“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

Mountain Gardener Newsletter

Are you still receiving the Mountain Gardener newsletter in the mail? If so you are only receiving them every-other month due to postage limitations.

In order to receive the newsletter every month, and to ensure you will continue to receive it, we encourage you to subscribe electronically. If you have email capability, sign up by emailing Joyce Plemmons at joyce_plemmons@buncombecounty.org or call 255-5522.

Normal October Weather
Weather Averages
For Asheville, North Carolina

Normal October Average High 67.1°F
Normal October Average Low 43.3°F
Normal October Precipitation 3.18”

Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 1</td>
<td>7:25 am</td>
<td>7:16 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>7:50 am</td>
<td>6:37 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 October

Lawns

• This is a good time to fertilize the cool season lawn (fescue, bluegrass) if you did not do it last month. Use a slow-release fertilizer and apply 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
• It’s been dry, so if you have planted grass seed, remember to keep it watered.
• Also be careful not to tear up new seedlings while raking leaves. A leaf blower would be gentler on the seedlings.

Ornamentals

• Fall is a good time to plant trees and shrubs. Pull roots loose on container grown plants and do not plant too deep.
• Do not fertilize ornamental plants now.
• Limit pruning to snipping the occasional stray branch and removing dead or damaged branches.
• Purchase spring blooming bulbs. Plant late in October or in November.
• Plant pansies and ornamental cabbage.
• Clean up house plants before moving back indoors. Take the time to cut them back and remove dead leaves and flowers. While you are at it, inspect carefully for insect infestations and treat before bringing the plants indoors.

Fruits

• Good sanitation is always important in the orchard this time of year. As you rake leaves, also remove any fruit left in the trees and pick up all fruit from the ground.
• Finish removing old canes from blackberry and raspberry patches.
• Strawberry plants are setting on the buds for next spring’s fruit. Pull weeds and irrigate if needed.

Vegetables

• Plant garlic and onions.
• Fertilize greens and other cool season crops planted last month.
• Good sanitation is important here as well. Remove spent plants to the compost pile or turn them into the soil to rot.
• Spray all crucifers (cabbage family crops) with organic B.t. (Bacillus thuringiensis) every 7 to 10 days to kill the various caterpillars that eat the plants.

Other

• When you are finished with garden clean-up, take a look at the storage shed. Clean out, organize and repair equipment.
• Fall is a great time to start a new compost pile. You can build a bin or just pile all that yard waste in the corner. For more information on back yard composting: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/ag-467.pdf.
Insects to Watch For

Ornamentals: Check evergreens for bagworms. Half of those bags contain eggs which will hatch in the spring, so remove and destroy them. Spruce mites are cool weather mites that become active now. Shake a branch vigorously over white paper to check for them.

Vegetables: Aphids and several species of caterpillars can be a problem on broccoli, cabbage, collards and other cabbage family plants.

Treating Hemlocks

If you have hemlock trees, inspect them for signs of hemlock woolly adelgids. This is a good time of year to treat smaller trees with insecticidal soap or horticultural oil. Fall is also a good time to apply a systemic soil drench treatment on larger trees. See: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note119a/note119a.htm

Time for Frost

It’s just a matter of time. Any day now the season’s first frost will bring an end to the summer garden season. Although the “average” first frost occurs in mid-October, we know how fickle Mother Nature can be. Buncombe County has had frost in late September, or not until early November.

It is also quite common to have one or two nights at or near 32 degrees, and then remain above freezing for a few more weeks. For this reason some gardeners find it worth while to protect late vegetable crops for a couple of nights in order to get a little more time in the garden. I have found, though, that real warm-season crops like squash and cucumbers may survive, but produce very little fruit once the weather has cooled down.

Fall Plant Sale “From Our Gardens to Yours”

Buncombe County Master Gardeners are planning their first Fall Plant Sale on Saturday, October 15. The sale will include favorite plants from Master Gardeners’ gardens. 9am - 1pm, RAIN OR SHINE, in the Extension Office parking lot at the corner of Coxe and Hilliard Ave., just south of the downtown Post Office and Bus Station.

Shop and Learn - Visit the information table for answers to your gardening questions.

FALL IS A GREAT TIME FOR PLANTING!
Spotlight: Fall Color

October brings the riot of fall color to the mountains. Our cool nights and moist climate bring out more intense leaf color in trees and shrubs than you’ll find at the lower elevations. Gardeners in western North Carolina can take advantage of this good fortune by selecting some plants for the landscape to replace the flower color of summer with the leaf color of fall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>botanical name</th>
<th>color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TREES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese maples</td>
<td>Acer palmatum</td>
<td>varies by cultivar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red maple</td>
<td>Acer rubrum</td>
<td>yellow, red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar maple</td>
<td>Acer saccharum</td>
<td>yellow, orange, red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kousa dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus kousa</td>
<td>red berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginkgo</td>
<td>Ginkgo biloba</td>
<td>bright yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black gum</td>
<td>Nyssa sylvatica</td>
<td>Scarlet or yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sourwood</td>
<td>Oxydendrum arboretum</td>
<td>dark red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHRUBS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fothergilla</td>
<td>Fothergilla gardenia</td>
<td>yellow to red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witch hazel</td>
<td>Hamamelis spp.</td>
<td>Yellow to red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blueberry</td>
<td>Vaccinium corymbosum</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viburnum</td>
<td>Viburnum spp.</td>
<td>Some have red berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia sweetspire</td>
<td>Itea Virginica</td>
<td>crimson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction to the Extension Master Gardener Program

Tuesday, October 18
1-3 pm
Buncombe County Extension Center
94 Coxe Ave., Asheville.

If you think you might be interested in becoming an Extension Master Gardener volunteer, this is your opportunity to come and learn more about this popular program in Buncombe County. Learn about the training requirements, volunteer activities, class schedule, and meet some current volunteers. You may fill out an application form and even schedule an interview if you like. No pre-registration required.

2012 Extension Master Gardener Training

The next training classes for the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program will begin in January, 2012. Classes will be Wednesday afternoons from noon until 4:00pm. Application forms are available and must be submitted no later than November 4. Interviews will be conducted in early November.

For an application call 255-5522 or email joyce.plemmons@buncombecounty.org
Composting With Earthworms

Fall is a great time to start a compost pile to recycle all those leaves and yard and garden waste. Kitchen scraps can be a valuable source of nitrogen components for the compost mix. But once winter sets in, it is not always convenient to carry the kitchen scraps out to the compost pile. Some people solve that problem by composting indoors with earthworms.

A suitable worm bin can be constructed inexpensively. All you need is a plastic box with a lid and a tray to put under it in case of leakage. A good starter size would be about 2 feet by 2 or 3 feet. Use a 1/2 inch drill bit to drill 9 or more holes in the bottom for drainage and a few holes near the top for aeration.

The bin will be most effective if located where temperatures stay between 55 and 75 degrees. Many people keep the bin under the kitchen sink or in the utility room, but the garage should be fine too.

Next you need to fill the bin with a moist fluffy bedding material for the worms to live in. Shredded office paper works, as does ripped up newsprint (black and white sections). Dip the paper in a bucket of water and squeeze out the water so it is just moist. Fluff it into the bin until the bin is nearly full.

One more thing you need before adding your worms is a couple handfuls of good garden soil. Earthworms have gizzards and need a little roughage.

Perhaps the most important part is getting the right worms. Only red worms (red wigglers), Eisenia fetida, should be used. You will want 1 to 2 pounds of worms. If you don’t have a friend with a worm bin ready to “harvest”, find a local supplier or mail order source. You can find a list of worm suppliers at: http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/vermicomposting/vermiculture/nc.html.

For more information on composting with worms:
http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/vermicomposting/household.html
**EVENTS**

- **October 1**  
  “**Hey Day**”, at the WNC Nature Center, 9:30—4, EMG Heirloom Garden info table.

- **October 8**  
  **Plant Problem Clinics**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market. 11:00am—2:00pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings.  
  (Last of the year)

- **October 8**  
  **Backyard Composting Demonstration**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market, beside Israel’s Garden Center, 11:00am—2:00pm.  
  (Last of the year)

- **October 15**  
  **EMG Plant Sale: “From Our Gardens to Yours”**, 9am—1pm, Rain or Shine, Extension Parking lot, corner of Coxe and Hilliard Ave. in downtown Asheville.

- **October 18**  
  **Introduction to the Extension Master Gardener Program**, 1—3pm at Buncombe County Cooperative Ext. Office, 94 Coxe Ave., Asheville.

- **October 19**  