



The Gardening Gazette

The Gardening Gazette is a free quarterly newsletter from the Clayton County Master Gardeners. We provide information on Master Gardener projects and tips to local homeowners.

<http://www.hosting.caes.uga.edu/claytonmastergardeners/>
Fall 2008

SEASONAL CALENDAR

OCTOBER – The month for digging, dividing and transplanting

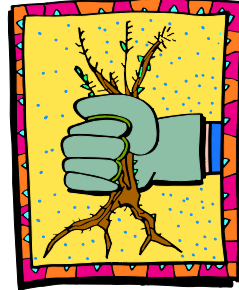
- Dig/divide/transplant perennials.
- Mulch all beds for winter.
- Plant parsley, radishes and onions.
- Plant new shrubs and trees now thru February.
- Bermuda/Zoysia/Centipede: Apply pre-emergent early in the month.
- Clean and prepare vegetable gardens.

NOVEMBER – The month for planting

- Plant shrubs, trees, vines and groundcovers.
- Plant spring bulbs when the soil is cool, around Thanksgiving.
- Now is a good time to take a soil sample to the County Extension Office.
- Apply lime to vegetable beds, if necessary.
- Transplant material as it goes dormant.

DECEMBER – The month for relaxing

- Plant Sweet Peas.
- Last chance to plant bulbs.
- Continue to plant new shrubs and trees.
- Buy new seeds and make plans to install in spring.
- Observe the yard/garden. It is often easier to see areas that need improvement when many plants are dormant.



PESKY WEEDS

Weeds have a seasonal life cycle. Some germinate in the winter and grow into the spring. These are cool season weeds, i.e. henbit and annual bluegrass. Warm season weeds come up in the spring and grow into the summer, i.e. crabgrass and lespedeza.

The key to weed control is prevention and persistence. For best weed control, it is highly recommended that pre-emergent lawn treatment be used in early October and then 8 weeks later to prevent cool season weeds. Follow up with a post-emergent broadleaf weed treatment for weeds that escape the preventative herbicide. Herbicides applied in the fall will not control warm season weeds that come up in the spring. Carefully select the correct herbicide for your lawn type and type of weeds you have. When using herbicides, follow the label directions! Do not use near trees, shrubs or their roots unless that herbicide is labeled for use around that shrub or tree.



LAWNS

Don't put that lawn mower away yet. The most important practice for a healthy lawn is to keep it mowed at the right height. Don't remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade height at mowing. As we move into fall, the growth of your lawn slows down. As long as your lawn grows, it should be mowed. Keep leaves raked off the lawn to prevent damage by matted, rain-soaked leaves.



FALL PLANTING AND CLEAN UP

As temperatures begin to cool and fall/winter begins, start planting or transplanting trees and shrubs. Trees planted in the late fall have time to develop a root system during the winter before they have to face our hot, dry summers.

Plant shrubs at least one half their mature diameter plus one foot away from the house. A plant that will be six feet wide at maturity should be planted four feet away from the house.

When planting, till large beds to plant into. Merely digging holes for each plant will limit their growth. Improve very sandy or clay soils by adding organic matter like ground pine bark or compost. Evenly incorporate these into the entire planting bed. **DO NOT** add organic matter if you are only digging individual planting holes.

Mulch around shrubs and trees to a depth of two to four inches. **DO NOT** pile mulch up against trunks of trees and shrubs. Water deeply and immediately after planting. Keep the soil moist but not overly wet. Newly planted trees will require special watering for a year while shrubs need this for six months. When watering new plants, direct water to the root ball. Sometimes the soil can be moist but the root ball can dry out, killing roots.

FLOWERS



Plant pansies from October 15th to November 15th in order to provide color and interest to the winter garden. Try these selections: snapdragons, dianthus, parsley and ornamental cabbage. Chrysanthemums add color and texture. September and October are good times to move, divide and plant irises, liriopse and daylilies. Renew mulch in flower beds for a fresh look. Mulch should be two to four inches deep.

DIG AND DIVIDE

Dig them up, chop into pieces, and replant. By dividing your perennials, you'll not only get more (free) plants, but — harsh as the process sounds — your perennials

will actually appreciate it. In fact, most perennials grow best when divided every three to five years. You'll know your perennials are ready for dividing when flower size diminishes and the center of the plant becomes brown and dead. If possible, choose a cool, cloudy — or even misty — day for dividing plants. For most plants, it's critical that the roots don't dry out so have a hose or bucket of warm water nearby. After planting, firm the soil around roots to eliminate air pockets and water the plants thoroughly. Once soil has frozen in fall, mulch the plants with organic mulch, such as bark chips or straw, to prevent alternate freeze-thaw cycles that can heave plants out of the ground.



VEGETABLES/HERBS

Plant cool season vegetables. Beets, carrots and turnips should have been seeded by September 15th. Seed mustard and lettuce by October 1st and radish and spinach by October 15th. Transplant cabbage and collards through early October. Wait until November to plant onion sets or plants. Plant elephant garlic in October. Other cool season vegetables are kohlrabi, Swiss chard, leeks, brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage, parsley and cilantro.

Begin preparing next year's summer vegetable garden by cleaning up dead plant material, tilling the soil and taking a soil test. The County Extension Office can help you with the test. To add organic matter, plant a "green manure" crop to till into the soil early next spring. You could seed ryegrass or an annual clover as a green manure crop.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Lunch n' Learn, "What Bees Happening", October 23rd, 12:15 PM – 1:00 PM.
- "Smart Gardening", Master Gardener Symposium @ Eula Ponds Perry Learning Center, 137 Spring Street, Jonesboro, GA 30236; Four great speakers, door prizes and a raffle for a complete rain barrel system; Saturday, October 4th; 9:00 AM-4:00 PM; \$30.00.

Call the Extension Office @770-473-5434 for more Symposium information and to register for the free class on October 23rd. Please join us!

(Tips in the Gardening Gazette are taken from Walter Reeves, Pike's Nurseries, The Garden Bench, Hasting Nature & Garden Center and Gardening with Rebecca Kohl)