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Contact Us
Buncombe County Center
94 Coxe Avenue
Asheville, NC  28801

Linda Blue
Extension Agent
Agriculture-Urban Horticulture

Check out Buncombe County Center’s website at:
http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu

Normal Nov./Dec. Weather
Weather Averages
For Asheville, North Carolina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Average High</th>
<th>Average Low</th>
<th>Precipitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>57.8°F</td>
<td>36.8°F</td>
<td>2.83&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>49.6°F</td>
<td>29.8°F</td>
<td>2.59&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>7:51 am</td>
<td>6:35 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>7:19 am</td>
<td>5:17 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>7:20 am</td>
<td>5:17 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 31</td>
<td>7:39 am</td>
<td>5:26 pm</td>
</tr>
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</table>

HAVE YOU TAKEN OUR SURVEY?
If you have already responded to the Mountain Gardener online survey. Thank you for your input. If you have not yet taken the quick survey, the page will be available until December 1 for your feedback. Just click here: http://harvest.cals.ncsu.edu/surveybuilder/form.cfm?testid=10972

If you are still receiving Mountain Gardener in the mail, remember that you will need to return your renewal form by December 1, 2010 to remain on the mailing list. If you are one of those subscribers who has mailed in your paper renewal form and complained about receiving 2 newsletters every-other month, I’ll remind you that the reason we can no longer mail the newsletter monthly is due to budget reductions. The only way to receive the Mountain Gardener Newsletter every month is to sign up for the email delivery. If you would like to change your subscription from paper to email: call (828)255-5522 or email: joyce.plemmons@buncombecounty.org

Helping gardeners put knowledge to work.
“Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns”—George Eliot

Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate in activities mentioned in this newsletter. Please contact Linda Blue at 828-255-5522 during business hours at least 3 days prior to the event to discuss accommodations.
Garden Chores for November

Lawns
- Removing leaves from a newly seeded lawn can be a challenge. Your best options are to use a leaf blower or to use a bagging attachment on the mower to chop and collect leaves. Dump them into the compost pile or use them as mulch.
- Nitrogen fertilizer can still be applied if you have not put out the fall application yet.
- It is still fine to aerate with a core aerator, but it’s too late to reseed.

Ornamentals
- Restrict pruning of shrubs to removing the occasional stray branch or light trimming of evergreens.
- This is an excellent time to plant most trees and shrubs. Water well and apply a 3 inch layer of mulch, being careful to pull the mulch a few inches away from the stem.
- November is the best time to plant spring flowering bulbs. Plant bulbs to a depth equal to 4 times the diameter of the bulb.
- Check house plants frequently for water needs until you figure out what their winter schedule will be. They may need watering more frequently, or less frequently, depending on their location and the type of heating system.
- While tending to the yard clean-up or enjoying a woodland stroll, keep your eye out for interesting seed pods, seed heads and colorful leaves that can be used in holiday decorating.

Fruits
- Taking the time to practice good sanitation in the orchard now will pay off next year in reduced disease and insect problems. Remove any dried up fruit from the trees as well as fruit and leaves from the ground.
- Pull weeds in the strawberry bed, but do not cover the plants with straw yet.

Vegetables
- When preparing the Thanksgiving meal, don’t forget to run out to the herb bed to take advantage of the fresh herbs such as parsley, rosemary, sage and chives. Even if you do not use them in your dishes, they make lovely garnish or table decoration.
- Broccoli will often continue to produce side shoots well into December. Kale, collards and turnip greens are even tastier now that they have been exposed to frost.
- Lettuce and Swiss chard are hardy to about 25 degrees. Light weight floating row cover will often extend that below 20 so you can continue to harvest much of the winter.
- If you still want to plant garlic, do it as early in November as possible.

Other
- Many gardeners bring the birdbaths indoors or turn the bowl upside down to prevent freezing. Shallow bowls are usually not damaged by water freezing in them, and the birds do still need water in the winter.

Garden Almanacs

With holidays and a new year approaching, this may be a good time to remind you that we have Gardeners’ Almanacs available. This booklet provides a list of garden chores and some instructional material each month, a vegetable planting guide for Buncombe County and more valuable information. For $5 they make a great gift for a new gardener, new neighbor, or yourself. Pick one up at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension Office at 94 Coxe Avenue.
Garden Chores for December

Lawns
• Take a break for a while, as long as the last of the leaves have been raked and the grass has been mowed that last time.

Ornamentals
• If possible, before bringing a Christmas tree indoors, give it a good shake and even a good cleaning with the garden hose to remove pollen and hitchhiking insects.
• Keep a living tree indoors no longer than 10 days. Then take it out and plant it in the landscape as soon as possible.
• To enjoy the poinsettia as long as possible, give it very little direct sunlight, keep it away from heat vents and cold drafts, and water regularly.
• Keep good pruning practices in mind when cutting holiday greenery. Make clean cuts at branch angles or leaf nodes, and keep an eye on the shape of the plant.
• Inspect house plants, especially any that spent the summer outdoors. They often carry in small insects such as scale, mealybugs, whiteflies and spider mites.

Fruits
• Although you do not want to prune fruit trees until March, it is OK to prune grape vines now.
• The strawberry bed can be mulched with straw when nights are regularly falling below freezing.

Vegetables
• Clean up the asparagus bed. Remove and discard dead ferns and pull weeds.
• Parsnips, turnips, beets and carrots can still be dug if the soil has not frozen.
• Monitor greenhouses, cloches and cold frames daily. Temperatures heat up quickly on a sunny day.

Other
• Along with the holiday greetings, the garden catalogs will be arriving in the mail. Start flagging your wish list pages for spring orders.

Treating Hemlocks

If you have hemlock trees that need to be treated for hemlock woolly adelgid infestations, this is a good time to treat. This applies to either sprays with insecticidal soap or horticultural oil, or applying a systemic soil drench treatment. It is best to apply the soil drench when there is moisture in the soil and the ground is not frozen. If you don’t get it done now, you can still make applications in February or March. For more information on hemlock woolly adelgid control, go to: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note119/note119.html.

To receive this newsletter via email
Phone (828) 255-5522 or e-mail: joyce.plemmons@buncombecounty.org
Spotlight: Parsley

People have been growing parsley since ancient times. Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) is steeped in the mythology of the Greeks and Romans. It had many ceremonial uses, as well as it’s well known use to cleanse the breath of garlic after meals—still a useful function today.

The parsley plant is a biennial. Plants started in spring will flower the following spring and die by summer. For that reason it is treated as an annual in the garden, even though it will often survive the winter. Whether you grow the flat leaf or curly leaf variety is just a matter of preference.

Parsley will grow best in rich soil in sun or partial shade. Plants are easily adaptable to the herb bed, vegetable garden or containers. It can even be used as nice greenery in the flower bed. Parsley plants can be started from seed, but you must be patient as seed can take up to 5 weeks to germinate. It is often helpful to jumpstart the germinating process by soaking seeds in warm water for 24 hours prior to sowing. Parsley plants are readily available at garden centers in the spring.

If you have parsley growing in the garden, why not pot up a few plants to enjoy on your kitchen windowsill this winter? Provide a bright, sunny location and use a liquid fertilizer occasionally to keep new growth coming all winter.

Placing a Screen

After leaves fall in autumn, we often find that a screening hedge would be desirable. When considering a hedge, keep in mind that most plants that will reach the desired height will need quite a bit of space. Unless the hedge is kept sheared annually, plants may reach a width of 15 to 30 feet in 10 to 20 years, depending on the plant. Sometimes a fence is a better option.

When selecting evergreens, consider how much sun the site will receive. Also decide if the situation requires a dense screen or if a loose, open plant habit will provide enough camouflage. How tall does the plant need to get? Do you really need something that grows into a large tree? Or will a 10 foot shrub suffice?

Possible Screening Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant</th>
<th>Height</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Laurel</td>
<td>10ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leatherleaf Viburnum</td>
<td>10ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prague Viburnum</td>
<td>10ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhododendron maximum</td>
<td>20ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buford Holly</td>
<td>20ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nellie R. Stevens Holly</td>
<td>25ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryptomeria</td>
<td>50ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Pine</td>
<td>80ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona Cypress</td>
<td>50ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arborvitae ‘Green Giant’</td>
<td>40ft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outstanding Volunteers

Extension Master Gardener Volunteers have helped thousands of Buncombe County gardeners to improve their gardening practices and to resolve plant problems. Without their time and energy many of your questions would have gone unanswered. We thank all our hard working volunteers for their dedication to urban horticultural education in Buncombe County. On November 10 our outstanding volunteers were recognized for their contributions in 2010.

2010 Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Joyce Weinberg. Joyce joined the Buncombe County Extension Master Gardener program in 2004. She has coordinated the Master Gardeners’ Speakers Bureau for several years and has taken an active role on numerous other committees.

The New Sprout award was presented to the outstanding member of the Class of 2010. Renee Cassano Lampila was recognized for her willingness to take on leadership roles and participate in numerous volunteer activities.

2010 Extension Master Gardener Volunteers receiving certification after completing training and more than 40 hours of service were:

Lisa Anderson  Joyce Carpenter  Ellen Freck  Kyle Gilgis  
Randy Harter  Jill Hurd  Eileen Kennedy  Renee Cassano Lampila  
Nancy Lesher  Kay Malchow  Patsy McNatt  Gary Merrill  
Kim Moore  Rene’ Moore  Laura Perry-Hipps  April Peterson  
Donna Sapp  Jim Sleeva  Mary Ann Snedeker  Cheryl Thomson  
Melissa Volker  Jeanette Williams

Buggy House Plants

Many of us bring new plants into the house this time of year—either as part of our holiday décor or to add to our collection of house plants. Unfortunately, they sometimes bring along unwanted visitors in the form of insect infestations.

Spider mites, scale, mealybugs and whiteflies can easily sneak in unnoticed on plants from a greenhouse or on your own plants carried in from outdoors. Inspect any plant coming into the house carefully before you place it near your other plants. Then check all your plants frequently in order to catch problems early.

When you do find a problem, either discard the infested plants or keep them away from the healthy plants until the problem is resolved. Unfortunately all these little pests can be difficult to control. Insecticidal soap and horticultural oil can be useful if you can get thorough coverage to the bottoms of leaves.

Rubbing alcohol can be used on plants that don’t have a lot of leaves—orchids or dieffenbachia for example. Use a cotton ball wetted with alcohol to wipe both surfaces of the leaves to remove scales or mealybugs. Check the plants in a week or two and repeat as needed.

Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, Contact an agent of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension.
EVENTS

- November 19 - Extension Master Gardener application deadline.

- January 20—April 21 - Extension Master Gardener Training will take place on Thursday afternoons

North Carolina Christmas Trees

The Fraser fir accounts for 96% of the Christmas trees purchased in North Carolina.

Fraser firs grow best at the higher elevations found in Ashe, Avery, Alleghany, Jackson and Watauga counties.

Since 1971, the White House has selected a North Carolina grown Christmas tree 11 times—more than twice as often as any other state.