

Horticulture Tips

February 2012

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

GARDEN TIPS FOR FEBRUARY!

David Hillock

General

- Base any plant fertilization on a soil test. For directions, contact your county Extension Educator.
- Provide feed and unfrozen water for your feathered friends.
- Clean up birdhouses before spring tenants arrive during the middle of this month.
- Avoid salting sidewalks for damage can occur to plant material. Use alternative commercial products, sand or kitty litter for traction.
- Join *Oklahoma Gardening* on your OETA station for the start of its 38th season beginning in February. *Oklahoma Gardening* airs on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. and Sundays at 3:30 p.m.

Trees & Shrubs

- Fertilize trees, including fruit and nut trees and shrubs, annually. ([HLA-6412](#))
- Most bare-rooted trees and shrubs should be planted in February or March. ([HLA-6414](#))
- Finish pruning shade trees, summer flowering shrubs and hedges. Spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia may be pruned immediately after flowering. **Do not** top trees or prune just for the sake of pruning. ([HLA-6409](#))
- Look for arborvitae aphids on many evergreen shrubs during the warmer days of early spring.
- Gall-producing insects on oaks, pecans, hackberries, etc. need to be sprayed prior to bud break of foliage.
- Dormant oil can still be applied to control mites, galls, overwintering aphids, etc. ([EPP-7306](#))

Fruit & Nuts

- Spray peaches and nectarines with a fungicide for prevention of peach leaf curl before bud swell. ([EPP-7319](#))
- Mid-February is a good time to begin pruning and fertilizing trees and small fruits.
- Collect and store graftwood for grafting pecans later this spring.
- Begin planting blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, grapes, asparagus and other perennial garden crops later this month.
- Choose fruit varieties that have a proven track record for Oklahoma's conditions. Fact Sheet [HLA-6222](#) has a recommended list.

Turf

- A product containing glyphosate plus a broadleaf herbicide can be used on **dormant** bermuda in January or February when temperatures are above 50°F for winter weed control. ([HLA-6421](#))

Vegetables

- Cool-season vegetable transplants can still be started for late spring garden planting.
- By February 15 many cool-season vegetables like cabbage, carrots, lettuce, peas and potatoes can be planted. ([HLA-6004](#))

Flowers

- Force spring flowering branches like forsythia, quince, peach, apple and weigela for early bloom indoors.
- Forced spring bulbs should begin to bloom indoors. Many need 10-12 weeks of cold, dark conditions prior to blooming.
- Feed tulips in early February.
- Wait to prune roses in March.

New USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map

David Hillock

Recently the USDA updated their plant hardiness map. The new map includes weather data collected from 1976 to 2005. It represents the average minimum temperatures in a given area and is broken up into 13 different zones of 10 degree differences. I think the neatest feature of the new map is it was specifically designed for the internet to be interactive. Because this edition was created using GIS (Geographical Information System) it is more detailed and sophisticated and includes a personal ZIP Code zone finder. Just go to the interactive map page and type in your ZIP Code to see the data for your area. There are no printed maps yet, but you can download maps (national, regional or state) in a number of resolutions if you like.

One thing that is quite noticeable with the new map and has everyone talking is the new zone designations. Hardiness zones have generally pushed further north with the warming trends experienced over several years. What does this mean for Oklahomans? In my opinion, not much because a large percentage of the state still falls into zone 7, however the zone extends a little farther north. Yes, more southern plants can be planted in areas where they weren't before, but, I would caution everyone to remember these zones only represent *average* low temperatures, not the coldest temperatures we can experience. We were reminded of this last year with -22°F temperatures here in Stillwater. Many other environmental factors should be considered when choosing plants including wind, soil type, soil moisture, humidity, pollution, snow, and winter sunshine. How a plant is planted and cared for also influences survival.

To see the new map and try out the interactive maps go to
<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/Default.aspx>

Graftwood Sources for 2012

Becky Carroll

The graftwood sources for 2012 are listed at the following website:
<http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/pecan/images/graftwood.pdf>.

2012 OKLAHOMA PROVEN SELECTIONS

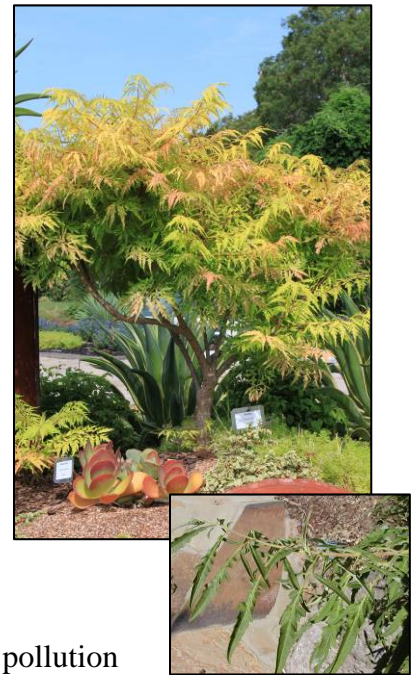
David Hillock

Collector's Choice – Sumac Collection

Rhus typhina 'Bailtiger' Tiger Eyes® and 'Laciniata'

Sumacs are native to Oklahoma and these selections have unique characteristics. Tiger Eyes® is bright lime green to yellow all summer, turning brilliant bronzy red in fall. Tiger Eyes® can grow 6 to 7 feet tall. 'Laciniata' or laceleaf sumac has deeply divided leaflets that create a fine-textured, lacey appearance and turn shades of red, orange and yellow in fall. This cultivar can grow 10 to 15 feet tall. As with any other sumac they spread by suckers forming thickets. Fruit form in pyramidal clusters and are hairy red berry-like drupes that persist into winter providing interest and food for wildlife. Flowers that bloom in spring attract bees and butterflies. These selections of sumac are all great for naturalized areas and erosion control.

- Exposure: Full sun to part shade
- Soil: Prefers moist, well-drained soil; tolerant of high pH soils and pollution
- Hardiness: USDA Zone 3-7



Photos by David Hillock

Tree – Chinkapin Oak

Quercus muehlenbergii

A native oak growing throughout most of Oklahoma and eastward, chinkapin oak is a rather attractive shade tree that grows 40 to 50 feet high and wide in the landscape. The tree has a nice medium texture in summer and a medium-coarse texture in winter. Bark on stems and trunk develops into irregular blocky scales with age and is quite attractive. Leaves are a glossy, dark yellow-green in summer with varying fall color of yellow to orangish brown to brown. Chinkapin oak is adapted to various soils, even alkaline soils, and is quite drought resistant and tolerant of windswept sites.

- Exposure: Full sun to part shade
- Soil: Prefers well-drained soil
- Hardiness: USDA Zone 5-9



Photo by Lou Anella

Shrub – Juniper Collection

Juniperus virginiana ‘Taylor’

Juniperus chinensis ‘Saybrook Gold’

Juniperus horizontalis ‘Monber’ Icee Blue®

This collection represents the very diverse genus *Juniperus*, which has several species and many cultivars within each species.

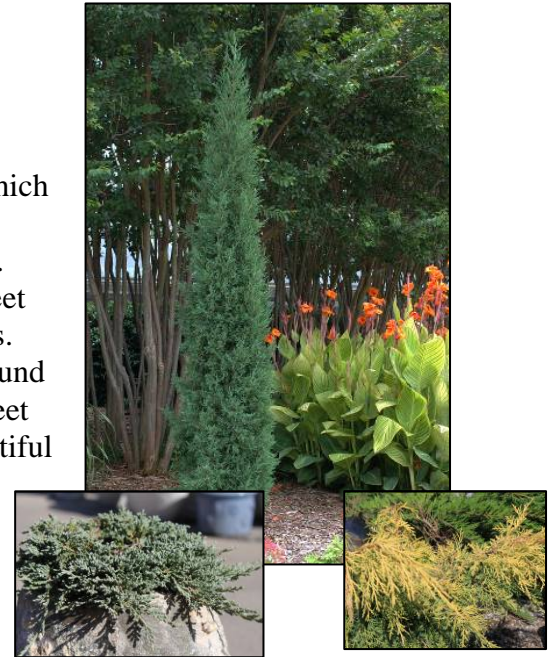
Junipers come in upright, spreading or low groundcover forms.

‘Taylor’ is a narrow, upright cultivar that grows about 4 to 5 feet wide reaching 15 to 20 feet tall and is excellent for tight spaces.

‘Saybrook Gold’ is the brightest gold, holding its color year round with a compact, spreading habit to about 30 inches tall and 6 feet wide. And Icee Blue® is a low, mat forming species with beautiful silver-blue foliage. In general junipers are adapted to a wide range of soils and withstand hot dry conditions once established.

- Exposure: Sun to part shade
- Soil: Moist, well-drained
- Hardiness: USDA Zone 4-9

Photos by David Hillock



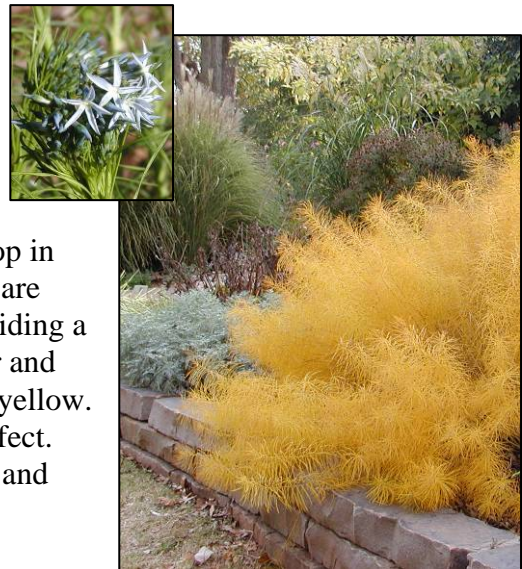
Perennial – Arkansas Bluestar

Amsonia hubrichtii

Arkansas bluestar is native to eastern Oklahoma and Arkansas, but does well throughout the state. It is tolerant of moist soils and is quite drought tolerant once established. Flowers are sky blue, star shaped, and develop in clusters at the end of each branch in early spring. Leaves are needle-like on upright stems that sway in the breeze providing a soft, wispy appearance; foliage is bright green in summer and then in fall, seemingly overnight, it explodes to a golden yellow. *Amsonia* grows to 3 feet high. Plant in masses for best effect. Can be used in mixed borders, meadows, native gardens, and open woods.

- Exposure: Sun, part shade
- Soil: Moist, well-drained
- Hardiness: USDA Zone 4-9

Photos by David Hillock



Annual – Magilla™ Perilla
Perilla frutescens

Known for its brightly colored leaves of dark purple to hot pink and green, Magilla Perilla is a vigorous annual. Magilla Perilla is a coleus look-alike, is in the same family as coleus, and has similar characteristics and growing needs. The species, *Perilla frutescens*, can be weedy, but Magilla is well behaved due to sterile seeds. It grows into a 24" tall mound and is heat tolerant. Magilla Perilla looks great in beds, mixed borders, and is spectacular in a container planting.



Photo by David Hillock

- Exposure: Full sun to part shade
- Soil: Well-drained, moist
- Hardiness: Use as an annual

For more information about Oklahoma Proven go to <http://oklahomaproven.okstate.edu/> or contact David Hillock, 405-744-5158, david.hillock@okstate.edu.

Pecan and Grape Management Courses Offered in 2012

Becky Carroll

The Pecan Management and Grape Management Courses will again be offered in 2012. This is the 15th year for the pecan class and 12th year for the grape class. The pecan class has had 409 students, while the grape class has reached 622 students. Although a few changes have occurred through the past years, the course continues to promise to provide present or potential growers with grape or pecan management requirements throughout the growing season. Participants get to learn in both a classroom and vineyard or orchard setting. Engaging in discussions and meeting other growers allow participants to network and learn from each other as well.

The courses not only can help growers learn but is a great opportunity for County Extension Educators to hone their skills with these crops. Educators can take the course at no cost. The online Pecan Management Course is also available to county educators who would like to learn more about pecans.

For registration information, visit <http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/events/index.htm>.

Camp TURF 3

Shelley Mitchell

Camp TURF 3 (Tomorrow's Undergraduates Realizing the Future) is scheduled for June 17-29, 2012 at OSU-Stillwater. It is a two week, residential camp for any Oklahoma student going into the 9th or 10th grade in the fall of 2012. The camp exposes students to career fields in

horticulture and landscape architecture with hands-on activities alongside professors and professionals in the field. It is free to the students, as the camp is sponsored by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Applications are available now at www.hortla.okstate.edu. Selection of students begins April 1, and there are 25 slots available. Contact Shelley Mitchell at shelley.mitchell@okstate.edu for more details.

Oklahoma School Garden Network

Shelley Mitchell

A Facebook page for “Oklahoma School Garden Network” has been created for anyone in Oklahoma interested in or involved with school gardens. Anyone can post pictures of their school gardens, and links of interest (grant opportunities, activities, lesson plans, workshops, etc.) are periodically posted as well. This is an attempt to create a place for all Oklahoma school garden advocates to exchange ideas and resources to benefit all Oklahoma students.

Upcoming Horticulture Events

IPM Conference

May 16, 2012 - Stillwater, OK

Plant Materials Conference

August 27-28, 2012

Wes Watkins Center– Stillwater, OK

GardenFest

September 29, 2012

The Botanic Gardens at OSU – Stillwater, OK

Tree Care Conference

October 3, 2012

Wes Watkins Center – Stillwater, OK

Global Horticulture Conference

November 7, 2012

Wes Watkins Center – Stillwater, OK

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