



**Ahh – To Grow A Garden – So Get Up and Get Growing –Taylorsville City - Tree Of The Month Article – October 2008** - Gradually, the leaves on the trees are starting to fall, and brisk chilly breezes are starting to blow. A lot of gardeners see fall as the time to start putting their gardens to rest. However, fall is the perfect time for assessing, designing and improving your garden. To winterize your yard here are ways to properly prepare your property for healthier lawn and plants come spring.

- 1- Mow the lawn until the first frost. Rake up all lawn clippings and all fallen leaves. This will keep the roots from being smothered over our cold winter months. Water less as temperatures dwindle.
- 2- Rake up all fallen fruit from your fruit trees to prevent attracting unwanted bugs and diseases.
- 3- If you can only fit in two projects in the fall, apply a lawn pre-emergent and a winterizing fertilizer. This is the key to reestablishing a strong root base in the lawn after the stress of a hot summer.
- 4- One last weeding will help improve the appearance of your garden during the remaining months of fall. Furthermore, each weed you eliminate will prevent possibility of weeds from sprouting in the spring.
- 5- Trim perennial flowers, such as black-eyed Susans and daylilies, leaving a one-inch stem to save the roots for next year. Rake up all leaves from flower beds, so they don't rot, attracting unwanted bugs.
- 6- Dig up summer blooming bulbs, like calla lilies, dahlias, or gladioli before we expect a killing frost (below 32 degrees overnight), which is usually October 12<sup>th</sup> in Taylorsville. Store in brown paper bags. Place in a cool but not freezing place, like a basement, or attached garage until next spring.
- 7- Pull out all dead annuals like impatiens, and begonias, plus most plants in your veggie garden or else they will rot there. You can compost all but tomato plants, which are more likely to have disease, and squash or pumpkin vines, which take more than a year to break down.
- 8- Don't pull up most herbs. Cut them back as you do perennials, since many will return in the spring.
- 9- Prune diseased branches and dried-out boughs from shrubs and trees. To prevent heavy snows from snapping off branches, tie evergreens by wrapping with twine securely but not too tightly. Wrap the shrub with a candy cane strip pattern from the bottom to the top of each shrub.
- 10- Burlap wrap any zone sensitive trees and shrubs like figs, eucalyptus, tree roses, and crape myrtle.
- 11- Mulch perennial beds with hardwood or cedar chips to keep roots insulated.
- 12- Perennial bulbs are the best deal in gardening. Spring flowering bulbs in the landscape can make a bold statement. Most people are familiar with bulbs for fall planting like hyacinth, daffodil, snowdrops, tulips, and crocus. After tucking the bulbs in the earth, the bulbs will sleep until spring, and then send up shoots from the bulb that will grow into a colorful spring spectacle. Adding spring flower bulbs to flowerbeds will reward you with a plethora of blooms that will enthusiastically strut their stuff, returning for many years. So grab your shovel and bulbs. Plant them this fall so that they will bloom next spring. Because some bulbs bloom early in spring before trees leaf out, finding a sunny location is not as important. In fact, a wooded area with a naturalized planting of early blooming daffodils looks striking. Spring bulbs can be planted in layers, with deeply planted bulbs going in first, then apply a layer of soil, then apply a layer of shallower bulbs, and so on. Some people claim you can layer bulbs down twelve inches in sandy soil. Our soil in Taylorsville is usually a silty clay loam with a gravelly substratum.
- 13- Fall is an ideal season for planting trees, shrubs and other assorted plants, too. The key is encouraging good root growth. Planting trees and shrubs in fall enables the root systems to grow before the hot summer returns. Cooler, wetter weather is the perfect time for tree planting. With an increase in rainfall and cooler temperatures in the fall, less watering is needed, which allows the new plants to begin forming roots without much care from us. Regardless of what tree is planted, the dormant season, (which is beginning) puts less stress on the newly planted trees. Do pay attention to the weather and if we go without natural rainfall for several weeks, you will need to water, even when it is cold.

