Master Gardener Fall Activities

Pumpkinfest and planting spring bulbs, preparing for workshop

Welcome 2015 Fall Interns
MaryKay Ackermann
Vickie Bone
Mary Burrack
Cheryl Caspers
Rusty Caspers
Rosenary Dreismeier
Pam Jacobs
Karl Kuntz (transferred)
Janel Martersen
Kayla Pins
Marty Scharff

“Make & Take”
Fall Arrangement Workshop
Sunday, November 1st
1-3 pm
Youth Development Center – Monticello

Winter Potluck
December 3rd
5:30 pm

Coordinators

Column

Just a friendly reminder to be an active Master Gardener you must record at least 10 educational hours and 20 volunteer hours for 2015. Please let me know if you need assistance recording your hours.

Well the frost has ended the growing season for another year. Soon the snow will be flying and we will be looking at vegetable/flower and fruit plant/seed catalogs.

I hope to see you at the workshop on November 1st and our winter potluck on December 3rd.

Kim
October 2015 Library Talks—Linn County Educational Opportunities

Starting Garden Transplants at Home @ Central City Library  Thursday, October 22 6:30—7:30 pm
Speaker: Zora Ronan Successfully start garden transplants at home with a minimum amount of equipment with this step by step process.

Care and Maintenance of Garden Tools @ Central City Library  Thursday, October 29 6:30—7:30 pm
Speaker: Doug Smith Learn tips for extending the life of your garden tools. Learn how to sharpen, clean and service your favorite garden tools and how to store them so they are in good condition for next spring.

Jones County Educational Opportunities

Thursday, October 22—6:30 pm—Vegetables presented by Patrick O’Malley (YDC—Monticello)
Saturday, October 31st—10 am—Anamosa Community Gardens (behind Starlighters) Huber Street

Putting our Garden to Bed—covering fall gardening tips, harvest/storage and clean-up presented by Kim Miller

Wrap Up for the Winter

Winter can be tough on trees—especially for trees with thin bark. On sunny and warm winter days, trees with thin bark can start to come out from dormancy, and then the cold winter temperatures at night permanently damage the tissue of the tree. Maples often fall victim to this. This can be prevented by wrapping the trunk with a commercial tree wrap or a grocery bag. The wrap reflects the sun and keeps the bark at a more constant temperature.

Pesky critters like deer, rabbits and mice are another major concern during the winter. Animals feed on tender twigs, bark and foliage. To protect your trees from animals, use chicken wire fencing, tree shelters or hardware cloth.

- Wrap from the ground up to the first branch. You can use tree wrap or similar material.
- Remove in spring (by April 1).
- The University of Minnesota Extension recommends for newly planted trees to be wrapped for at least two winters and thin-barked species up to five winters or more.
- For other tips visit http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/trees-shrubs/protecting-from-winter-damage/

The tree, shown here, is wrapped with a paper grocery bag and masking tape. (To use a grocery bag, cut the bag in two or in strips first.)
This is the time of year when our yards and gardens require maintenance work that generates a lot of residue in the way of dead plants, leaves, branches and twigs. There are a couple of options to getting rid of this waste – burn it or compost it. Depending on where you live, burning isn’t the best solution due to community ordinances and the risks associated with burning. Also, the plant material may be too wet or green to effectively burn. The other option is to start a compost pile and let Mother Nature do the work for you. A compost pile, however, is not just an organic trash heap. There are certain things that should be done to make it an effective tool to produce usable compost in a relatively short period of time. Fall is a good time to start the pile because we have a good supply of materials to feed the pile. Below are a few “do’s and “don’t’s” to follow when starting and maintaining a compost pile. For more information on composting, download ISU Extension publication PM 663, Composting Yard Waste.

Do:
Add yard and garden residues and other organic materials to the compost pile, including leaves, grass clippings, straw and hay, sawdust, and finely chopped or shred tree and shrub prunings.
Build the compost piles in layers with 6 to 8" layers of plant material with a one inch layer of soil or previously made compost in between.
Add a combination of green and brown plant material. The green provides the nitrogen and the brown adds the carbon. Both are necessary for the microbes that break down the organic material.
Shred or cut large items before adding them to the compost pile, such as branches and twigs, newspaper, etc. Smaller particles decompose faster.
Add food scraps from produce items, such as apple cores, banana and orange peels, melon rinds, etc. You can also put coffee grounds and eggshells on your compost pile.
Turn the pile over occasionally or turn into another bin to mix; this aerates the material for more rapid decomposition.
Add water occasionally if it doesn’t rain so the pile is damp, but not soggy.
Have patience. It will take two to four months for plant material in a compost pile to decompose if it is turned regularly. Otherwise it may take six months or more.
Use the compost as a soil amendment to your garden to improve the physical, chemical and biological properties of your soil.

Don’t:
DON’T make the compost pile too big or too small. The best enclosed backyard compost pile is between 3’ × 3’ × 3’ to 5’ × 5’ × 5’.
DON’T add meat scraps, bones, grease, whole eggs, or dairy products to the compost pile because they decompose slowly, cause odors, and can attract rodents.
DON’T add pet feces or spent cat litter to the compost pile.
DON’T add diseased plant material or weeds that have gone to seed. Disease organisms and weed seeds will not be destroyed if the temperature in the pile does not reach 150o to 160oF.
DON’T consider compost a substitute for fertilizer in your garden, but rather a supplement. The nutrient release from compost is often too slow to supply all the nutrients necessary for good plant growth.
Show Your Support Through Art!

Help rally support for Trees Forever by telling us why you support our programs. During our Plant It Forward campaign, we want to give people 100 reasons to donate to

Trees Forever Plant It Forward: 100 Gifts, 100 Reasons Endowment Challenge Campaign.

Here’s how you can rally support!

1. Print and cut out the leaf on the right
2. Finish the sentence, "I plant it forward because..."
3. Decorate your leaf

Mail to our office (770 7th Avenue, Marion, IA 52302) OR Tweet a picture @Trees_Forever

Your support is growing into a "tree" in our office. We invite you to swing by and check it out!

Garden Tips

Late Fall November

Lawn
• Fertilize lawns (1 pound N per 100 square ft) to promote root growth and encourage early green-up in the spring

Fruits
• Cover strawberries with several inches of straw mulch to protect flower buds during winter.

Trees and shrubs
• Protect young trees from rabbit damage with chicken wire or hardware cloth fencing.

Flowers
• Remove diseased foliage from iris and peonies to prevent problems next year.
• Protect hybrid-tea roses with several inches of soil and straw over the winter (RG 310).

Houseplants
• Stop fertilizing houseplants until spring.

Vegetables
• Apply and incorporate 2 to 3 inches of manure or compost into the soil (PM 820).
• Leave the “fern-like” foliage of asparagus to stand for the winter
Calendar of Events 2015

See page 2 for some educational opportunities

October 22—Vegetables by Patrick O’Malley—YDC—6:30 pm
October 27—Full moon
October 31—Halloween
November 1st—Daylights Savings Time Ends
November 1st—Fall Arrangement Workshop—YDC 1-3 pm
November 11th—Veteran’s Day
November 12th—Monthly Meeting
November 26th—Thanksgiving
December 3rd—Winter Potluck—YDC—5:30 pm
   Meet interns, seed order and elections of officers for 2016
December 6th—Hanukkah
December 22nd—First Day of Winter
December 25th—Christmas
December 26th—Kwanzaa

**Submit hours for 2015 by December 31st **

December 31st—New Year’s Eve

Gardening Tips from the 2015 Garden Calendar end of October and for the month of November

- Purchase pumpkins from local grower
- Rake and compost leaves
- Remove debris from vegetable garden and compost
- Remove leaves and other debris from gutters
- Water newly planted trees until the ground freezes
- Fertilize the lawn
- Mulch strawberries with straw
- Cover base of hybrid tea roses with soil
- Clean and store garden tools

Gardeners learn by trowel and error