Learning for Life

The Garden Bench September / October 2008

Gardening and home landscape news & information from the UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research based horticulture information to assist middle Georgia gardeners. Each edition is researched, compiled and printed as a free service.

Fall Events & Gardening in Middle Georgia

Discover Georgia at the 2008 Georgia National Fair in Perry. Fair dates are **October 2 - Oct. 12th**.

Come join us at the Georgia Grown Pavilion. Master Gardeners will present demonstrations on gardening and environmental topics. They will also be available to answer your gardening questions.

The **2009 Middle Georgia Gardener's Calendar will be available** for sale at the pavilion and the Houston Extension Office.

Once temperatures get cooler, it is **a great time to plant or transplant trees and shrubs**. Trees planted in the fall have time to develop a root system before summer.

Protect your landscape by monitoring rainfall in your yard. The rule of thumb is ¾ to 1 inch of water. If there has been no significant rainfall for one week, **water shrubs, trees, and vines. This is especially important for new plantings.**

Take care of your lawn. Continue to mow until the grass goes dormant.

Apply a pre-emergent herbicide labeled for your type of grass. (See page 2 Weeds, Weeds, Weeds article.)

Old fallen leaves contain the disease inoculums for next year's plant infections. Keep leaves and pine straw raked up off the lawn.

Irrigation systems should be turned off and drained before freezing temperatures occur.

A true garden bed.
Designed by Cynthia Moore.
Photo by D. Stephens

Fall Color Tips & Tricks

* Add color through the use of Snapdragons, Dianthus, pansies and violas.
* Add texture to the garden through the use of ornamental cabbage, and herbs such as rosemary and parsley.
* Plant pansies and violas from Oct. 15—Nov. 15th. They need to develop strong root systems before frost, but can be damaged by heat.
* Use water soluble slow release fertilizer to feed pansies and violas in winter.

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The Naming of Trees

Diane Stephens

If, as T.S. Elliot, tells us the naming of cats is a difficult matter, you can imagine the concern gardeners have with the scientific names of trees.

Why should we care about the scientific names of trees? It is the best way to ensure we get the type, size and color we actually want to have in our landscape or gardens. Common names don't always mean the same thing universally. That beautiful tree you saw in a magazine or catalog may not have the same common name when shopping a local or internet garden center or nursery.

Scientific names are not that difficult to understand. Yes, they are Latin based. However, we have adopted many scientific names verbatim. For example, we use Magnolia and Viburnum without thinking of them as genera of scientific names!

The universal application of our modern day binomial naming system dates back to 1753 when Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, brought this into practice. Prior to this time there was no uniform method of naming plants.

The first part of a scientific name is the generic name (genus) and is always capitalized. The second name is the specific (epithet or species). It is not generally capitalized.

Sometimes subcategories of species are used in naming a tree or plant. The name used may indicate a characteristic of the tree. It may be the name of the person who first identified the tree or a location where the tree was first discovered.

Some generic or species are named to honor someone. For example, Linnaeus named the genus Magnolia in honor of Pierre Magnol, a former director of the botanical gardens at Montpellier, France.

Resource: The Illustrated Book of Trees by William Carey Grimm.

Weeds, Weeds, Weeds:

Willie Chance

We have had many calls regarding weeds. Most landscape problems are more easily prevented than cured. This is especially true with weeds. We have **two types of weeds** that grow in four seasons. **Winter weeds** come up in fall and grow through winter into spring. **Summer weeds** germinate in spring and grow through summer into fall. Weeds are a **four-season problem** in middle Georgia!

In the spring, many gardeners will find winter weeds will have taken over their landscape. Winter weeds include annual bluegrass, henbit and others. To solve this March/April problem, you need an **October solution. Apply pre-emergence (preventative) herbicides around October 1 and again 60 days later.** The latter application is to prevent late emerging weeds. These will prevent many weeds from coming up or getting large.

To prevent summer weeds, apply pre-emergence herbicides in early to mid-February and again 60 days later if the weather permits.

Read the herbicide label for restrictions as to when and how the herbicide can be used. Summer weeds can include crabgrass, lespedeza, goose grass and others.

What pre-emergence herbicide should you use? That will depend on the kind of weeds you had last year and the type of lawn grass you have. Atrazine prevents broadleaf weeds better than grassy weeds. It will control annual bluegrass but will not control crabgrass well. It is excellent for lespedeza, annual bluegrass and many broadleaf weeds.

Atrazine can be used on zoysia, centipede and St. Augustine lawns. It can also be used on Bermuda grass if it is fully dormant (brown). Atrazine also kills some weeds after they emerge. This means it can be used as a post-emergence weed killer after weeds emerge. For this reason we can delay application of this herbicide slightly beyond the dates mentioned above. Atrazine can be used only so often. Be careful to follow label recommendations.

Weed and Feed products **should not be applied in the fall** since it is too late to fertilize when herbicides should be put out. I suggest that you put out your fertilizer and weed control separately.

Perennial weeds like dandelion, Florida betony (rattlesnake weed), poison ivy, certain vines etc. are not easily controlled with pre-emergence herbicides. Use post-emergence herbicides repeatedly about every 4 to 5 weeks to kill these. Diligence and persistence are the keys to killing perennial weeds in the landscape.

DANDELION
A perennial weed that will overwinter in the lawn.

URL for the full article:
http://www.ugaextension.org/houston/anr/documents/PreventingtheSpringandSummerWeedFlush_000.pdf

GREEN AND GROWING

OR

RIPE AND ROTTING

Fruit & Vegetable Tips:

Transplant broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, and kale into the garden in September or October.

Cool season vegetables may be planted at this time. These include turnip, spinach, mustard greens, lettuce, radishes, beets, carrots, and Chinese cabbage.

Be sure your vegetables are adequately watered this time of year. Many crops won't mature correctly if stressed due to lack of water.

Mulch to control weeds and slow water loss.

Check grapevines for mummified berries - victims of black rot. Pick them, and dispose of them before they can spread the disease. Do not put them in the compost pile.

Be sure to **keep strawberry** beds **weed free**. Every weed you pull now will help make weeding much easier next spring.

Additional online garden and landscape information can be found at:
http://apps.caes.uga.edu/urbanag/

Fall **weed control around fruit trees is crucial** because weeds act as hosts to over-wintering insects. Be sure to turn the soil as the days grow cooler to destroy soil-burrowing larvae.

Prevent disease by promptly disposing of all fallen fruit, leaves, and dead limbs.

Apply mulch around fruit trees but do not place it right up against the tree trunk as this creates a path for insects and disease.

The University of Georgia