

# Horticulture Tips

## June 2011

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 first generation fall webworm. ([EPP-7306](#))

#### Turfgrass

- Fertilize warm-season grasses at 1 lb. N per 1,000 square feet. Don't fertilize fescue and other cool-season grasses during the summer.
- Dollar spot disease of lawns can first become visible in mid-May. Make certain fertilizer applications have been adequate before applying a fungicide. ([EPP-7658](#))
- Seeding of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of June (through July for improved varieties such as Riviera and Yukon) to reduce winterkill losses. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. ([HLA-6420](#))
- 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 to 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. ([HLA-6415](#))
- Pine needle disease treatments are needed again in mid-June. ([EPP-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.

## **Deadheading!**

*David Hillock*

“Deadheading” is a term often heard amidst the conversations of gardeners across the country. One not familiar with the term may be somewhat startled by such a word. However, it simply means to remove old, faded, spent blooms from your plants by pinching or cutting them off. By deadheading your flowers, new blooms are encouraged and the blooming period of many plants can often be extended.

Remove old blossoms by cutting or pinching back to just above a leaf node on the stem below the flower. If the stem of the plant is somewhat woody and tough, then pruners or a pair of sharp scissors may be used. Soft herbaceous plants can be pinched by hand. When I was working as a gardener in Utah, we used a good old pair of sheep sheers to cut back the hundreds of petunias and other annual flowers we were growing. Petunias respond well to a good haircut about mid-July. Just cut them back about half way, give them a shot of fertilizer and watch them bloom like crazy the rest of the summer. Other plants that respond well to deadheading include ageratum, geranium, marigold and zinnia.

## **Don't Bag It!**

*David Hillock*

Now that the grass is growing like gangbusters, especially if you have been generous with the fertilizer and water, there is plenty of mowing to do. One way to save time and effort is don't catch the clippings. Turfgrass clippings contain valuable nutrients, much of which you just applied, and will help the turf if recycled back into the soil. In fact, it may even reduce the amount of total fertilizer needed for the season. Using a mulching mower or one with a mulching blade works best as they are designed to chop the grass clippings up into small pieces that easily decompose and return to the soil. However, you do not need a mulching mower or blade. A standard mower will work just as well as long as you cut the turf frequently enough. If you choose to catch your grass clippings, at least toss them into the compost pile or use them as mulch in the landscape. Avoid bagging them up and placing them at the curb to be hauled away as this puts an unnecessary strain on the local dumps and could cost you more money in the long run by increased waste handling fees.

## **Responsible Application of Lawn Fertilizer**

*Justin Quetone Moss*

I often hear local television meteorologists recommend that viewers should fertilize their yards before a storm system moves across the state during the growing season. While this strategy seems reasonable, it could result in off-site movement of fertilizers through leaching or runoff. In addition, off-site movement of fertilizers due to heavy rainfall results in wasted time, effort and money. In order to ensure that lawn and landscape fertilizers stay on-site for plant use, follow these helpful tips:

- Always base fertilizer applications on yearly soil test results.
- Based on soil test results, apply lower fertilizer rates more frequently rather than a single, high fertilizer rate, especially on sloped areas.
- Do not fertilize immediately before heavy rain or irrigation.
- Lightly water-in fertilizer applications with 0.25 inches of water.
- Use fertilizers that contain slow-release nitrogen sources.
- Sweep-up fertilizer that is accidentally spread on impervious surfaces such as sidewalks or driveways.
- Maintain a non-fertilized buffer (15-25 ft) with higher cut turf or native grasses (>6 in) around water bodies such as creeks, streams, ponds or lakes.
- Maintain and mow turf areas at the higher end of recommended mowing heights.
- Mulch landscape areas with a 3 inch layer of natural mulch.
- Fill-in bare soil areas with turf seed or sod.

## **Lane Agriculture Center Field Day**

*Jim Shrefler*

Scientists and Staff of the OSU Wes Watkins Research and Extension Center and the USDA's Wes Watkins Agricultural Research Laboratory invite you to join us for the 2011 Public Field Day scheduled for Saturday, June 11, 2011. Please take a moment to mark your calendar and plan to join us to tour research and demonstration projects, participate in a variety of educational events, visit with scientists and last, but not least, enjoy a complimentary meal of delicious southeast Oklahoma cuisine. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will include a blend of activities and events that is sure to include something for everyone. Research and Demonstration projects currently underway include organic vegetable culture, pepper production, onion growing methods, hoop house technology, pineapple production and squash bug management. All who attend are certain to enjoy the local entertainment, antique tractor exhibits, firefighter demonstrations and equipment displays during the course of the day. Another feature will be the display of science projects conducted by local students who received state level awards for their work. Also, back by popular request, will be the OSU Entomology Insect Adventure. The Insect Adventure is a living exhibit of exotic and unique insects (see <http://insectadventure.okstate.edu>) that will be a learning adventure and a treat for everyone who attends. Additional events to round out the day will include exhibits of local agricultural products and services and equipment demonstrations. The event is open to the public and there is no entrance fee. We sincerely hope you can join us! The Lane Agricultural Center is located 10 miles east of Atoka, Oklahoma on Highway 3. For further information call 580-513-5544.

## **OSU Turf Management Field Day**

*Justin Quetone Moss*

A turfgrass field day is going to be held on June 15, 2011 at The Botanic Garden at OSU Educational Center located near the corner of Virginia and Sangre roads in Stillwater, OK. The field day is going to showcase the latest in ongoing research from the Turfgrass Science Team at Oklahoma State University in the area of golf course turfgrass pest management.

Registration for the one-day event is \$40 per person or \$30 for OSU employees. A lunch and handouts will be provided to those who pre-register **ONLY**.

Information on registering for the event can be found by going to <http://orangehub.okstate.edu>, click on Agriculture Conference Services, 2011 Turf Pest Management Field Day.

Four CEU's each in the categories of Ornamental and Turf (3a) and Demonstration and Research (10) will be available.

In-service credit for OSU Cooperative Extension employees will also be available. Information can be found at <http://inservice.dasnr.okstate.edu/>

Details of the field day can be found by visiting our website at: <http://turf.okstate.edu>.

## **Blackberry Production Workshop**

*Eric Stafne*

The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture will host a blackberry production workshop for experienced as well as beginner commercial growers at the Fruit Research Station at Clarksville, during the afternoon of Thursday, June 23, 2011. Whether you are thinking about expanding your existing planting, changing to newer cultivars or starting a new planting, this is a great learning opportunity you cannot afford to miss!

### **Schedule:**

3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Registration
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	M. Elena Garcia and C. Vincent – Cultural Practices
4:30 – 5:30 p.m.	D. T. Johnson and S. Smith – Pest Management
5:30 – 5:45 p.m.	G. Rodriguez – Production Budgets
5:45 – 6:15 p.m.	J. R. Clark – Breeding Program
6:15 – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Tour of U of A Blackberry Breeding Program

Workshop cost is \$25.00 which includes educational material and a light dinner. Seating is limited so please register early. Registration closes on Monday, June 20, 2011. To register, contact Ms. Katie Hanshaw, 479-754-2406, [khanshaw@uark.edu](mailto:khanshaw@uark.edu).

## **Upcoming Horticulture Events**

### **June 18, 2011**

GardenFest: Celebrating the Grand Opening of The Botanic Garden at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK

<http://www.oklahomagardening.okstate.edu/events/gardenfest/index.htm>

### **July 26, 2011**

2011 OSU Organic Workshop and Field Tour

Wes Watkins Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Lane

Call 580-513-5544 for details.

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