



The Gardening Gazette

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

The Clayton County Master Gardeners are a 501(c)(3) organization.

www.claytoncountymastergardeners.org

Winter 2010

SEASONAL CALENDAR

JANUARY – The Month for Planting

- Small, leafless shrubs and trees can be transplanted easily now
- Prune most of your deciduous trees & shrubs
- Add compost/mulch to protect any tender new growth that may appear prematurely
- Turn flower bed soil, if the ground is workable
- Give houseplants a half turn every month so they don't lean too much in one direction
- Prune apple and pear trees and grape vines
- Start some flower and veggie seeds indoors after the first of the year.

FEBRUARY – The Month for Pruning

- Look for blooms on your Lenten Rose
- Transplant deciduous shrubs and trees which are still dormant
- Till your vegetable garden to expose weeds and seeds
- Begin feeding houseplants using a 50% fertilizer mix
- Some perennials and ornamental grasses start to look ragged. Chop them low with sharp clippers
- Reduce the size of your butterfly bush by two-thirds to one half to encourage new growth this summer
- Clean out bird boxes so they will be ready to welcome new residents in a few weeks

MARCH – The Month for Digging

- Prune roses; spray for black spot/feeder
- Plant tender bulbs and tubers (gladiola, lilies, dahlias)
- Prepare vegetable garden soil for planting
- Pinch back houseplants to promote new growth
- Plant bare-root roses now
- Cut most of the green foliage off of tattered liriopie
- Divide overgrown clumps of hosta whose leaves are unfurling aboveground

Money Saving Gardening Tips



You can cut costs and reduce routine maintenance while improving your home landscape and garden. Stroll through your yard/garden and try some of these ideas:

- Reduce the size of your high maintenance lawn by enlarging existing garden beds.
- Turf will not grow under trees. Mulch around trees out to the edge of the canopy. Group trees together into a large mulched bed.
- Plant trees and shrubs in place of annual flowers. Group plants for maximum impact and reduced maintenance.

- Use perennial plants and bulbs for seasonal color. Some varieties naturalize and multiply over time. Daffodils do well in our area.
- Daylilies add color to the landscape. As they grow, they will need to be divided. Use these new plants to expand your garden.
- Coleus cuttings can easily be rooted in a growing medium or water.

Spring arrives on March 20th! The danger of frost is still possible. We generally expect the last frost around the end of the month but it could easily be two weeks or more before the frost danger is gone. Use warm days to get your flower and vegetable gardens ready.



PRUNING



Correct timing is essential for pruning success and February is a great time to PRUNE. Except for spring flowering plants, the best time to prune most shrubs and trees is in late winter when they are in a completely dormant state. Pruning during dormancy greatly reduces the changes of shock to the plant.

DO NOT prune SPRING FLOWERING SHRUBS and TREES at this time of year. Azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods, forsythia and other plants that bloom in the spring set their flower buds in July for the following spring. If you prune now, you will cut off the flower buds and sacrifice the spring blooms.

ROSES should be pruned in late February or early March when the "eyes" or buds on the canes begin to swell and turn red. Climbing roses bloom on older wood, so prune them sparingly.

LAWN CARE GUIDE



Now that your lawn is dormant, you should have given it one final edging. Keep leaves and pine straw off to prevent damage by matting leaves/pine straw.

January 15-February 15: Apply **post-emergent** for winter weeds/grasses to the Warm Season Grasses which include Bermuda, Zoysia and Centepede. Also, apply **pre-emergent** for crabgrass control.

February 15-March 15: Apply **pre-emergent** for crabgrass control to the Cool Season Grasses of Turf-type Fescue and Tall Fescue.

USE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE FOR BACKYARD HABITAT

Simply by placing your old Christmas tree in the yard, you're providing birds and small mammals with good winter shelter. You can always chop your old tree up in the spring. If you're handy with tools, drill out pieces of the trunk and craft rustic bird feeders.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES NOONTIME KNOWLEDGE

- January 28th – "Growing Blueberries"
- February 25th – "Low Maintenance Gardening"
- March 25th – Growing Up – Vines

Classes are held at the Extension Office. Call 770-473-5434 for more information and to register. Classes are free but registration is required. Please join us!

CLAYTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS OF INTEREST

- May 8th - Annual Plant Sale at Jonesboro First United Methodist Church
- June 11th – 12th – Annual Flower Show at the HQs Library on Battlecreek Road
- November TBA – 5th Annual Symposium