NOVEMBER, 2011
HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!

Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service
1140 Red Mile Place
Lexington, KY 40504-1172
(859) 257-5582
Fax: (859) 254-3697
ces.ca.uky.edu/fayette

By The Yard...

HORTICULTURE

Fayette County

Planting Trees & Shrubs

Selecting the right varieties for the location and transplanting them in the fall gives trees and shrubs a head start on winter and helps them provide pleasure and beauty for years to come.

Now through November is the best time to transplant trees and shrubs. Ornamentals lose less moisture because fall days are shorter, outdoor temperatures are cooler and rainfall usually is adequate. These conditions also help retain soil moisture so plants can settle into their new location. Also, many of these plants are deciduous and lose their leaves in the fall so their demand for water is less.

Trees and shrubs also undergo internal changes that promote root growth and increase tolerance to winter weather. Leaf growth during the summer produced sugars that were moved into the roots, so ample energy is available to re-establish strong root systems after transplanting.

Woody ornamental root systems continue to grow at soil temperatures above 40 degrees, so planting in October and early November usually will give them six to seven weeks before soils reach this temperature. Evergreen species retain their leaves during the fall and winter, so it is best to plant them in early spring, or perhaps early fall so root systems will have adequate time to become re-established before plant water demand increases.

For best results, choose ornamentals that are hardy to the area. Avoid trees and shrubs that are adapted to zone six or above because they are only marginally hardy in Kentucky. Planting an assortment of shrubs and trees will slow down the spread of disease and insect problems.

It is important to select ornamentals that are adaptable to environmental and soil conditions of the site. Talk to a professional if you are not familiar with the growing requirements for a particular shrub or tree or have questions about how to choose vigorous, healthy plant materials.

Serviceberry

Several ornamentals can be successfully planted in early to late fall. They include coffee tree, crabapple, elm (disease-resistant varieties only) ginkgo, honey locust, linden, sugar maple, pagoda tree and serviceberry. It is best to wait until after leaf drop later in the fall to plant birch, flowering dogwood, oak, red maple, sweetgum and tulip poplar.

Inadequate moisture during dry periods is the primary threat to transplant survival. Be sure to thoroughly soak the ground after transplanting. Frequently check newly-planted specimens to be sure the soil has not dried out. It is better to thoroughly soak soil once or twice a week than to water it a little every day. Providing sufficient moisture helps transplants survive adverse environmental conditions during the winter.

Two common mistakes many home gardeners make are choosing ornamentals that grow too large for the location and improperly planting them.

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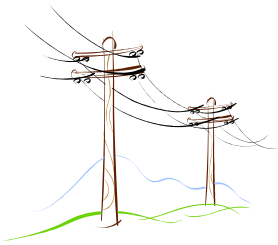
Planting Trees and Shrubs (continued)



A specimen planted with great expectations can grow into a headache when you have to severely prune to keep it away from the house, or the utility company must drastically cut it back to keep branches out of power lines. Be sure to dig a transplant hole that is wide enough. It should be at least two to three times the diameter of the root ball, even wider is better. A hole that is saucer-shaped is better than a bowl-shaped one.

Ornamentals should not be planted any deeper then they grew in a container or field. Use the soil line on the trunk to gauge how deeply to plant balled-and-burlapped ornamentals. A distinctive color difference on the trunk bark indicates how deeply a specimen was planted in the field. If you are not sure how deeply to plant an ornamental, plant it on the shallow side. It is less damaging to plant a tree too shallow than to plant it too deep.

After transplanting, apply a two-to three-inch layer of mulch. Avoid piling mulch around the base of the trunk because this may encourage rotting. A layer of mulch will help conserve soil moisture and discourage weed growth. Mulching also helps moderate soil temperatures that may cause the root system to heave out of the ground during winter freezing and thawing cycles.

Do not fertilize newly planted trees and shrubs during the first year because it will cause excessive vegetative growth at the expense of root development. Also, amending the soil with sand, compost or peat moss is unnecessary and can keep an extensive root system from developing.

Gardeners can find more information on home horticulture by contacting the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service office or visiting the Web site: *http://www.gardendata.org.*

Source: Rick Durhan, University of Kentucky, Consumer Horticulture, Master Gardener/E.I. Horticulture

Featured Plant—Amsonia hubrechtii, Arkansas Blue Star, Arkansas Amsonia, Hubricht's Amsonia

Amsonia hubrechtii, syn *A. hubrichtii* is a fine leaved plant known as much for it's orange-yellow fall foliage as for it's attractive Spring blue flowers. The foliage creates a fine textured round airy plant. As it's common name indicates this plant is found native in Arkansas and surrounding states. It's native habitat is well-drained creek banks and bottomlands, but it performs admirably as a landscape plant in Kentucky. It has been observed in Kentucky landscapes growing in dry shade, moist shade, moist sunny, and dry sunny sites. There are a number of related species that are also interesting as landscape plants. How the confusion in the spelling of the species name came about isn't known. The spelling *A. hubrechtii* was common to plant catalogs at the time when it was selected as a Theodore Klein Plant Award Winner. It would seem that *A. hubrichtii* is the correct spelling considering The Missouri Botanic Garden Plant Finder http://www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/codem/W810.shtml describes it's species name as "This species was named after Leslie Hubricht who first discovered it growing in the wild in the early 1940s.".

November Quick Tips

•Although we are past the best time for seeding, lawns will benefit from a fall application of nitrogen. October and November are excellent months to feed as you can promote vigor without excessive growth.

•Mow new grass seedlings when they reach two and one half inches tall. Continue to mow lawns as late as needed.

•Remove leaves from lawns, especially new plantings, to prevent grass from being damaged.

•When you are finished with tools and equipment for the season clean, sharpen, and oil tools for next year. Make sure to drain, or add fuel stabilizer to, gasoline powered equipment.

•If you have not dug and stored tender bulbs like dahlias, cannas, and gladiolus, do so before the ground freezes.

•Clean up peony foliage if you have had any of the leaf spotting diseases. This will help prevent the problem next year.

•Drain and store garden hoses and irrigation systems.

•November is an excellent time to plant fall bulbs for next spring.

•Start a compost pile with all of those leaves. It doesn't have to be elaborate or technical. A simple pile will make compost if left long enough.

•Plant paperwhites, amaryllis and other ready to bloom bulbs for the holidays.

•Protect the trunks of fruit trees with wire mesh to prevent gnawing damage from rabbits and voles.

•Do a thorough cleanup of the vegetable garden. This will remove many insect and disease problems before they can become a problem next year.

•Monitor houseplants for insect problems. Most common pests can be controlled if detected before they become major infestations.

•Gardener's Toolbox Class for November: Plant Propagation, November 8th starting 6:30 p.m. at the Fayette County Extension Office. Cost $15.00, call to save a spot, 859 257-5582.

Fresh Cranberry Relish (Diabetic Recipe)

1 orange
1 (12-ounce) package fresh *or* thawed frozen cranberries
2 medium tart apples, unpeeled, cored and coarsely chopped
5 1/4 teaspoons Equal® for Recipes *or* 18 packets Equal® sweetener *or* 3/4 cup Equal® Spoonful™
1/8 teaspoon salt

1.Grate rind from orange and reserve. Peel orange; cut orange into large pieces.
2.Place orange rind, orange pieces, cranberries and apples in food processor; process until finely chopped. Stir in Equal® and salt. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
Makes 12 servings.

Note: Amount of Equal® may vary depending on the tartness of the apples and cranberries.

Nutrition Information Per Serving of Fresh Cranberry Relish (2/3 cup): 41 cal., 0 g pro., 10 g carbo., 0 g fat, 0 mg chol., 22 mg sodium. Food Exchanges: 1/2 Fruit.

The Fayette County Cooperative Extension office will be closed on Thursday November 24th and Friday, November 25, in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.
Have a safe and happy Holiday!

Pest Patrol—Houseplant Insect Control

Several kinds of insects or insect relatives can become pests of home or home greenhouse plants. Usually, it is easier to prevent pest problems than to cure them. Some preventive measures to consider are listed below:

How to Avoid Problems

Buy only healthy plants from certified nursery dealers. The chance of buying infested plants that may appear healthy at the time is greater when buying plants of uncertain origin.

Always keep new plants isolated from other plants for 30 days to be sure they are not harboring pests.

When re-potting, thinning out or otherwise handling your plants, do not move from one group of plants to the next without washing your hands and utensils. Microscopic stages of insects and disease organisms can be spread this way.

When re-potting plants, use commercially prepared sterile soil rather than untreated soil from the yard or garden. Untreated soil can contain insects, mites, weed seeds or plant diseases.

Inspect your plants regularly for signs of infestations. If a plant begins to show signs of a problem, isolate it from nearby plants until you can determine that the condition is not contagious.

If you discover insect infestations, there are several courses you can take. What you can do will depend on the kind of insect involved, the degree of infestation, the kind of plant involved and its value to you. These are some of the control techniques.

Control Alternatives

Disposal- Easily replaced plants that are severely infested should be discarded rather than attempting to nurse them back to health. Even if they can eventually recover, the hazard of the infestation spreading to more valuable plants in the meantime is not worth the risk of keeping the plant.

Pruning- Leaves, fronds and stems that are so heavily infested that these parts are dead or dying are best pruned away. The amount of pruning necessary to reduce an infestation will be determined in part by the kind of plant involved. Those with good regenerative ability may be very severely pruned while other plants may be permanently disfigured by only moderate pruning.

Handpicking- Occasionally, large insects such as caterpillars, grasshoppers or beetles will get indoors in small numbers and quickly create noticeable damage. Handpicking the pests as they are found is usually simpler and more effective than other control techniques.

Alcohol swabbing- A cotton ball or cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol can be used to wipe off aphids and mites. The alcohol has some insecticidal effect on the insects that may not get picked up on the swab.

Pressure spraying- Aphids, mites, mealybugs, or thrips often can be removed or greatly reduced with a brisk water spray. The water pressure should be strong enough to knock the insects off but too weak to damage the plants. Repeat if necessary or use another method if results are not satisfactory.

Washing- Broadleaved plants can be washed with soapy water and a soft brush or cloth to remove or kill scales, aphids, mealybugs, or other tiny insects that stay on the plant constantly. Use one teaspoon of mild detergent or soap in a gallon of water. Although this method is time consuming, it may be the best alternative to insecticide sprays which may injure the plant. Washing will have to be repeated if the infestation reappears. A thorough washing often holds scale infestations at bay for several months.

Dipping- This is a modification of washing except that plants with finer foliage can be treated. Select a container large enough to accommodate the largest plant to be dipped. Only the above ground parts of the plant are dipped. When dipping, turn the plant upside down using crumpled paper or a cardboard disc to keep the plant roots out of water.

Hot water dipping- This method is specifically for treating African violets infested with cyclamen mites. Badly injured plant parts should be trimmed off where practical before dipping. The infested plant, pot and all, is immersed for 15 minutes in water held at 110 degrees F. Success of the treatment depends on careful control of the water temperature.

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Pest Patrol—Houseplant Insect Control (continued)

Insecticide Spray- Only a few insecticide products including insecticidal soaps, are available for treating plants inside the home, and even some of these may injure certain plants. Read the label thoroughly before you buy or use a product to be sure it is appropriate for your situation. Most of the houseplant insecticide products are ready-to-use pressurized aerosols or finger-pump atomizers. They are generally safe to a wide variety of plants but sometimes injury will occur if the applicator is held too close to the plant. During good weather when plants can be taken outdoors for spraying, a wider choice of insecticides is available. However, the same precautions for selecting an appropriate product pertain. Do not move sprayed plants back indoors until the spray has thoroughly dried on the plants.

COMMON PESTS

Aphids

Aphids are sucking insects with soft, rounded bodies. They range from 1/12 inch to 1/8 inch long and their color may vary. They occur in clusters on buds or new foliage. Aphids suck sap, causing reduced growth or stunting of the plant.

Feeding by some species may produce distorted leaves. Aphids secrete "honeydew" which gives the leaves a shiny appearance. A black sooty mold may grow on the honeydew. Dip, spray, alcohol swabbing, or washing can reduce infestations.

Fungus gnats

Fungus gnats are slender, delicate, mosquito-like flies. The larval stage is a small, active, thread-like white worm with a black head. The larvae live in damp soil and can damage small roots. Plants may drop leaves and generally lose vigor and color. Isolate infested plants. Insecticide sprays will kill adults. Allowing soil to dry more between waterings should help to control the larvae.

Mealybugs

Mealybugs are soft-bodied sucking insects that are covered with white, powdery wax filaments. They occur in leaf axils or branch crotches. Mealybugs suck plant sap and produce honeydew and produce symptoms like those from aphid infestations. Isolate infested plants and treat as for aphids.

Spider mites

Spider mites are very small and infestations may be overlooked until mites become very numerous or they begin to spin webbing on the plants. Mites remove sap from the plant, causing leaves to yellow and drop. Infested plants are stunted and unthrifty. Water sprays may be used to break up the webbing and reduce mite numbers. The plant foliage may be sprayed or dipped with insecticidal soaps. Be sure to treat the underside of the leaves. Treat at least two times, 10 days apart, to control newly-hatched mites. Mite eggs are not susceptible to insecticides.

Scales

Scales are stationary insects with shell-like coverings that protect their body. Some scales may be flat or convex, round, oval, or pear-shaped. Most are brown, but color can range from white to black. Scales produce honeydew, a substance that gives the leaves a shiny, sticky appearance. Sooty mold, a dark growth, may appear on the leaves of infested plants. Plants infested with scales show poor growth or are stunted. Spray or dip the foliage with a soapy wash. Repeat the treatment in 3 weeks and at intervals as needed.

Slugs

Slugs are fleshy, slimy animals. They may be light brown to black. Slugs rasp leaves, stems, flowers, or roots. Slugs may produce holes in the leaves or just scar the leaf surface. Silvery slime trails appear where they have crawled over surfaces. Slug baits containing metaldehyde may be used for control.

Sowbugs and Pillbugs

Sowbugs and Pillbugs are oval, hard-shelled, gray creatures that occur in damp places and hide under objects during the day. When disturbed, pillbugs curl up into a small ball. Sowbugs run for cover. Both feed on decaying organic matter, but may attack rootlets and tender seedlings. Sevin may provide some control. These creatures require humid conditions in order to survive. Allowing the soil to dry more thoroughly should solve the problem.

Whiteflies

Whiteflies are about 1/16 inch long and resemble powdery white moths. The immature stages are similar to scales in appearance and feed on the underside of the leaves. They suck sap, causing leaves to turn pale and die or drop off. Sooty mold may develop on the honeydew that these insects produce. Dip or spray infested plants. Several treatments at weekly intervals may be needed.

Revised: 1/94