

Horticulture Tips

October 2003

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

GARDEN TIPS FOR OCTOBER!

David Hillock

Turfgrass

- You can continue to replant or establish cool season lawns like fescue.
- The mowing height for fescue should be lowered to approximately 2 1/2 inches for fall and winter cutting.
- Broadleaf weeds like dandelions can be easily controlled during October (F-6421 & F-6601).
- Mow and neatly edge warm season lawns before killing frost.

Ornamentals

- Plant cool season annuals like pansies, ornamental cabbage or kale, snapdragons and dusty miller when temperatures begin to cool.
- Begin planting spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, hyacinths, crocus and daffodils.
- Good companion plants for bulbs are evergreen ground covers such as ajuga, vinca, English ivy, alyssum, potentilla, moneywort, thrift, phlox, oxalis and leadwort.
- Peonies, daylilies and other spring-flowering perennials should be divided or planted now.
- Dig and store tender perennials like cannas, dahlias and caladiums in a cool, dry location.
- Purchase trees from nurseries and garden centers at this time to select the fall color you prefer.
- Many perennials can be planted at this time and the selection is quite nice.
- Plant fall mums and asters and keep them watered during dry conditions. Don't crowd since they take a couple of years to reach maturity.
- Plant container-grown trees and shrubs this month.
- Check and treat houseplants for insect pests before bringing them indoors and repot rootbound plants.

Fruits & Vegetables

- Dig sweet potatoes and harvest pumpkins and winter squash.
- Remove green fruit from tomato plants when frost threatens.
- Harvest Oriental persimmons and paw paws as they begin to change color.
- There is still time to plant radishes and mustard in the fall garden.
- Use a cold frame device to plant spinach, lettuce and various other cool season crops for production most of the winter.

- Plant cool season cover crops like Austrian winter peas, wheat, clover and rye in otherwise fallow garden plots.
- Remove all debris from the garden to prevent overwintering of various garden pests.
- Start new planting bed preparations now with plenty of organic matter.

Water Gardens

- Take tropical water garden plants indoors when water temperatures near 50 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Close the water garden for the winter by placing hardy plants in the deeper areas of the pool. Stop feeding the fish.
- Cover water gardens with bird netting to catch dropping leaves during the winter months.

Oklahoma State Pecan Show 2003

Becky Carroll

The 2003 pecan crop will be brought into the barns starting in a few weeks. Don't forget to enter your best pecans in the pecan show. There will not be any qualifying regional or district pecan shows this year. However, some county/area shows will be held at the discretion of the County Extension Educator. Growers are encouraged to participate in county shows if available. Winning entries from county shows will be sent to the state show. If no county/area show is available, growers may enter pecans directly by sending samples to Becky Carroll, 360 Ag Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by January 12, 2004.

Samples should be entered in a sealed plastic or paper bag. Label the bag on the outside and place a label inside the bag. Information should include exhibitors name and address, county and type of pecan entered. Be sure to follow the guidelines that are listed below before sending entries.

A few helpful hints: Take the time to select pecans that are all the same cultivar or same size and shape natives – don't send mixed pecans. Select uniform, clean, uncracked pecans. Presentation can make the difference between two very similar samples. Make sure to send two pounds of pecans in a labeled and sealed bag.

General Rules and Guidelines

- All entries must be grown in Oklahoma during the current season.
- Each entry shall consist of two pounds of nuts.
- Entries deemed unworthy by the judges will not compete for awards.
- Label each entry as to exhibitor's name, address and cultivar of nuts. If more than one native (seedling) pecan exhibit is made, identify the nuts from separate trees by numbers. Only one exhibit of each cultivar or native tree may be entered by one individual.

- Each entry will compete in one of the following 28 classes:

Apache	Mahan	Squirrels Delight
Barton	Maramec	Stuart
Burkett	Mohawk	Success
Cheyenne	Pawnee	Western
Choctaw	Peruque	Wichita
Comanche	SanSaba Improved	Other Cultivars
Graking	Schley (eastern)	Large-Native (seedling)
Gratex	Shawnee	Small-Native (seedling)
Kanza	Shoshoni	
Kiowa	Sioux	
- Each grower is allowed to participate at one county show of his or her choice.
- Each grower is allowed to enter one entry in each show class with the exception of Class 26 (Other Cultivars), Class 27 (Large-seedling) and Class 28 (Small- seedling)
- Each grower may enter one entry from each native (seedling) tree.
- Entries should be shipped or mailed to arrive at the show at least one day prior to the deadline.
- County pecan shows will not be affected by these rules and procedures.
- Only first and second place winners in each class of each county/area show will be eligible to compete in the State Pecan Show. Following each county show, eligible entries will be placed in cold storage, and judged before the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Annual Meeting. At that time, the winning entries will be displayed with awards and recognitions. All entries will become the property of the OPGA.
- First and second place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.
- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Trophies will be awarded for the largest pecan entry, the entry having the highest kernel percentage, the champion native and the best entry of the show.
- If a qualifying show is not available, growers may submit entries in accordance with these guidelines directly to the State Show. Entries in the state show must be received by January 12, 2004 at the following address:

Oklahoma State University
 Department of Horticulture & LA
 Attn: Becky Carroll
 360 Ag Hall
 Stillwater, OK 74078

Alternatives for Turf in Shady Areas

David Hillock

Keeping turfgrass alive in shade in Oklahoma is quite challenging to say the least. Heavy shade created by dense canopies of trees in small residential areas creates an environment that is far from desirable for turfgrasses, even for the turf-type tall fescues, which are moderately shade tolerant. Under such circumstances, stresses such as poor light quality and quantity, competition

for water and nutrients, poor air movement, and leaf litter usually result in failure to establish a lawn.

Where such conditions exist and all attempts of establishing a turfgrass have failed, consider shade tolerant perennial flowers, groundcovers or mulched beds. Granted you will not be able to romp and play on the perennials and groundcovers, but you won't have to mow them once a week either.

Perennials and groundcovers that tend to compete well with trees for water and nutrients once established.

English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Carpet Bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans*)

Common Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*, *V. major*)

Other plants that may be considered depending on available light and water.

For Deep Shade:

Sweet Violet (*Viola odorata*)

Black Mondo Grass (*Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Arabicus')

Japanese Painted Fern (*Athyrium nipponicum* var. *pictum*)

Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*)

Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*)

Lily-of-the-Valley (*Convallaria majalis*)

Allegheny Spurge (*Pachysandra procumbens*)

Japanese Pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*)

Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*)

Crested Iris (*Iris cristata*)

Wild Gingers (*Asarum* spp.)

For Light Shade:

Moneywort, Creeping Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*)

Bishop's Goutweed (*Aegopodium podagraria* 'Variegatum')

Dwarf Mondo Grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus*)

Carpet Bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans*)

Spotted Deadnettle (*Lamium maculatum*)

Liriope, Lily-turf (*Liriope muscari*, *L. spicata*)

Hostas, Plantain Lily (*Hosta* spp.)

Strawberry Geranium (*Saxifraga stolonifera*)

Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*)

Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*)

Lenten Rose (*Helleborus orientalis*)

Woodland Phlox (*Phlox divaricata*)

Alleghany Spurge (*Pachysandra procumbens*)

Japanese Pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*)

Crested Iris (*Iris cristata*)

Wild Gingers (*Asarum* spp.)

Epimediums (*Epimedium* spp.)

Rubies for the Garden

David Hillock

One of my favorite ornamental grasses for the Oklahoma garden is 'Pink Crystals' Ruby Grass (*Rhynchelytrum nerviglume* 'Pink Crystals'). 'Pink Crystals' Ruby Grass is a small, cool-season grass from South Africa that forms a 20 to 24 inch tall clump. The foliage is a blue-green color in summer turning a purplish-red in the fall. The showy white-pink flowers bloom a foot above the foliage in the spring and summer. When the sunlight hits the blooms just right it looks as if sparkling, pink crystals are attached to the blooms. Like many ornamental grasses, a slight breeze adds to the beauty as the blooms and foliage sway back and forth. Best in full sun with regular water but tolerates considerable dryness. The plant will rot in heavy wet soils so be sure to provide excellent drainage. 'Pink Crystals' Ruby Grass is a tender perennial treated as an annual in Oklahoma so look for them in the garden centers next spring for a wonderful summer display.

Plant Spring-Flowering Bulbs Now!

David Hillock

This is the month to plant spring-flowering bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, etc. Be sure to get to the garden centers early so you can pick out the largest and healthiest of bulbs. They will bloom better for you than the smaller, discount types. Most bulbs should be planted to a depth that is about 2 times the diameter of the bulb. Tulips can be planted a little deeper which seems to protect them from the summer heat. However, tulips typically don't last more than one or two seasons so don't expect them to perennialize like daffodils. Be sure to plant your bulbs in well-drained soil; most will rot in our heavy, wet, clay soils during the winter if proper drainage is not provided.

Don't forget to try some of the other spring-flowering species besides the typical ones, such as *Alstroemeria ligtu* (Peruvian Lily), *Allium* spp. (Giant Allium), *Anemone coronaria* (Poppy Anemone), *Anemone nemorosa* (Wood Anemone), *Belamcanda chinensis* (Blackberry Lily or Leopard Flower), *Convallaria majalis* (Lily-of-the-Valley), *Crocus* spp. (Crocus), *Fritillaria imperialis* (Crown Imperial), *Fritillaria melagris* (Checkered Lily), *Galanthus* spp. (Snowdrop), *Muscari* spp. (Grape Hyacinth), *Scilla campanulata*, also *Hyacinthoides hispanica* (Wood Hyacinth or Squill), and *Scilla* spp. (Squill).

In addition to spring-flowering bulbs, don't forget that pansies can be planted now along with flowering cabbage and kale and other cool season flowers. The pansies will be quite happy through most of the winter and come spring, by the time the bulbs are popping through the ground, they will begin to delight you with a colorful display.

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Tree Care Conference

October 14, 2003

Oklahoma Botanical Garden and Arboretum, Stillwater

Contact Mike Schnelle at mas@okstate.edu

Greenhouse Growers' Fall Seminar

October 21, 2003

Holiday Inn, Stillwater

Contact Carroll Emberton at ohic@ionet.net

<http://www.ogga.org/education.htm>

Hazard Trees and Trees People and the Law

November 5-6, 2003

Reed Conference Center, Midwest City

Contact Mark Bays for more information at 405-521-3864 or mark@oda.state.ok.us

Horticulture Industries Show

January 9-10, 2004

Tulsa Community College Northeast Campus

Oklahoma Nursery and Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention

January 15-17, 2004

Cox Convention Center, Oklahoma City

Contact Carroll Emberton at 405-942-5276 or ohic@ionet.net

<http://www.oknurserymen.org/>

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or steph@okstate.edu.