

GARDEN CHECKLIST FOR MARCH

In this weeks article I want to mention things gardeners need to be considering for March. The following is a garden checklist:

- Last call to sign up for the Baxter County Master Gardener Seminar on March 12 at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Mtn. Home. Seminar topics are "Getting the Garden Ready For Spring", "Propagation: From Apples to Zinnias", "Low Maintenance Gardening", and "Lawns for North Arkansas". There is a fee of \$10 to attend the seminar. Attendance is limited and pre-registration is required. To register: send name, address, phone number, email address (for confirmation), and a \$10 check payable to BCMG, to the following address by March 5th: BCMG Seminar, 281 Lorraine Place, Mtn. Home, AR 72653.
- Now is as late as you want to get if you want to use glyphosate to control winter weeds in your bermuda yard. If you wait too much longer your bermudagrass will begin to green-up. Check bermuda first for signs of green-up. Look up against sidewalks and buildings where bermuda would start growing the earliest. Do not use glyphosate if your bermuda has started to green-up.
- Wait to fertilize fescue lawns until they have started growing good. You could even wait until April to fertilize them. If you have some bare spots or a thin lawn, now is the time to seed tall fescue.
- Spray broadleaf weeds before they bloom and make a seedcrop in lawns. Use a broadleaf weed killer such as Trimec and spray weeds after we have had a few days of 60°F or higher temperature.
- March 15 – April 1 is the target date to apply crabgrass pre-emergence weed control products to established lawns and established beds. Read label directions before purchasing product to insure purchase of the correct material. Most often what is used in your lawn cannot be used around your perennials so you will have to purchase two different products.
- Fertilize pansies. This is a prime blooming and growing month for them.
- Avoid moving houseplants outside until late April.
- Avoid planting tender vegetables and bedding plants until mid to late April when frost danger is past.
- A general rule of thumb is divide fall bloomers in the spring and spring bloomers in the fall. Dig and divide hostas, chrysanthemums and sedums.
- Give ornamental grasses such as liriopie a haircut to remove old leaves. This should be done before new growth begins.
- Before heading out to the nursery for new plants, have a plan in mind. Space new plants according to eventual size, not what they are now. Ask about sunlight requirements, moisture and growth habits. Proper selection can relieve a lot of headaches later.
- Prune hybrid tea roses now if not done already. Remove diseased, dead, and old wood first. Remember to cut ¼ inch above an outward facing

- bud at a 45 degree angle. Seal cut wounds with sealer to prevent dieback from diseases and insects. Also, begin your regular disease spray program as foliage appears.
- Overwintering tropicals should be sheared back.
 - Start seeds indoors for tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.
 - Continue to plant cool-season vegetables.
 - Finish pruning trees this month and certainly before bud break. Prune summer flowering shrubs and evergreens shortly before the new growth emerges.
 - Prune spring blooming plants after bloom. As soon as quince, forsythia, and other cane producing spring flowering shrubs have finished blooming, prune out a third of the old canes. This rejuvenation cut will encourage vigorous new growth which will bloom next spring.
 - Check ornamental cherries, plums, and peaches for egg masses of the spring webworm. These egg masses are wrapped around small twigs and are shiny black in color. Prune and destroy these otherwise they will hatch out later with a vicious appetite.
 - Fertilize spring flowering bulbs now if you haven't. Apply 1 pound of 13-13-13 per 100 square feet of bed. Be careful not to get fertilizer trapped in the leaf whorl. Bulbs will benefit from an additional 2 pounds of 13-13-13 per 100 square feet in the fall.
 - Most gardeners keep their leftover seed from one season to the next. Follow this simple way to check if your leftover seed are still good. Dampen a paper towel (use two if your towels are thin); place a few seeds in question onto the damp towel. Fold the towel over and over so you end up with seeds sandwiched between layers of wet towel. Slip into a plastic ziplock bag and set in a dark warm place. Wait two days, then unfold paper towel and see if seeds have begun sprouting. If they have, you know the seeds you have left will produce.
 - Flowering bulbs are coming into their full glory this month. Now is the time to see where you need more and more importantly where they are for dividing later. Place markers by clumps now for moving or dividing later this spring or early summer. Also allow foliage to die down naturally for maximum bloom display next year.

For more information on any of the above points, contact the Baxter County Cooperative Extension office at 425-2335. The Cooperative Extension Service is a part of the University of Arkansas Division Of Agriculture.

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