

# Horticulture Tips

## June 2003

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources  
Oklahoma State University

### **GARDEN TIPS FOR JUNE!**

*David Hillock*

#### General Landscape

- Find someone to water plants in the house and garden while on vacation. Harvesting vegetables and mowing the lawn are a must and imply that someone is home.
- Mulch ornamentals, vegetables, and annuals to reduce soil crusting, and to regulate temperatures and moisture during hot summer months. Mulching will reduce about 70 percent of the summer yard maintenance.
- Remain alert for insect damage. Add spider mite to the list. Foliage of most plants becomes pale and speckled; juniper foliage turns a pale yellowish color. Shake a branch over white paper and watch for tiny specks that crawl. Watch for 1st generation fall webworm. (F-7306)

#### Turfgrass

- Fertilize warm season grasses as per May. Don't fertilize fescue and other cool season grasses during drought.
- Dollar spot disease of lawns can first become visible in mid-May. Make certain fertilizer applications have been adequate before applying a fungicide. (F-7658)
- Seeding of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of June to reduce winterkill losses. (F-6419)
- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. (F-6420)
- Watch your lawn for weeds missed by your earlier preemergent herbicide application. Determine if the weed is a grass, broadleaf or nutsedge and choose the correct post emergence application. (F-6421, F-6601)
- For grassy weeds use a herbicide compound like MSMA, DSMA, AMA, or CMA. For broadleaf weeds use a phenoxy type herbicide like 2,4-D and other mixes. Nutsedge can be reduced with Basagran, Glyphosate or Image according to label directions.
- White grubs will soon be emerging as adult June Beetles. Watch for high populations that can indicate potential damage from later life cycle stages as grubs in the summer.

#### Fruit and Nut

- Renovate overgrown strawberry beds after the last harvest. Start by setting your lawnmower on its highest setting and mow off the foliage. Next thin crowns 12-24 inches apart. Apply recommended fertilizer, preemergence herbicide if needed and keep watered.

#### Trees and Shrubs

- Vigorous, unwanted limbs should be removed or shortened on new trees. Watch for forks in the main trunk and remove the least desirable trunk as soon as it is noticed. (F-6415)

- Pine needle disease treatments are needed again in mid-June. (F-7618)
- Remove tree wraps during the summer to avoid potential disease and insect buildup.
- Softwood cuttings from new growth of many shrubs will root if propagated in a moist shady spot.
- Protect trees from lawnmowers and weed eaters by mulching or using protective aerated covers.

### Flowers

- Pinch back leggy annuals to encourage new growth. Fertilize and water appropriately.
- Feed established mums and other perennials.
- When picking fresh roses or removing faded ones, cut back to a leaflet facing the outside of the bush to encourage open growth and air circulation.
- Stake tall perennials before toppling winds arise.

## ***Plant Profile – Agastache***

*David Hillock*

Also known as Double Bubble Mint, Wild Hyssop, Hummingbird's Mint, and Mosquito Plant, *Agastache cana* is an excellent plant for low water areas. Agastache is a very showy perennial for sunny, dry, flower gardens. It grows into a bushy form with branching stems from the ground, with narrow leaves along the stems. The flower is 1-inch long, rose purple, tubular and appear in late summer to early fall along top 12 inches of stem. Flowers have fragrance like Double Bubble Bubblegum. Other species of Agastache are available providing flower colors in blue and orange.

*A. cana* is native to Western Texas and southern New Mexico, growing on dry slopes at high elevations in the mountains. Agastache prefers well-drained soil, overwatering can be a problem in clay soils. Hummingbirds and hawkmoths are attracted to this plant over a long period of time; also considered deer resistant. These features as well as being very showy and providing late-season color makes this plant worth a try especially for gardeners in Western Oklahoma.

## **Poisonous Landscape Plants**

*David Hillock*

Since the beginning of time, people the world over have lived near hundreds of plants that can cause irritation, illness, or death. Over the years, many new plants have been introduced into gardens from their native meadows and mountains. A few of these plants are extremely poisonous; a far greater number of them are moderately poisonous, producing varying degrees of illness or irritation. Some plants cause dermatitis, hay fever, or other illness as a result of the allergic sensitivity of the person rather than the direct toxicity of the plant.

There are a large number of poisonous plants that are useful and will doubtless continue to be used. However, everyone needs to be concerned with the potential danger of these plants. Small

children are curious and tend to put things in their mouths and, consequently, are the most common victims of poisonous garden plants.

Be familiar with any poisonous plants growing in your yard or neighborhood. Teach children not to eat any plant parts – leaves, seeds, or flowers – other than those given them as vegetables. It is your responsibility to protect your children against poisoning by teaching them not to eat or drink medicines, pesticides, cleaning solvents, shoe polish – and plants. In California, less than one-half of 1 percent of all inquiries reaching poison control centers are about plants.

In spite of education and precautions, accidents do happen. Therefore, be prepared in case of emergency. The following steps are recommended as first aid treatment for swallowed poisons.

- Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink before calling the Poison Center or calling a doctor.
- Do not make the victim throw up or give ipecac syrup unless a doctor or the Poison Center tells you to.
- If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call 911.

### **OKLAHOMA POISON CONTROL CENTER**

Children's Hospital of OU Medical Center  
940 N.E. 13 Street, Room 3510  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

***Emergency Phone:*** 1-800-222-1222 (voice and TTY/TDD)

***Administrative Phone:*** (405) 271-5062

***FAX:*** (405) 271-1816

***Website:*** <http://www.Oklahomapoison.org>

Below is a partial list of some common landscape plants that may have some degree of toxicity to humans.

Allamanda  
Anemone (pasque flower)  
Boxwood  
Buckthorn  
Burning bush  
Castor bean  
Daphne  
English ivy  
Elderberries  
Euonymus  
Four o'clock  
Foxglove  
Holly  
Hyacinth

Hydrangea  
Impatiens  
Juniper  
Lantana  
Larkspur, delphinium  
Lily-of-the-valley  
Mountain laurel  
Narcissus, daffodil  
Oaks  
Oleander  
Privet  
Rhododendron/azalea  
Wisteria  
Yew

For additional information on poisonous plants, visit one of the following web sites:

[http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/hortinternet/posionous\\_plants.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/hortinternet/posionous_plants.html)

<http://www.ces.uga.edu/Agriculture/horticulture/H-00-056.htm>

<http://www.aragriculture.org/commhort/ACN/toxic.asp>

## Master Gardener Program

*David Hillock*

**More Counties Join the Oklahoma Master Gardener Program!** This year we had several counties begin training. On the western side of the state **Beckham County** joined with **Roger Mills County** and **Dewey County** started a new group as well. **Jackson, Kiowa, and Greer Counties** joined together to begin another Master Gardener group in southwestern Oklahoma. **Rogers County** started a new group in northeastern Oklahoma while **Ottawa County** joined with **Delaware County** in the far northeast corner. Each group is filled with enthusiastic gardeners ready to learn and provide service to their communities. This now brings our total of counties with active Master Gardeners to **32!** It is so exciting to see so many people willing to learn and then share their knowledge by volunteering in their communities. I look forward to working with each of the groups in the future and seeing wonderful programs develop as a result of their commitment and enthusiasm to their communities.

***We want to know what you are doing!** Once again I would like to solicit for your updates. All counties with MGs are encouraged to share project, activity, and event information each month. Please send information to David Hillock, 360 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078; or email to [hillock@okstate.edu](mailto:hillock@okstate.edu).*

## Mow at the Right Height

*David Hillock*

Too frequently we see lawns that have been mowed as close as possible to give the grass that putting green appearance. Though it is nice and neat looking, it may not be the healthiest thing for your turfgrass. Each species has an optimum cutting height for different seasons and under particular circumstances such as shade.

The warm-season turfgrasses are cut higher in the fall to provide insulation for low temperatures. When they are growing during the summer, they are cut lower to promote lateral spread and a “tight” turf. Cutting turfgrasses below their recommended height will discourage deep rooting. Cutting too low may cause the turf to thin, because it is less able to withstand heavy traffic and environmental stresses such as low soil moisture and extreme temperatures. Cutting bermudagrass above its recommended height may produce a stemmy turf, characterized by leaves being produced near the end of upright stems. This kind of turf is prone to scalping. Turfgrasses grown under shady conditions should always be maintained at a slightly higher cut in order to increase leaf area to compensate for lower light levels.

## Mowing height of commonly grown turfgrasses in Oklahoma.

<i>Turfgrass</i>	<i>April-August</i>	<i>September-March</i>
	<i>- inches -</i>	
<b>WARM-SEASON</b>		
Bermudagrass	0.5-0.75	1.0-1.25
Midiron		
Midfield		
Midlawn		
Tifway		
Tifway II		
Tifgreen		
Sunturf		
Arizona common	1.0-2.5	1.5-3.0
Cheyenne		
Jackpot		
Mirage		
Guymon		
U-3		
Sundevil		
Yuma		
Riviera	0.5-1.5	1.0-2.0
Yukon		
Buffalograss	2.0-3.0	2.0-3.0
St. Augustinegrass	2.5	3.0
Zoysiagrass	0.5-0.75	1.0-1.25
<b>COOL-SEASON</b>	<i>June-mid September</i>	<i>mid September-May</i>
Kentucky bluegrass	2.5-3.0	2.5
Perennial ryegrass	2.5-3.0	2.5
Tall fescue	2.5-3.0	2.5

## Upcoming Horticulture Events

### *Oklahoma Gardening Summer Gardenfest*

June 14, 2003

Oklahoma Botanical Garden & Arboretum, Stillwater

Lauren Springer, an award-winning writer and photographer, will be our guest speaker. Her presentation will be "Creating a Resonant Garden, Marrying the Natural and the Personal Landscape." Lauren's presentation will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the other demonstrations will

follow from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. This will be a day filled with horticultural presentations, demonstrations, and garden tours will provide an opportunity for *Oklahoma Gardening* viewers across the state to come and visit the studio set and garner some expert gardening information. This event is FREE to the public. For more information, call 405-744-5404 or visit our web site [www.oklahomagardening.okstate.edu](http://www.oklahomagardening.okstate.edu).

**Oklahoma Greenhouse Growers' Short Course**

June 24-26, 2003

Oklahoma State University – Oklahoma City

**2003 Oklahoma Master Gardener Continued Training Summer Conference**

June 25, 2003

Tulsa Community College North Campus, Tulsa

The conference is being hosted by the Tulsa County Master Gardeners and Tulsa Community College. Registration packets have been mailed to Master Gardeners. For more information contact David Hillock, Master Gardener Coordinator at 405-744-5158 or [hillock@okstate.edu](mailto:hillock@okstate.edu).

**Multi-State Ornamental Plant Materials Conference**

September 24-25, 2003

Holiday Inn, Stillwater

**Tree Care Conference**

October 14, 2003

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater

**Greenhouse Growers' Fall Seminar**

October 21, 2003

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater

**Oklahoma Nursery and Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention**

January 15-17, 2004

Oklahoma City

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or [steph@okstate.edu](mailto:steph@okstate.edu).