



The Hancock Gardener

The Hancock Gardener is the monthly Gardening Newsletter from the UGA Cooperative Extension – Hancock County April 2010 Edition

WELCOME

April showers are here! It's time to get busy outside! You can begin by starting your turf work right now to avoid problems down the road. You should avoid using herbicides on your lawn during green up as you can damage new growth stolons as they're tender. You can begin your fertilization program in late April or early May. Sharpen your mower blades and check your mowing deck. Nothing is more frustrating than to fire up your mower and leave a trail of ripped up sod behind you.

Greg Glover, Hancock County Coordinator

GENERAL LANDSCAPE

Watch out for tea scale. Tea scale is the most serious insect pest of flowering camellias and they will attack hollies. Tea scales are small insects known for their small bodies (1/10 in.). They attach themselves to leaves and suck plant juices. Male tea scale produces a white wax which covers their bodies and during heavy infestations, the underside of your leaves will appear cottony. Adults are very resistant to insecticides. Prune out heavily infested branches. This can be done by removing 2 to 4 inch long non-flowering branches on major limbs inside the plant since these can harbor scale. Light to moderate infestations can be treated with oil sprays.

LAWN CARE

The single most effective step you can take to improve your lawn is to mow at the proper height for the type of lawn grass you have.

<u>Lawn Care</u>	<u>Mowing</u>
Hybrid Bermuda & Zoysia	0.5 – 1.0 in.
Centipede	1.0 – 1.5
Common Bermuda	1.0 – 2.0
St. Augustine	2.0 – 3.0

SOIL TESTING REMINDER

You should pull a soil test now to determine your lime and fertilizer needs. If your ph is low, you should apply the recommended amount of lime before rototilling your garden area so that the lime can be mixed with the soil as you till. A ph of 6.0 to 6.5 is recommended for most vegetables.

The Hancock Gardener is a gardening publication from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension in Hancock County.

FLOWERS

Fertilize established perennials after the danger of frost has past. You can begin planting most warm season flowers now. You can fertilize bulbs by applying one pound of 10-10-10 per 100 sq. ft. or another equivalent fertilizer. You should keep the soil moist, but not overly wet around your bulbs and cut off the foliage when it turns brown. You can plant zinnias, amaranth, purslane and marigolds in sunny areas and begonias, impatiens, caladiums and hostas in the shady areas of your yard.

VEGETABLE/HERBS

If you haven't already started on this task, plan your vegetable garden now. Remember that leafy vegetables need at least 6 hours of sunlight to develop properly. Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplants and peppers prefer 8 to 10 hours of sunlight. You can maximize the use of sunlight by running your garden rows east-west. You should plant your tallest vegetables on the north and west sides of your garden.

You can make second plantings of quickly maturing crops like corn, snap beans and radishes now. In case you're wondering which USDA Hardiness Zone Hancock County is located in, the answer is zone 8.

If you're using transplants, harden them off by decreasing water, fertilizer and growing temperatures. You should transplant on a shad day in the late afternoon or in the early evening to reduce transplant shock. You should mulch to prevent the emergence of weeds and plan on fertilizing them at least monthly.

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