Rootstock can affect the scion in several ways. Some rootstock can determine the growth and size of the scion grafted onto it. This is evident in dwarf and semi-dwarf trees as well as in the form of some trees, such as a weeping cherry tree. The rootstock can also determine how fruitful a scion is, as well as when it sets fruit and the life of the plant. There is also some influence over winter-hardiness and disease-resistance. Choosing for desired characteristics in the rootstock and its influence on the scion can produce a plant desirable for most any condition.

For a successful graft to occur, there are four steps in the process. First, the fresh-cut scion tissue must be brought into secure contact with the fresh-cut stock tissue. It is important for the two parts to be tied together so that they do not move, otherwise, the following steps will not occur. Next, callus tissue is formed from both the scion and the stock which further binds them together. This can take from one to seven days. Thirdly, cells within the callus differentiate into new cambium cells over a period of 2-3 weeks. Finally new cambium cells make new vascular tissue so the exchange of water and nutrients can occur.

During the grafting process, there are certain things over which the propagator has control. For a higher rate of success, temperatures should be kept between 55-90⁰ F. Any lower, and the stock plant usually creeps into dormancy, any higher and rot occurs before the tissue can heal. Higher humidity is also a key to keeping the pieces from becoming too dry. For drier areas, brushing melted wax over the graft can make sure it doesn't become too dry inside the grafted piece. Cleanliness is perhaps the easiest factor to control. If the grafting knife or scalpel is dirty or the area has not been properly cleaned before starting, bacteria and fungi are quick to spread at the optimum temperatures and humidity.

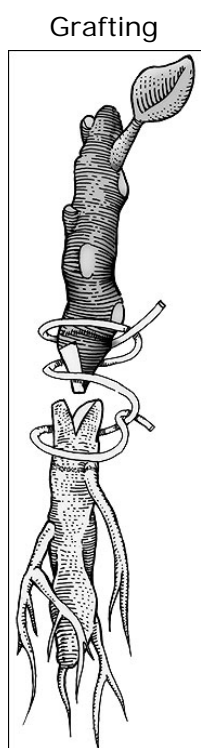
PRINCIPLES OF PROPAGATION BY GRAFTING

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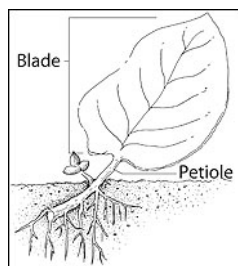
When considering which plants to graft, there are several considerations to take into account to ensure achievement of a good graft. Consider the compatibility of the two plants to be grafted together. Two varieties of apple will work handily, whereas trying to combine a rose and peony will not. There are some plants that will not work when trying to do a graft. Most woody plants have fairly good success rates, whereas more herbaceous plants should not be attempted. Doing grafting at a time of year when there is active growth and the temperatures are not too extreme will also help.

There are certain indicators that a graft has been unsuccessful. Sometimes they will show up years after a graft has been done. Yellowing or die-back in the foliage of the scion is an early indicator of a problem. Sometimes it will just affect the scion, sometimes it will kill the whole tree. There are some instances in which there will be an overgrowth of tissue at, below or above the union. This can produce a somewhat comical appearance, but not a desirable one for most yards. A problem can also be detected if the stock and the scion are out of sync seasonally, such as going into dormancy or leaf-drop at different times.

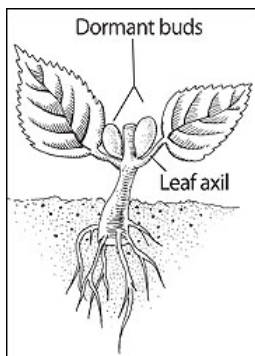
There are many ways of experimenting with grafting and it is a good way to produce variety, desirable traits and hardiness without working on a multi-generational breeding program. In the next newsletter, there will be procedure and tips for doing successful grafting in the home garden. Grafting does not have to be for the professionals; it should have a place in every gardener's tool box.



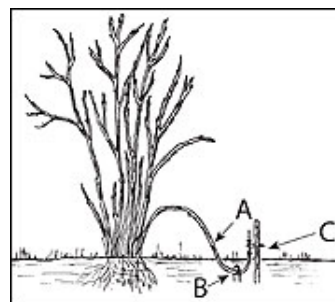
Grafting



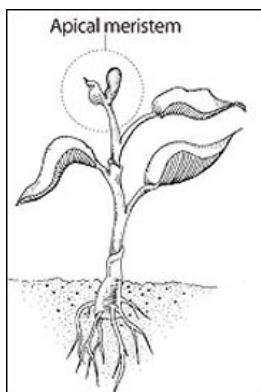
Leaf Cutting



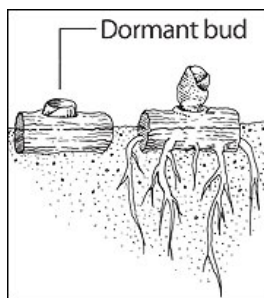
Leaf and Bud



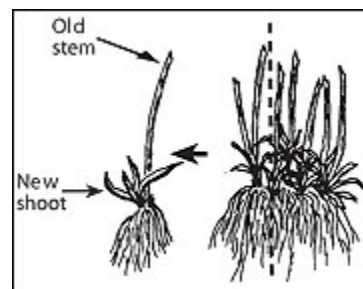
Simple Layering



Stem-tip Cutting



Stem Cutting



Crown Division

Some of the various means of Propagation -
 drawings Courtesy of University of Missouri Extension, Master Gardener Core Manual
<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/MG3>



OCTOBER TIPS



ORNAMENTALS

- October is the best month to plant fall annual beds. It is cooler for the transplants and gives their roots time to become established before winter cold hits. Try mixing dwarf snapdragons with pansies for color and parsley, rosemary, kale, mustard and Swiss chard for background color. Make sure your beds have good drainage. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=7840
- Plant poppy, cornflower and larkspur seed now for early spring annuals.
- If climbing roses are in an exposed location, tie them up firmly with broad strips of rags or padded foam tape so the wind will not whip them against the trellis and bruise the bark.
- Don't prune roses this late as new growth would become subject to winter injury. The rose garden should be raked and cleaned, removing all fallen leaves and mulch to prevent black spot and other diseases next year. Replace mulch after the ground has frozen. Continue spraying for fungus. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=5977
- Clean up around perennial flowers, such as peonies. If left on the ground, leaves and stems can harbor diseases and provide convenient places for pests to spend the winter.
- Cut down stems and foliage of herbaceous perennials when the leaves begin to brown. Leave 3 inches of stem to ID the plant's location.
- As you clean out the flower beds, mark the spots where late emerging perennials will come up next spring to avoid damaging them while working the beds.
- October and November are generally considered the best months to plant trees and shrubs. Garden centers and nurseries usually stock a good selection of woody plants now. Select some accent plants for your landscape that will provide autumn colors. Trees that turn red include *Aronia*, dogwood, red maple, red or scarlet oak and sourwood. Shrubs with spectacular fall foliage include viburnum, fothergilla, hydrangea, blueberries, *Itea* and *Amsonia*.
- Plant trees at least 6 feet away from sidewalks and concrete pools so growing roots do not crack the concrete.
- Small imperfections, such as nicks and loose skin, should not affect the quality of most bulbs. Store bulbs in a cool area (below 65° F) if unable to plant immediately. http://www.caes.uga.edu/applications/publications/files/pdf/B%20918_2.PDF
- To minimize the look of open spaces between new shrubs, plant a low-growing evergreen ground cover.
- Cut back perennial herbs to encourage well-branched growth next year.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Tomatoes need an average daily temperature of 65°F or more for ripening. If daytime temperatures consistently are below this, pick fruits that have begun to change color and bring them inside to ripen. Use recipes that require green

tomatoes or place a ripe apple in a closed container with green tomatoes to encourage the tomatoes to turn red. Ripe apples give off ethylene gas which causes tomatoes to ripen.

- Cure pumpkins, butternut, and Hubbard squash at temperatures between 70 - 80° F for two to three weeks immediately after harvest. After curing, store them in a dry place at 55- 60° F. If stored at 50° F or below, pumpkins and squash are subject to damage by chilling. At temperatures above 60° F, they gradually lose moisture and become stringy.
- A final weeding of your strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries will help keep weed problems down to a minimum. Strawberries covered in the fall with a spun-bonded polyester material and uncovered in the spring just before bloom produced up to 60% more fruit than plants given the conventional straw or hay mulch cover.
- Make a note of any particularly unsatisfactory or productive varieties or crops. Such information can be very useful during garden-planning time in the spring.
- Clean up home orchard and small-fruit plantings. Sanitation is essential for good maintenance. Dried fruits or mummies carry disease organisms through the winter to attack next year's crop.
- If there is a threat of frost at night, harvest your cucumber, eggplant, melon, okra, pepper and summer squash so the fruits are not damaged by the frost.
- Hot peppers store well dry. Pull plants and hang them up, or pick the peppers and thread on a string. Store in a cool, dry place.
- Do not apply quick-acting fertilizers while tilling the soil in the fall; nitrogen will leach away before spring. Materials that release nutrients slowly into the soil, such as rock phosphate or lime, can be worked into the soil in the fall.
- When removing disease-infected plant parts/debris, do not place refuse on the compost pile. The disease pathogens will live in the compost pile and can be transmitted with the application of compost to other garden beds, unless compost temperatures reach above 180° F and decomposition is complete. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=6406

MISCELLANEOUS

- Kudzu, poison ivy and other weedy vines are more susceptible to chemical control this time of year. Be sure to follow the directions, and protect other plants from drift of the spray. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=7647&pg=np&ct=poison_ivy&kt=&kid=&pid=

NOVEMBER TIPS

ORNAMENTALS

- Protect the roots of azaleas and rhododendrons with a heavy mulch of organic materials (i.e. oak leaves, wood chips, or pine needles). http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=7331
- For best growth, plant spring bulbs where they are out of the direct sun during the middle of the day. Bulbs have a chilling requirement that is satisfied by winter soil temperatures, so avoid planting bulbs near heated basements where the soil may not stay adequately cold. Do not plant bulbs before Nov. 1st.
- Watch for standing water in perennial beds after long periods of rain. Water that collects on the surface during winter will freeze and can damage perennials. Dig shallow trenches to help drain excess water away. Make a note to raise that bed in spring or plant with plants that like “wet feet”. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6094&pg=np&ct=peonies&kt=&kid=&pid=
- When placing plants around the home, remember as a general rule, plants with thick leaves can take lower light levels than those with thin leaves.
- If there is any evidence of scale on trees and shrubs, spray with dormant oil in late fall and again in early spring.
- Avoid transplanting shrubs and trees on windy days; the roots can be exposed to too much light or drying winds, putting undue stress on the plant.
- Peonies that don't require a long cold winter perform better in the South. They can be planted now in full sun and fertile, well-drained soil that is rich in organic matter. Dig holes 18” and fill halfway with a mixture of soil, compost, and a handful of 5-10-10 fertilizer. Add a few more inches of soil and set the tubers so the buds are 1-2” below the soil surface. Backfill, firm the soil, and water thoroughly. Peonies do not grow well after being moved and will not bloom for several years.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Remove grass and weeds from trunks of fruit trees and grapes to prevent damage by mice and rodents. Leave a bare 1 ft. wide circle around tree trunks when spreading mulch to keep mice from feeding on the bark. A poultry wire collar or fence, or a commercial tree guard approx. 18 inches high will deter rodents and rabbits.
- Plant lettuce and hardy vegetables, such as beets, cabbage, and spinach, in cold frames for winter or early spring crops.
- If you use aged manure as a soil conditioner, apply it now and till it under; it can be a source of weed seed. Composting before application can reduce the number of viable seeds.

- Rough plow or spade garden plots containing heavy, clay soil. Add organic matter and lime if indicated by a soil test. Leave the soil rough. Winter's thawing and freezing will break up the clods and kill some of the insects and slugs overwintering in the soil. A rough soil surface also catches more moisture and reduces erosion.
- When time or weather conditions prohibit plowing or cover cropping, you may let your garden lie under a mulch of compost, non-diseased plant wastes, or leaves all winter to be plowed/tilled under in the spring. If using heavy organic matter, chop fine enough so it can break down over the winter.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Store pesticides in a frost-free location away from food and out of the reach of children. If a pesticide is in a paper container, put the whole package in a plastic container and seal it. Be sure that all bottles and cans are tightly sealed and well labeled.
- Keep an eye out for spider mites on your houseplants; they thrive in dry air. At the first sign of any insect infestation, isolate your plant. Several thorough washings with plain water may bring them under control. If not, apply an appropriate insecticide and follow the instructions on the label! http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=7639
- During the cooler temperatures and shorter days of winter, the growth of most houseplants slows. Unless plants are grown under an artificial light source that is left on 16 hours per day, new growth will be minimal until spring. Reduce fertilization and water until late April or May when new growth resumes.
- African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. To humidify African violets, surround the pot with moist peat contained in a second pot. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=6342
- If you plan to lay newspapers as mulch in the spring, glue them end to end this winter and store them as rolls. The paper mulch unrolls easily and won't be lifted by wind before anchoring.
- Check attic vents, building joints and loose siding. Seal any openings that would allow squirrels and mice to enter. http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/displayHTML.cfm?pk_id=7304

Happy Thanksgiving!!!



Recipes



Send recipes to
Maura Watson at
mlw229@gmail.com

Cranberry-Apple Crumble (makes 10 servings)

- 4 cups peeled, cored & thinly sliced tart apples (3-4 apples)
- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 stick margarine
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup oats
- ½ cup packed brown sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In large bowl, toss together apples, cranberries & granulated sugar. Let sit until juices begin to form (about 10 mins.) Turn into 9 inch X 9 inch baking dish. Bake for 30 mins.

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Cherokee County Extension Service
100 North St., Suite G21
Canton, GA 30114



Holiday Cherry-Pistachio Biscotti (makes 2 ½ dozen)

- 2 ¼ cups all purpose flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pinch salt
- ½ dried cherries (chopped)
- 1 stick margarine (softened)
- ½ cup pistachios (chopped)
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- 2 oz. milk chocolate (melted)



Heat oven to 375 degrees. Mix flour, baking powder & salt in a bowl. Beat butter, sugar in second bowl till creamy. Beat in eggs (**one at a time**). Add vanilla; stir in flour mixture. Add cherries & nuts. Gather dough in a ball; divide in 2 halves.

Flour hands; roll dough into two 12” logs. Place on large ungreased baking sheet. Flatten logs slightly so each is 2 to 3 inches wide.

Bake at 375 degrees for 23 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to rack & cool.

Lower oven temperature to 325 degrees. Cut loaves into ¾ inch thick slices (about 16 slices per log). Place “cut-side” down on sheet. Bake 10 minutes; turn over and bake an additional 10 minutes.

Cool on rack. Dip one end into melted chocolate. Let dry on waxed paper. **Makes a Great gift!**

**Mailing
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Here**

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Mission Statement of the Georgia Master Gardener Association:
To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening and to voluntarily and enthusiastically share this knowledge with others.