

# Horticulture Tips

## May 2004

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

### **GARDEN TIPS FOR MAY!**

*David Hillock*

#### Trees and Shrubs

- Prune and feed azaleas immediately after blooming.
- Insect Alert: (F-7306)
  - \* Bagworms on juniper and arborvitae. (Late May)
  - \* Elm leaf beetles and larvae on elms. (Late May)
  - \* Mimosa webworms on mimosa and honeylocust.
  - \* Lace bugs on sycamore, pyracantha and azalea.
- Soak new transplants and newly planted trees unless rainfall is abundant.
- Pine needle disease treatments are needed in mid-May. (F-7618)

#### Turfgrass

- Cool-season lawns can be fertilized again. If you did not fertilize cool-season grasses in March and April, do so now.
- Warm-season lawns may be fertilized again in May. (F-6420)
- Seeding of warm-season grasses such as bermudagrass, buffalograss, zoysiagrass and centipedegrass is best performed in mid-May through the end of June. The soil temperatures are warm enough for germination and adequate growing season is present to promote winter hardiness.
- Dollar spot disease of lawns can first become visible in mid-May. Make certain fertilizer applications have been adequate before ever applying a fungicide. (F-7658)
- Nutsedge plants become visible during this month. Post-emergent treatments are best applied for the first time this month (F-6421). Make certain warm-season grasses have completed green-up.
- The second application of pre-emergent annual grass herbicides can be applied in late-May or early June, depending upon timing of first application (F-6421). Check label for details.
- Vegetative establishment of warm-season grasses can continue. (F-6419)

#### Flowers

- Annual bedding plants can be set out for summer color.
- Plant summer bulbs such as cannas, dahlias, elephant ear, caladiums and gladiolus.
- Shake a leaf over white paper to look for spider mites. If the tiny specks begin to crawl, mites are present.

#### Water Gardens

- Clean out water garden and prepare for season. Divide and repot water garden plants.
- Begin feeding fish when water temperatures are over 50°F.

## Fruits and Vegetables

- Plant watermelon, cantaloupe, cucumber, eggplant, okra, sweet potatoes, etc.
- Fruit spray programs should be faithfully continued during the next several weeks. (F-6235)
- Late May is the best time to control borers in the orchard. Check for label recommendations and controls.

## ***Heuchera*, Coral Bells or Alum Root, Great Perennials for the Garden**

*David Hillock*

*Heuchera* species are North American natives that form clumps of handsome foliage about 12 to 24 inches wide and 12 to 24 inches tall. Wiry stems stick way above the foliage producing sprays of dainty flowers in late spring to early summer. Newer cultivars have focused on the foliage colors, patterns and textures. Some fairly new cultivars include 'Amber Wave' with stunning, ruffled, amber-gold foliage. The light rose-colored flowers are only secondary to the dazzling foliage color that seems to work with just about any other plant in the garden. Another cultivar is 'Pewter Veil' with metallic silver leaves with an underlay of purplish color. 'Amethyst Mist' produces glossy amethyst colored leaves with silver overtones. 'Champagne Bubbles' produces thousands of flowers that change from white to pink making the plant look as if the cork of a champagne bottle has just been popped. Foliage is a glossy green. 'Cherries Jubilee' is a cultivar with warm green-brown foliage and cherry red flowers. 'Sunspot' displays electric yellow foliage with blood-red center patches and pink flowers. The list goes on as the combination of foliage colors, size and textures seems limitless. In the mildest of climates *Heuchera* foliage can be evergreen. They grow best in partial shade in our southern heat and prefer moist, well-drained soils with good organic matter. Removing the faded inflorescences can prolong flowering. *Heuchera* can be used in the front of a border, in woodland settings, as a source of cut flowers, and to attract hummingbirds and bees to the garden.

## **Needle Blight of Pine**

*David Hillock*

Dothistroma Needle Blight can cause the premature loss of needles of several varieties of pine. In Oklahoma, Dothistroma Needle Blight has been recorded from Austrian, Ponderosa and Mugho pines. This disease, if uncontrolled for several years, can severely weaken and eventually kill these trees.

### **Symptoms**

Symptoms develop in the fall of the year in which the infection was initiated. Early symptoms consist of yellow and tan spots, and water-soaked bands on the needles. The bands and spots may turn brown to reddish brown and may be surrounded by yellow bands. The tips of the needles will die, with the base of the needles remaining green. The dead portion of the needle may break off leaving a blunted tip. Extensive damage may occur on the needles within two to three weeks of the initial appearance of symptoms. Infected needles will be shed or cast from the tree prematurely. Under Oklahoma conditions, needle fall is extensive following hot, dry summers.

## **Disease Cycle**

The nonsexual stage of the fungus *Dothistroma pini* is the only stage found in Oklahoma. Conidia (spores) of the fungus are produced in stromata (a mass of fungal mycelium in or on which spores are formed) in the spots and bands on the needles. The stromata begin to form in the fall of the year, but most mature to produce conidia during the following spring. Conidia are spread by rainsplash throughout the growing season (May - October). Infection occurs throughout the growing season, but symptoms do not develop until late summer or early fall. Two seasons are required for completion of the disease cycle.

## **Control**

Copper fungicides (Bordeaux Mixture or Copper Fungicide) effectively control *Dothistroma* Needle Blight. Two applications are recommended, the first in mid-May to protect the previous-season needles and the second in mid-June to July to protect the current-year needles. In addition, homeowners can help control this disease by collecting the infected needles and destroying them.

## **Oklahoma Turfgrass Sod Source Directory**

*David Hillock*

Looking for turfgrass sod this spring/summer? Pick up a copy of the Oklahoma Turfgrass Sod Source Directory, OCES publication CR-6605. This directory was created to assist potential sod buyers in locating sources of turfgrass sod available in Oklahoma, as well as in determining availability of services such as site preparation, sod installation, sprigging, hydroseeding, and hydromulching. To get a copy, contact your local County Cooperative Extension Office or go to [www.osuextra.com](http://www.osuextra.com).

## **MASTER GARDENER CORNER**

*David Hillock*

### **2004 Oklahoma MG Continued Training Summer Conference! June 4, 2004.**

The summer continued training conference is going to be a great event! The agenda for the conference is as follows:

- 8:30 a.m. Preconference Tour of Cann Memorial Gardens
- 10:00 a.m. "50 Ways to Add Wow to Your Garden: Lessons from Garden Design's Golden Trowel Program," Keynote speaker Sarah Kinbar, Associate Editor, Garden Design Magazine.
- 11:00 a.m. "From the Prairies to the Gardens of Versailles," David Keathly, Director of E.W. Marland Estate
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. "Internet Resources for the Master Gardener - okPLANTid and okPLANTtrees," Dr. Lou Anella, Associate Professor, OSU Horticulture and Landscape Architecture Dept.
- 1:30 p.m. "Mesonet – A Weather Toolkit for the Home Gardener," Al Sutherland, Mesonet Assistant Extension Specialist, OSU Biosystems and Ag. Engineering Dept.

- 2:00 p.m. "Landscaping for Wildlife: A Guide to the Southern Plains," Melynda Hickman, Natural Resources Biologist, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
- 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:20 p.m. Specialist Discussion Panel
- 4:30 p.m. Conclude

Registration packets will be mailed to Master Gardeners. Conference registration will be \$30.00. Registration will include a one-year subscription to Garden Design Magazine plus lunch and breaks. Seating will be limited to the first 200 registrants so register early. **Hope to see you all there!** To learn more about the conference contact David Hillock, Master Gardener Coordinator, Oklahoma State University, Dept. of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, 360 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078. E-mail: [hillock@okstate.edu](mailto:hillock@okstate.edu); phone: 405-744-5158.

## **Upcoming Horticulture Events**

### **Turfgrass and Nursery/Landscape Field Day**

May 20, 2004

OSU Botanical Gardens, Stillwater

### **Integrated Pest Management for Landscape Professionals**

May 25, 2004

OSU, Stillwater Campus

### **State Master Gardener Conference**

June 4, 2004

Pioneer Technology Center, Ponca City

### **Onion Production and Marketing Field Day**

A field meeting will be held Thursday, June 10 at Calvin, Oklahoma to view and discuss progress with commercial fresh-market onion production. Topics to be addressed will include varieties, transplant sources, insect and disease management and harvest procedures. It will be a late afternoon/early evening event and exact starting time and details will be provided in the June issue of Hort Tips. For more information contact Jim Shrefler, Area Extension Horticulture Specialist at 580-889-7343 or by email at [jshrefl@okstate.edu](mailto:jshrefl@okstate.edu).

### **OPGA Annual Meeting**

June 11-13, 2004

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### **Oklahoma Gardening Summer Gardenfest**

June 12, 2004

OSU Botanical Gardens, Stillwater

The keynote speaker will be Landscape Architect Tim Thoelecke from Garden Concepts, Inc. in Glenview, Illinois. His presentation will be on "Garden Makeovers." Other activities include a

children's gardening activity booth, a cooking demonstration, gardening for wildlife, growing Oklahoma wildflowers, Oklahoma proven plant selections and turfgrasses for Oklahoma lawns.

### **Greenhouse Production Shortcourse**

June 15-17, 2004

OSU-Oklahoma City Campus

### **Lane Ag Center Field Day**

The Annual Lane Ag Center Field Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 19. The Center is located 10 miles east of Atoka on Highway 3 in southeast Oklahoma. Operated cooperatively by Oklahoma State University and the Agriculture Research Service branch of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Center is the site of extensive research and demonstration activities in areas including vegetables, forages and turfgrass. Vegetable research includes work on watermelon, squash, cucumber, sweet corn, peppers, tomato, dry beans, greens and onions. Turf activities include a St. Augustine cultivar trial and demonstration plots of various turf species. A new area of activity at the Center is the development of vegetable production technology that meets the standards for Certified Organic Production under the recently established National Organic Program.

The field day will feature tours of research and demonstration projects, opportunity to visit with scientists to discuss current projects, live entertainment, complimentary refreshments (including cold watermelon) and antique tractor displays and competitions. For more details call 580-889-7343 or check the Lane Ag Center web site at [www.lane-ag.org](http://www.lane-ag.org).

### **Horticultural Therapy Conference**

Date - TBA

Stillwater

### **Multi-State Plant Materials Conference**

September 22-23, 2004

Holiday Inn, Stillwater

### **Nursery/Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention**

October 8-9, 2004

Cox Convention Center, Oklahoma City

### **Tree Care Issues Conference**

November 3, 2004

OSU Botanical Gardens Educational Building, Stillwater

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