

THE GARDEN PATH, NOVEMBER 2012

A publication of Kerr Lake Extension Master
Gardeners

PLANT OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER

By Marty Finkel,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener



Coppertone Loquat
(*Eriobotrya japonica* 'Coppertone')

Some sources list this beautiful tree (or large shrub) as hardy in Zone 8, but Michael Dirr in the *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* puts it in Zone 7, saying: "...I keep reassessing the cold hardiness based on year-to-year performance; apparently, the species is slow to harden in fall, but if sufficient acclimatization takes place then a Zone 7 (0 to +10 degrees F) is realistic."

As seen in the JCRA photo, the flowers are in 3 to 6" long terminal panicles. These fragrant flowers appear anytime from November to January, and the tree has lustrous, dark green foliage. Its pear-shaped or oblong 1 to 1¼" fruit is edible, ripening April through June, although fruiting is negligible north of Atlanta. It fruits heavily in the lower South. Culture is easy in moist, well-drained, loamy soil in the sun, and it tolerates drought once fully established. Dirr cautions against over-fertilizing because of the danger of fireblight. It grows to around 15 to 25' high and wide. Use it for excellent textural effects or espalier it against a wall. Dirr lists several cultivars, many of which were bred for improved fruit.



GARDEN TO DO – NOVEMBER

By Carl Shafer,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

Remove any old mummified fruit on trees, bushes, or vines and from the ground as these can be sources of disease next year. Clean up under pecan trees. Also continue to cleanup garden plants as they finish producing.

Late fall and early winter is good time to plant fruit and nut trees. Container blueberries can also be planted now. Other berry plants are normally planted in the spring. Check local nurseries for plants.

Plant your garlic now if you have not already done so.

Continue to collect leaves and compost them.

Clean and repair, if necessary, your garden tools and equipment before putting them away for the winter.

Use the internet to order some seed catalogs if you are interested in trying some new or different vegetable varieties next year. Also most garden magazines, at this time of the year, will have many mail order seed company advertisements. To get you started here are two lists. Directory of Organic Farming Supplies for NC Farmers (www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/programs/ncorganic/2008ncorganic_suppliersdirectory.pdf), and Sources of Organic and Untreated Non-GMO Seeds (<https://attra.ncat.org/sorg/seeds.html>).

Most outside gardening activities should be finished by now. Trees and shrubs can still be planted as long as the ground is not frozen. If you are adventuresome, try a cold frame in a sunny area to grow radishes, lettuce, spinach,

and other greens.

Still time to apply lime, if needed.

Most pruning should be put off until late winter or early spring when the weather is more comfortable. You can do fruit trees and grapes in Jan if the weather allows, otherwise do it in Feb. See the Feb 12 issue of this publication for pruning information web sites.

If you want to grow your own onion transplants, start seeds in December so that plants can be set out in February or early March. Use short-day or day neutral varieties for our area.

Inventory your left over seeds. Do a germination test if you are uncertain of their viability.

If you are growing transplants, note that the average last frost date for the Henderson area is April 21. Some seeds need to be started as much as 12 weeks before setting out. Thus, seeds will need to be ordered in December or early January to be available by mid to late January. For web resources for planning your garden and growing transplants, see the Feb 12 issue of this publication. Note that the Central N.C. Planting calendar has Cabbage and Leaf Lettuce being transplanted the first week of Feb and Broccoli, Cauliflower, Celery, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leek, and Parsley being transplanted in mid Feb. For a lead time of eight weeks, that means starting seeds in early Dec for first plants and continuing for about two months for successive plantings. The first plantings may need season extension steps for cold temperatures and the last for the heat. A recent "Season Extension" posting can be found at: (www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/seasonextension2012.html). Also see "Resource List for Season Extension" at: (www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/seasonextensionlist.html).

If we have a dry spell in Dec or Jan and the soil can be tilled, you may want to prepare part of your garden for planting early cool season crops because in the late winter and early spring the ground is often too wet to work. Note peas and

bulb onions can be seeded in Jan and many plants can be seeded in Feb.

For a monthly calendar of garden activities for Central North Carolina developed Chatham Co., see:

(www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/homehort/HomeCal.html).

Check out "The Garden Professors" website! Horticulture Professors from four universities (Virginia Tech, Univ. of Minnesota, Michigan State Univ. and Washington State Univ.) feature research based horticultural information.

<https://sharepoint.cahnrs.wsu.edu/blogs/urbanhort/default.aspx>

CHECKLIST FOR NOVEMBER

By Mary Jane Bosworth,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

As the garden grows, so does the gardener.
Anonymous

Fall is for Planting

- Fall is the ideal time to plant or transplant trees and shrubs. Cool weather allows plants to develop good root systems before the hot weather of summer.
- For fescue lawns, November is the time to fertilize. This is the most important fertilization of the year.
- Have your soil tested now to avoid the spring rush.
- Mulch trees, perennials and herbs after the first killing frost for winter protection.
- Plant spring flowering bulbs.
- Remove all debris and left over plant matter from the garden, rototill, incorporate organic matter and lime, if necessary and you will be ready for spring planting.
- Use pansies and other cool weather flowers to add color to your winter garden.
- Divide perennials such as hostas, phlox and ferns.
- Start thinking about what you want to do differently next year.

INTERESTING TID-BITS FOR NOVEMBER

By Marty Finkel,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

The JC Raulston Arboretum is one of the 21 official All-America Selections (AAS) testing sites for new cultivars of bedding plants. Each year over 700 different kinds of annuals and tender perennials are planted, evaluated, and reported. You can see these displays in the Annual Color Trials beds year-round, with the height of the flowering season occurring June through August. You can find all sorts of interesting information each season such as the Top 10, Best of Breed, Leaders of the Pack, and more by visiting the JCRA website.

Dwarf, compact, spreading buddleias have been bred by Dr. Denny Werner at NCSU and are creating a sensation due to their growth habit, length of bloom time and fragrance, and they require no dead-heading. 'Blue Chip,' in the Lo and Behold series, has been on the market for some time and has been widely promoted. The white 'Ice Chip' and 'Lilac Chip' are in the same series but are shorter and have smaller leaves and flowers. 'Purple Haze' is a gorgeous, semi-pendant one in that series but is a little larger than the 'Ice' and 'Lilac' Chips.

Food for thought: In an article in the Oct. 1, 2012 issue of *Greenhouse Grower*, "The Garden of the Future", Dr. Allan Armitage posits the view that the "...30 and 40 year-olds are too busy with work and kids to be digging holes, and the older folks are just getting tired." He says he gives lectures all over the country to hundreds of gardeners, and that while there is still a huge population of dirt gardeners, he "sees more mowers, blowers and goers in neighborhoods than ever before." To take advantage of this trend, more plants are being bred to fit from tiny to huge spaces on decks, balconies, patios, etc. There are hanging basket roses in the Balconia series and small, elegant, colorful shrubs for containers along with new perennials, annuals, and vines. Have your fun and eat it too with new patio vegetables to put into the mixed containers.

The plant industry is responding with selling liners of three plants to a liner and other innovations. For a real trip into this fascinating world, explore these series on your search engine: Confetti, Kwik and Trixi. Seed companies are with the trend, also, as putting seeds of different colored flowers in one pack takes the guesswork out of your mixed container.

HERB OF THE MONTH, NOVEMBER

By Edna Lovelace Gaston,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

GETTING HERBS READY FOR WINTER

Overnight forecasts are slowly dropping – before long there will be a frost warning. Then before we know it, freeze warnings and winter will be upon us. But don't despair!!!! Herbs can be brought inside and enjoyed during the wonderful cold winter. No need to give up gardening.

It's not too late to start some herbs from seed – Parsley, Dill, etc. As they grow use and enjoy. For those plants growing outside, they may have to "fooled" a little. If growing in the ground, dug them up, insert in pots slightly larger than the root balls, add good potting soil as necessary, put in a semi-shady location and keep moist but not overly wet. Now comes the "trick". One of the secrets to moving a plant inside is to make the transition slowly. Relocate the pots closer to the house. During each move, gradually reduce the amount of sunlight. Let the pots stay in one location two or three days. Over the course of a couple of weeks, the pots should be at the house. Now put them on the porch very close to the house. Leave for a couple of days. Then move inside to as sunny a location as possible.

Once inside, the herbs need humidity but not excess moisture. A good solution is place a leak proof container several inches deep where you want the herbs to grow, add a layer of gravel in the bottom, about an inch works great. Then position the herbs in their pots on the gravel. Keep the gravel damp but do not let the water get so deep in the container as to allow the pots to sit in it. Occasional misting of the leaves is very beneficial. Now comes the treat – fresh herbs.

Some herbs that I have successfully overwintered in the house include Parsley (flat leaf and curly leaf), Chives (both regular and garlic), Mints, Lemon Verbena, Thymes, Rosemary. It does take a little effort to bring herbs inside but the enjoyment all winter is worth it. Grouped together the herbs make a wonderful display. If cooking with herbs, nothing beats fresh and growing inside could not be more convenient. Just brushing the leaves and letting the wonderful scents flow through the house is so invigorating.

Experiment, enjoy and have fun,

Ladybug

Additional Information:

- Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs. Claire Kowalchik and William H. Hylton, Editors. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA, 1987.
- Herbs Their Culture and Uses. Rosetta E. Clarkson. The Macmillan Company, New York, NY, 1942.
- Growing Herbs in Pots. John Burton Brimer. Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 1976.
- The Herb Book. John Lust. Bantam Books, New York, NY, 1974.

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Pictures courtesy of JC Raulston Arboretum