

July 2016
Volume 7, Issue 7



Coming Events

Workshops, Demos, etcetera

Thurs., July 28, 10:00a

Fall Vegetable Gardening

Thurs., Aug 11, 10:00a

Improve your home's Curb Appeal

Thurs., Aug 25, 10:00a

Fabulous Ferns and Their Fronds

Thurs., Sept 8, 10:00a

Fall Lawn Care

Wed., Sept 21, 9AM-6PM

MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE

Thurs., Sept 29, 10:00a

So You Want to Be a Master Gardener?

All classes will begin in the auditorium at the Agricultural Building and are free unless otherwise indicated.

Registration is required. Call 336-570-6740, or register online here:
<http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/>

Contact us :

Alamance County Cooperative
Extension Service

209-C N. Graham Hopedale Rd.
Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-570-6740

E-mail:

Mark Danielely

Mark_danieley@ncsu.edu

Chris Stecker

Christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com

Like us on

Facebook,

Click the link
below:



Love That Shrub? Let's Make Another!



Chris and I get calls quite frequently from folks wanting to know how to root a plant. It may be a favorite shrub from grandmother's house or something unusual from a neighbor's yard. The good news is that many shrubs root well this time of year and most of the work can be done indoors. After spending several days outside in the 90 degree plus weather working in the garden, some indoor plant work is appealing. Some of the plants that can be rooted now include boxwood, camellia, holly and magnolia.

Tips for Tips

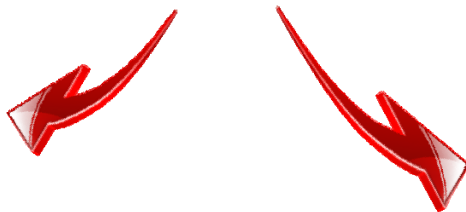
There are four main types of stem cuttings that can be used to propagate plants; herbaceous, softwood, semi-hardwood, and hardwood. Most of the shrubs we are interested in rooting this time of year will be from semi-hardwood stem cuttings. These stem cuttings come from partially mature wood of this year's growth.

Cuttings should be taken in the morning and it is best to avoid taking cuttings from plants that are under stress from lack of moisture. The cuttings should be 4-6 inches long and should be kept cool and moist until sticking in the rooting media. Terminal growth works best, but flower and terminal buds should be removed to concentrate the cutting's energy on growing roots. Remove the leaves from the bottom 2-3 inches of the cutting. For plants with large leaves, cut the remaining leaves in half to save space and reduce water loss. Treating cuttings with a rooting hormone like Rootone may be helpful to stimulate root growth.

The rooting media needs to be sterile and well drained. Many of the commercial potting soils that contain peat moss, pine bark, and perlite should work well. Stick the cutting about 2-3 inches deep in the soil making sure the cutting does not get turned upside down. If you are doing only a few cuttings, a plastic flower pot is sufficient. The trick is to keep the cuttings moist until they root. The pot or tray can be covered with clear plastic using a wire frame to keep the plastic off the cuttings. The potting soil needs to be kept moist and the cuttings should be misted on a regular basis. Keep the cuttings in a bright room, but not in direct sunlight. Once the cuttings have rooted, they can be transplanted into separate containers and may be need to be held until next spring before planting.



Use terminal cuttings, but remove terminal buds and flowers



Poke holes to receive cuttings to avoid scraping off rooting hormone.



Dip end in water then in rooting hormone

Firm soil around cuttings



Bag it to retain moisture, keeping plastic away from leaves



A Simple Way to Make More

You may be wondering how successful you can be rooting stem cuttings. Sometimes it works well and sometimes not so well. If you want a higher chance of success with less work you might consider a propagation practice called layering. Layering is the process of growing roots on a stem that is still attached to the parent plant. This eliminates the need to keep the stem cutting moist which is the main cause of failure in rooting stem cuttings.

Simple layering is the easiest layering technique. A low growing and flexible stem is bent to the ground and part of the stem is covered with soil. You should leave about 6-8 inches of the stem above the ground. The bend in the stem below the soil normally induces root formation, but a slight wound on the underside of the buried section may help the rooting process. Then you can just sit back and wait. It may take several months for the stem to grow roots, but once it does you have a new plant. Forsythia, boxwood wax myrtle azaleas and hydrangeas are some plants that can be propagated by simple layering.

For answers to all your growing questions, contact mark_danieley@ncsu.edu or christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com





July Garden Tips



Annual bedding plants will benefit from a summer haircut. Stagger your pruning by cutting back one-third of a bed or container each week. By the third week, the first group of pruned plants will be blooming again, assuring some color during the entire pruning period.



Fertilize established warm-season (Zoysia or Bermudagrass) lawns at the rate of one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Unlike fescue, which should be kept tall – at least 3 to 3-and-a-half inches, warm-season lawns need to be maintained at a height of only $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1". This promotes dense growth and discourages many weeds.



Even moisture at the root zone of tomatoes may help prevent blossom-end rot. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation rather than overhead watering and keep plants mulched.



Plant Brussels sprouts, carrots and rutabagas from July 1st to the 15th. Mid month begin planting beets, broccoli and collards.

Keep vegetables picked to encourage production.

If you are willing to keep them well-watered all summer, roses may be fertilized every four weeks until mid-August. This will keep them blooming well into fall. However, if deep watering is not an option, roses can be rested this month. Keep blossoms cut to encourage further bloom, too!

Remove water sprouts and weak new growth from apple trees, crapemyrtles and others. Summer pruning is less likely to produce weak growth. Discontinue pruning by August 1st so any new growth will harden off before frost.

Mature vines of poison ivy, trumpet creeper, English ivy and wisteria that climb your trees can be killed at this time. Cut a chunk from the vine near the base of the plant, being careful not to cut the resident tree. Apply brush killer to the cut. The cut must be fresh – no more than 15 minutes old. Bag vines and dispose of in the trash. Never burn poison ivy!!!

Brown patch is a disease that attacks cool-season lawns and is encouraged by overwatering and over fertilizing with nitrogen. Allow your cool-season (Fescue) lawn to go dormant, watering only if there has been no rainfall for three or four weeks. Remember that no lawn grass is green year round.

Swiss chard is a great addition to the summer vegetable garden. When the heat shuts down spinach and lettuce and the brassicas have breathed their last, chard stands tall and sweet, offering tasty leaves and stems as a delicious change of pace. Plant the 'Rainbow' variety for a colorful addition to the garden. If chard becomes overmature, cut it back to about 4 inches. After cutting, it will send out tender new leaves. Note that extended dry weather can cause chard to bolt or go to seed.



Arbor Gate Plant of the Month

Hibiscus 'Davis Creek'



Scarlet Rose Mallow



Scarlet Rose Mallow



Hibiscus 'Davis Creek'

Rose Mallow

Scarlet Rose Mallow is a vigorous, sturdy, erect, woody-based perennial that typically grows 3-6' tall and features huge, showy, 5-petaled, bright scarlet red flowers in the upper leaf axils of the plant over a long, mid-summer to early fall bloom period. Each flower has a prominent and showy center staminal column. Hemp-like, palmately compound, deep green leaves (5-6" wide) give the plant an exotic tropical look. Sometimes commonly called swamp hibiscus because it is native to marshes and swamps in Alabama, Georgia and Florida.

The selection "Davis Creek" is slightly less statuesque, topping out at around 3-4' feet and bearing numerous hot pink flowers beginning in July and lasting until frost. Burgundy stems really set off the foliage and shocking pink flowers.

Grow in average, medium to wet soil in full sun to part shade. Plants may become leggy with diminished flowering in too much shade. Tolerates summer heat and humidity as well as poor drainage, but soil should be kept moist throughout the growing season.

Read more here:

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/hibiscus-coccineus/>

Hibiscus coccineus



Foliage and red stems of Hibiscus 'Davis Creek'