

Horticulture Tips

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

GARDEN TIPS FOR NOVEMBER!

David Hillock

Lawn & Turf

- Fertilize cool-season grasses like fescue with 1 pound nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.
- Continue to mow fescue as needed at 2 inches and water during dry conditions.
- Control broadleaf winter weeds like dandelions.
- Keep falling leaves off fescue to avoid damage to the foliage.

Tree & Shrub

- Prune deciduous trees in early part of winter. Prune only for structural and safety purposes.
- Wrap young, thin-barked trees with a commercial protective material to prevent winter sunscald.
- Apply dormant oil for scale infested trees and shrubs before temperatures fall below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Follow label directions.
- Continue to plant balled and burlapped trees.
- Watch for arborvitae aphids, which tolerate cooler temperatures in evergreen shrubs.

Flowers

- Tulips can still be successfully planted through the middle of November.
- Leave foliage on asparagus, mums, and other perennials to help insulate crowns from harsh winter conditions.
- Bulbs like hyacinth, narcissus and tulip can be potted in containers for indoor forcing.

Miscellaneous

- Leftover garden seeds can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer until next planting season. Discard seeds over 3 years old.
- Gather and shred leaves. Add to compost, use as mulch or till into garden plots.
- Clean and store garden and landscape tools. Coat with a light application of oil to prevent rusting. Drain fuel tanks, irrigation lines, and hoses. Bring hoses indoors.

Fruits & Nuts

- Delay pruning fruit trees until next February or March before bud break.
- Harvest pecans and walnuts immediately to eliminate deterioration of the kernel.

Fabulous Fall Plants

David Hillock

As I have walked through the gardens recently I have been renewed after a long hot summer by the fall performers. Even though many plants will soon go dormant, many provide one last show before the winter months. Many perennials that looked a bit tired from the summer heat have suddenly perked up to dazzle us with another show of flowers. Some have simply waited until the shorter days and cooler temperatures to wow us, like ligularia with its bright golden yellow flowers, toad lily with its unique, purple-spotted flowers, and asters of all sorts with their purple to lavender and pink flowers.



Ligularia



Toad Lily

Don't forget those trees and shrubs with colorful berries that appear late fall and early winter. The deciduous hollies are very spectacular, usually covered in bright red berries, though orange and yellow fruiting varieties are available too, usually persisting well into the winter months. Other woody plants with colorful berries include the chokeberries (both red and black fruits, *Aronia arbutifolia* and *A. melanocarpa* respectively), beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) with violet to metallic-purple fruit, heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) with red fruit, and viburnums (*Viburnum* spp.) with blue, black or red fruits.



Callicarpa



Viburnum

In addition to berries, several plants have unique and colorful seed heads. Plants that develop interesting seed heads in the fall can provide color, texture and form. Ornamental grasses are probably most noted for their beautiful plumes that sway back and forth in the Oklahoma breezes. A particular species that I am impressed with is the pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia* spp.). This native grass sports delicate, airy, violet-colored panicles that illuminate when the sun provides just the right backlighting.



Pink Flamingo Muhly Grass

A clematis (*Clematis x* picket fence in the garden with the interesting seed heads that might see in Horton Hears a



'Danielle') is still blooming on a deep blue flowers combined with remind me of something you Who.

Of course there are some wonderful evergreen plants too that continue to provide interest in any garden such as the dramatic form and color of the Sapphire Skies yucca (*Yucca rostrata* 'Sapphire Skies'). Broadleaf evergreens like boxwood, hollies, and Osmanthus have variegated cultivars, all of which perform well in semi-shady areas, providing additional color and interest to otherwise dark and boring corners of the yard.



Sapphire Skies Yucca

And finally, we can't ignore those plants that adorn themselves one last time with spectacular fall colors. Perennials such as amsonia which turn golden yellow and sumacs that turn shades of orange, yellow and red are just a couple of the many plants that brighten up the fall day.



So you see, there is no reason to have a dull garden in the fall and winter months. There are plenty of showy plants out there and now is a good time to evaluate the garden's fall and winter character; and if it seems a bit dull, head to the garden catalogs and web sites to see what you can find for your landscape.

Forcing Bulbs for Winter Bloom

David Hillock

Selecting Bulbs – When selecting bulbs for forcing, buy the largest and best bulbs available. Since only a few bulbs are needed, cost is negligible. The best bulbs are clean looking, firm, show no signs of withering, and are free of insect and disease damage. The larger the bulb, the better the quality of flower obtained.

Beginners should select bulbs such as tulips, hyacinths, daffodils or narcissus, as these are the easiest to force. For further flower variety, experienced gardeners may wish to include crocus, Dutch iris or muscari. West Coast bulb growers precool their bulbs thus they are ready to be potted when received. If bulbs are not precooled put them in the crisper of the refrigerator for

3 to 4 weeks. But be sure the bulbs stay dry. Then place them in a pot of media and put it in a cool dark place until roots and/or shoots appear. If the bulbs initiate roots in the crisper, pot immediately.

Containers - The best containers are shallow, old-fashioned clay pots, called bulb pans. Bulb pans are one-half as deep as wide. Azalea pots, though slightly deeper than bulb pans, are also satisfactory, however, just about any container will do. Pots must have holes for drainage.

If you don't use a new pot, especially clay pots, they should be scrubbed with a weak solution of household bleach (1 part bleach and 9 parts water). Rinse thoroughly several times in clean water. Do not use old clay pots that are corroded with white lime deposits. The lime will injure developing roots. Plastic pots do not develop these mineral deposits, but are harder for the beginner to manage. New clay pots should be soaked at least 12 hours before planting, changing the water periodically.

Soil Mix - An artificial growing medium or soil mix for forcing should be lightweight and sterile. Garden soil may contain diseases and may cause drainage problems. Artificial soil mixes that drain well are available in garden centers and are good for forcing. Avoid soil mixes composed mostly of peat moss.

Planting the Bulbs – Place about one inch of the soil mix in the bottom of the container then place bulbs on top of the mix. Bulbs may almost touch each other since root development will take place in the soil beneath. After arranging the bulbs, finish filling the container with mix, firming it around the bulbs. Leave ¼ inch unfilled at the top of the pot for watering. When possible, cover the tips of the bulbs with approximately ½ inch of soil. An exception is hyacinths, which should be potted with the tips of the bulbs ½ inch above the soil level.

After planting, water the soil thoroughly then allow it to drain completely before storing. Never let soil remain soggy wet. Additional mix may be needed as it settles.

Storing the Bulbs – After potting, keep the bulbs in a cool dark place at 50°F if possible. A cool basement or unheated garage may be suitable. You can cover the pots with paper bags if the area is not dark enough.

You may also set the pots outside on the north side of the house. Set them on a gravel or rock layer to keep them from rooting through the pot. Invert another container over the pots and cover with straw or leaves.

Whatever place you choose for rooting of the bulbs, make sure they are watered regularly.

Potted bulbs will require about 10 weeks ripening or growing period at lower temperatures.

Indoor Culture – At first, keep the pots in a dimly lighted, cool room (50° to 60°F) for a few days. If the room is too bright, cover the pots with a sheet of newspaper so the stems will grow to the proper length. Gradually expose the new growth to full light by placing the pots in a

window with an eastern or southern exposure. If they are brought immediately into a warm room, they will flower prematurely and bloom and stems will be inferior.

As soon as the flower buds show color, keep them away from direct sunlight so the flowers will last longer. In order to obtain a succession of bloom; bring in only a few pots at a time at about two-week intervals.

Flowering bulbs “forced” in this manner seldom make successful growth if transplanted to the perennial border.

Results from the 2011 Pumpkin Variety Trial

Lynn Brandenberger, Extension Vegetable Specialist

Pumpkin is a popular seasonal crop in the U.S. Fall pumpkins are normally planted in June and harvested in late September and early October in Oklahoma. During 2010 a pumpkin variety trial was completed at the Vegetable Research station in Bixby, OK. That trial included 14 different varieties in a conventional open field system with overhead irrigation. The 2011 trial at Perkins was designed to observe not only performance (yield, fruit quality, color) of the same 14 hybrid and open-pollinated varieties, but also to demonstrate the use of plasticulture methods (drip irrigation and white plastic mulch) for growing pumpkins.

We didn't see any differences between varieties for either powdery mildew infection or vine damage (data not shown). Very low levels of powdery mildew were observed, this is likely due to extremely high temperatures during the growing season which stopped powdery mildew from getting started. Varieties were organized into five groups. Each group was comparable in average weight per fruit, and included at least one hybrid variety.

Conclusions: The plasticulture system used for this trial worked very well. The season was extremely hot and dry with more than 60 days of 100°F or higher temps and only 0.6 inches of precipitation during the month of July. Installation of the plastic mulch with the white side up allowed soil temperatures to moderate enough to allow normal germination and growth of the crop. Additional advantages of using the plastic mulch was reduced weed competition in the crop row, particularly from bermudagrass which was prevalent in the field. The drip irrigation system did well providing water for the crop, although we did experience several leaks in the system due to wildlife chewing on the drip tape for their water needs.

In general several of the varieties in the trial had reduced yields when compared to the 2010 trial, but overall we were pleased with the performance of most in 2011. Both ‘Mustang’ and ‘Orange Bulldog’ yielded as well as they did in 2010 which is amazing considering the hot and dry conditions that the trial encountered. Several hybrids have potential for use in Oklahoma including ‘Touch of Autumn’, ‘Orange Smoothie’, ‘Charisma’, and ‘Mustang’. Open pollinated varieties including ‘Winter Luxury’, ‘Howden’, and ‘Orange Bulldog’ may also have a place in farmer’s fields or the home garden.

Table 1. 2011 Pumpkin variety trial, Perkins, OK. Seed sources and yields.

Variety	Type	Source	Average weight per fruit (lbs.)	Number of fruit per acre	Weight of fruit per acre (lbs.)
Group 1					
Baby Pam	O.P.	Seedway	1.4 a ^z	4477 b	6816 b
Touch of Autumn	Hybrid	Seedway	1.6 a	8188 a	14359 a
Group 2					
Orange Smoothie	Hybrid	Twilley	3.4 ab	3912 a	13391 a
Small Sugar	O.P.	Willhite	2.8 b	3428 a	10446 a
Winter Luxury	O.P.	Johnny's	4.4 a	2420 a	12503 a
Group 3					
Charisma	Hybrid	Johnny's	9.3 a	1815 a	17989 a
Orange Bulldog	O.P.	UGA	5.2 b	4033 a	21982 a
Tom Fox	O.P.	Johnny's	7.6 ab	847 b	7905 a
Group 4					
Howden	O.P.	Willhite	10.7 a	1412 a	15811 a
Magician	Hybrid	Seedway	7.3 a	1876 a	15549 a
Trojan	O.P.	Seedway	12.1 a	887 a	12463 a
Wolf	O.P.	Seedway	12.0 a	787 a	9196 a
Group 5					
Gold Rush	O.P.	Seedway	14.2 a	484 b	6937 b
Mustang	Hybrid	Seedway	17.8 a	1573 a	26580 a

^z Numbers in a column (by group) followed by the same letter exhibited no significant differences based on Duncan's Multiple Range Test where P=0.05.

Table 2. 2011 Pumpkin Variety Trial, Perkins, OK. Uniformity and fruit characteristics.

Variety	Uniformity ratings ^x			Circumference ^y		Fruit Shape ^y	
	Size	Shape	Color	Ped. (in.)	Fruit (in.)	Height (in.)	Width (in.)
Group 1							
Baby Pam	2.9 a ^z	4.0 a	3.4 b	2.5 a	15.4 a	3.5 b	4.4 a
Touch of Autumn	3.6 a	4.4 a	4.2 a	3.3 a	15.5 a	4.1 a	4.4 a
Group 2							
Orange Smoothie	3.3 a	4.3 a	4.5 a	3.1 a	19.4 ab	6.1 a	5.5 a
Small Sugar	3.6 a	3.4 b	3.5 b	2.8 a	18.3 b	5.2 a	5.2 a
Winter Luxury	3.9 a	4.1 a	3.5 b	2.8 a	22.3 a	5.8 a	6.4 a
Group 3							
Charisma	3.9 a	4.1 a	4.4 a	3.4 a	29.8 a	8.0 a	8.5 a
Orange Bulldog	1.9 b	1.6 b	1.4 c	1.9 b	25.3 a	6.1 b	7.3 a
Tom Fox	2.3 b	3.5 a	3.4 b	4.1 a	27.5 a	7.6 a	7.7 a
Group 4							
Howden	3.2 a	3.3 a	3.8 a	4.1 b	27.8 a	9.5 a	7.7 a
Magician	3.3 a	3.1 a	3.4 a	4.9 b	26.3 a	8.5 a	7.5 a
Trojan	2.1 a	2.0 b	2.5 a	4.7 b	30.5 a	9.9 a	8.7 a
Wolf	2.8 a	3.5 a	2.8 a	7.9 a	31.9 a	9.3 a	8.7 a
Group 5							
Gold Rush	3.4 a	3.1 a	3.4 a	6.1 a	34.1 a	9.5 a	9.4 a
Mustang	3.2 a	3.4 a	3.7 a	4.6 b	34.0 a	11.1 a	9.6 a

^x Uniformity ratings= 1-5 scale, 1=least, 5=most uniform in size, shape, and color within a variety

^y Circumference and fruit shape measurements taken on three fruit per plot that were closest to the average weight per fruit for that plot. Ped.= peduncle

^z Numbers in a column (by group) followed by the same letter exhibited no significant differences based on Duncan's Multiple Range Test where P=0.05.

Pumpkin pictures from 2010 trial at Bixby, OK



Orange Smoothie Twilley

Small Sugar Willhite



Pumpkin pictures from 2010 trial at Bixby, OK



Pumpkin pictures from 2010 trial at Bixby, OK



Oklahoma State Pecan Show

Becky Carroll

It's that time of year again! Remember to save back a couple of pounds of your best pecans to enter in the state show this year. 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. 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 Oklahoma State University, Department of Horticulture, Attn: Becky Carroll, 358 Ag Hall, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078. Samples should arrive by January 23, 2013.

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 2 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:

1. Apache	12. Maramec	23. Success
2. Barton	13. Mohawk	24. Western
3. Burkett	14. Pawnee	25. Wichita
4. Cheyenne	15. Peruque	26. Other Cultivars
5. Choctaw	16. SanSaba Improved	27. Large-Native (seedling) 60 nuts/lb or larger
6. Comanche	17. Schley (eastern)	28. Small-Native (seedling) more than 60 nuts/lb
7. Graking	18. Shawnee	
8. Gratex	19. Shoshoni	
9. Kanza	20. Sioux	
10. Kiowa	21. Squirrels Delight	
11. Mahan	22. Stuart	
- 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.
- Samples 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, second, and third place winners in each class at the State Pecan Show will receive ribbons.
- State Pecan Show Special Awards – Plaques 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 23, 2013 at the following address:

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

Master Gardener Corner

David Hillock

Horticulture Industries Show (HIS) - January 11-12, 2013. The HIS program is complete and preregistration forms will be mailed late November – early December or can be found on-line at <http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/his/>. This year HIS will be held at the Holiday Inn City Center, Fort Smith, AR. All Master Gardeners are invited to attend. If you are a returning Master Gardener, you can receive Continuing Education hours that will count towards the minimum 20 hours you need to keep active member status. Remember, however, that only the time actually spent in class counts as training received. Travel and in-between times do not count.

Though we offer a Master Gardener/Public Garden session, you may also choose from any other session offered during the conference. There are five commodity groups represented during HIS, all conducting seminars, workshops, and business meetings. You may choose from any of the following groups – Vegetable, Fruit, Sustainable Ag & Farmers Market, Master Gardener/ Public Garden, and Christmas Tree.

The conference theme is "*Horticulture Production & Food Safety: Making Good During Tough Times*" with Keynote Speakers Gretchen Wall, Produce Safety Alliance Program Coordinator; and Marty Matlock, Office for Sustainability at the University of Arkansas.

Topics for the Master Gardener/Public Garden session include: *Basics of Residential Drip Irrigation*, TBA; *Demonstration Garden & Learning Opportunities at Farmer's Market*, Debra Bolding; *Volunteer Opportunities with Keep Arkansas Beautiful*, Elizabeth Philpott; *Value of Arboretums in Public Spaces*, Gerald Klingaman, Director of Operations, Botanical Garden of the Ozarks; *Key Steps to Identifying Your Plant Problems*, John Hopkins, Extension Urban Entomologist, UA; *Butterfly Gardens & Arboretums*, Charlotte Abbott & Barbie Luther, MG and Project Chair for the South Arkansas Arboretum Butterfly Garden; *Tree Health in Response to 3 Years Drought/Heat*, Berni Kurz, Washington County Extension Educator, UA; *Disease Free Rose Care*, Sherrie Smith, Plant Pathologist, UA; *Managing Drought Injury in Our Landscape*, David Hillock, Asst. Extension Specialist, Consumer Horticulture, OSU; *Garvan Gardens*, Bob Byers, Assoc. Executive Director, Garvan Woodland Gardens; *Picking Fruit at the Right Stage of Ripening*, Dan Chapman, Director of UA, Fruit Research Station, Clarksville, AR; *Color Coordination: All about Butterfly Mimicry and the Flowers they Love*, Lori Spencer, Author and Freelancing Entomologist; *Youth Gardening*, Julie Treat, Horticulture Program Technician, UA; *The Value of Community Gardens*, Janet Carson, Arkansas MG State Coordinator and UA Extension Horticulture Specialist.

For more program information and registration go to <http://www.hortla.okstate.edu/his/>.

This should be another great conference, hope to see you there!

Mark Your Calendars! 2013 State Master Gardener Continuing Education Conference – June 13-14, 2013

Next year the Canadian County Master Gardeners are hosting the State Master Gardener Conference in El Reno. The conference will be held June 14, 2013 at the Redlands Community College campus. An evening social is scheduled for Thursday, June 13 at the Redlands Community College Darlington Agricultural Education and Applied Research Center. Regular conference activities will begin on Friday, June 14. We hope that you will mark your calendars and plan to attend. Planning and organization of the conference is still underway; we will keep you posted.