



THE GARDEN SPADE



A monthly Gardening Publication of the University of Missouri Extension -- Southeast and East Central Regions

Pruning Hydrangea

by Katie Kammler

When to prune hydrangea so they still bloom can be very confusing. I get this question in the office often and the key is knowing what kind of hydrangea you have. The majority of hydrangea bloom on wood that was produced during the previous year known as old wood. These should be pruned after flower. Some flower on the current season's growth known as new wood. These can be pruned in the winter or early spring before the new growth takes place.

Climbing Hydrangea is a clinging vine that grows 60' to 80' in height. It has peeling, cinnamon colored bark and white flowers that open in early to mid-summer. It blooms on new wood so it is pruned in the winter to early spring.



Smooth Hydrangea is a shrub that will grow 3' to 5' tall. It has white flowers in late June through September on



new wood. This plant can be cut all the way to the ground in late fall or early spring.

Bigleaf Hydrangea

blooms on old wood but shoots can experience winter kill and have no flowers. Pruning should be done after flowering has



occurred. It is a fast growing shrub that grows 3' to 6' in height. The flowers are blue or pink in flat topped clusters. The color of the flower depends on the soil pH. Acid soils produce blue shades and alkaline soils produce pink.

Panicle Hydrangea has white flowers that appear on panicles 6" to 8" long in mid-summer. They flower on new wood so pruning is done in the winter or early spring. It is a fast growing shrub that can reach heights of 10' to 20'.



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April 2011

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Pruning Hydrangea

by Katie Kammler

Oakleaf Hydrangea is a slow growing shrub that will reach 4' to 6' in height with a wide spread due to suckering. They bloom in July to September with 4" to 12" long white flowers. Flowering is on old wood so it needs to be pruned after flowering. It also has beautiful fall foliage of red, orange-brown, and purple.



Top Ten Hydrangeas for Missouri

Hydrangea anomala subsp. *petiolaris*

Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Nikko Blue'

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Tokyo Delight'

Hydrangea paniculata 'Limelight'

Hydrangea paniculata 'Tardiva'

Hydrangea quercifolia 'Alice'

Hydrangea quercifolia 'Pee Wee'

Hydrangea quercifolia 'Brido'

A good source for information and picture of the above varieties, go to www.mobot.org/

The Perfect Planter

by Donna Aufdenberg

Container gardening is one of the most creative forms of gardening and can be thought of as living flower arrangements with roots.

Generally, plants can be grown in anything. Some of the more traditional containers include clay pots, plastic pots, ceramic pots, hanging baskets, wire baskets with a liner, concrete planters, planter boxes, whiskey barrels or tubs. Some of the unusual items include window boxes, wooden crates, tires, kiddie pools, old chairs, boots and the list goes on!

Regardless of what you use for your living flower arrangement, here are some tips for selecting the perfect planter.

- The container must have holes! Drainage is most important to keep plants looking their best.



- The container must be large enough to hold a sufficient amount of planting media for the roots of the plants to grow.
- Consider the weight of the planter once it has moist soil and plants in it. Is it going to be easy to move?
 - Consider where the pot will be sitting. Avoid black pots in full sun. Avoid porous containers in very hot, sunny spots (porous materials wick water away from the plants).
 - Decide whether the container needs to be attractive (high visibility areas).
- Remember to coordinate the containers color with the plant materials. Sometimes it is easier to start with neutral colors such as tans, terra cotta, and browns especially if you would like to change color combinations from year to year.

April Gardening Calendar

By Donna Aufdenberg

Outdoor Plants and Ornamentals

- Winter mulches should be removed from roses.
- Ornamental grasses can be cut back and divided right now.
- Plants bought out of greenhouses need to be hardened off before planting.
- Lift, divide, and replant mums as soon as new shoots appear.
- Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need no covering. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early summer.
- Cut back blooming shrubs right after they have bloomed.

Vegetable Gardening

- Start cucumber, cantaloupe, summer squash, and watermelon seed indoors in peat pots.
- Plants started indoors should be hardened off outdoors before being transplanted into the garden.
- Plastic jugs make inexpensive, easy-to-use “hot caps” for vegetable seedlings.
- Plant warm season vegetables after the chance of frost has passed.
- Flower stalks should be removed from rhubarb plants, if they develop.



Fruits and Nuts

- Pull mulches off the strawberry beds after last frost. Row covers can be kept on until bloom.
- Plant bare-root or potted fruits as soon as the soil can be worked.
- Remove tree wraps from fruit trees now.
- Protect bees and other pollinating insects. Do not spray insecticides on fruit trees that are blooming.

Indoor plants

- Prevent stem rot of house plants by potting plants up on a slight mound with the soil sloping 1/4 inch lower at the edge of the pot.
- Don't be too anxious to move your house plants outdoors. Even a good chill can knock the leaves off of tender plants.

Turfgrass

- Start mowing cool season grasses at recommended heights.
- Aerate turf if thatch is heavy or if soil is compacted.
- Apply crabgrass preventers before April 15th. Do not apply to areas that will be seeded.

Tips for Earlier Harvests

Try earlier varieties:

'Early Sweet'
Muskmelon
'Red Norland'
Potato
'Earliking' Sweet
Corn

Use transplants verses seeds when planting onions, cucumbers, melons and squash.

Set out small, stocky transplants.

Avoid transplants that already have fruit or flowers.

Mulch for moisture conservation and weed prevention to cut down on plant stress.

Use “hotcaps” to protect young transplants from wind and cool temperatures.

Use floating row covers to guard against insects.



Peach Trees

By Sarah Denkler

As temperatures slowly warm up we are starting to see blooms pop on ornamental and fruit trees.

Peach trees are among the first to burst forward. If you are scouting or watching your trees you should already see the buds swelling in anticipation of consecutive warm days.

This is also when fruit can be most vulnerable. Frost is responsible for killing many flowers this time of year. While you may see this as bad luck, as long as you don't lose all your buds to frost, it can be good for the harvest and the tree.

By now you should be familiar with the fact that you should thin your fruit trees and prevent the development of too many fruit on one limb. Frost does the thinning for you.

Peaches usually take about 3 years to start producing. They will continue to improve production and reach their peak at about 15 years. From this point on they will gradually decline but still bear fruit. A 15 ft. tree should produce between one and three bushels.

Peaches are sensitive to poor drainage so make sure they are in a well-drained soil and not in a low-lying area.

Prune plants in early spring before they bloom. An open center system is used to maintain good air circulation. This is easy to do if you start with small stock and train the tree as you prune each year.

Although it is not required to have two plants for cross pollination, a larger harvest is observed when there are more trees available for cross pollination.

Some good varieties (with bloomtime) for those who are looking include: Redhaven (early), Reliance (early), Glohaven (mid-season), Loring (mid-season), Belle of Georgia (late), Cresthaven (late), and Encore (late).

Some common diseases of peach include Brown Rot, Peach Scab, Peach Leaf Curl and Bacterial Spot.

Each can be controlled with a spray program that is started with bud swell.

Aphids, scale, borer, and oriental fruit moth can be problematic as well. If these are issues in your yard you may wish to consider a spray program for control. Bees must be considered when spraying for insects as they are needed for pollination.



Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle - Pass It On

By Barb Gray

As it is the right time of year to start seeds remember to recycle for the purpose. Use egg cartons, salad cartons, fruit containers and plastic cups as seedling trays to start seeds indoors. Use popsicle sticks as markers or cut the side out of a milk carton and write directly on the plastic with a sharpie. These plastic markers can be transplanted into the garden so you will remember what varieties you planted later in the season. Use plastic disposable plates as overflow trays for pots.

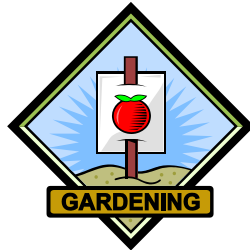
Hot Topic - Vegetable Gardening

by Katie Kammler

In recent years, providing information on growing vegetables has become the biggest part of my job. I give more talks on vegetable gardening than anything else and is the topic of a lot of questions that come into the office. I think the increased interest is due to high food costs and the desire to know where food is coming from.

Vegetables are easy to grow and can take a little space or a lot depending on your likes and available area. Many vegetables do well in pots if you don't have space to plant a garden. Tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, lettuce, radishes, and herbs can all be grown in containers. If you have space for an actual garden, remember to start with a soil test to determine what fertilizer inputs are necessary. Also, full sun is a must for vegetables.

The most popular vegetable to grow is tomatoes. Unfortunately, they are the vegetable with the most problems. They have many disease, insect, and weather related problems. To help prevent problems in your vegetable garden, not just on tomatoes, there are some easy practices to follow.



First, healthy soil equals healthy plants and healthy plants are more likely to fight off insect, disease, and weed pressure along with drought conditions. Water once a week deeply to encourage deep root growth. Watering with soaker hoses or drip irrigation keeps the foliage dry and helps prevent disease. Mulch to reduce weed problems, add organic matter to the soil, keep soil from splashing on the plants, and reduce soil erosion. Control insects that spread disease. Trellis plants such as tomatoes and cucumbers to keep them off the ground so they get better air and light flow to prevent disease and make them easier to pick.

Plant what you enjoy eating and remember that food pantries would love to have any extras that you might have. Vegetable gardening is a fun activity to get kids involved in too so they learn that food doesn't just come from the grocery store shelf. With some work outside in the summer time, you can grow some food for your table. If you have any questions about vegetables, contact your local extension specialist.

Recipe Using Herbs: Lemon Balm Bars

By Don and Carol Koehler, Master Gardeners

CRUST

1 cup bleached flour
1/4 cup confectioners sugar
1/2 cup melted butter

FILLING

1 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup Packed Lemon Balm leaves
2 Tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
pinch of course salt
3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 eggs



Preheat oven to 325 °F. for glass or non stick pan, 350 °F for all other types.

Make crust. Stir together flour and sugar. Cut in butter with fingertips or pastry blender until mixture resembles course crumbs. Press evenly into 8 inch square pan . Bake 20 minutes.

Meanwhile make filling; in food processor or blender, whiz sugar and Lemon Balm leaves until leaves are finely ground. Transfer to a medium bowl. Whisk in flour, baking powder, and salt. Whisk in lemon juice and eggs.

As soon as crust is baked, pour filling over and return to oven for 20 to 25 minutes more. Top should be barely firm. Cool on wire rack, dust with confectioners sugar and store in airtight container.

****ENJOY****

Plant of Merit - *Acer myabei* 'State Street' Maple

by Sarah Denkler

This tree is more cold hardy and drought tolerant than many common maples in Missouri. It also tolerates salt, pollution and clay soils making it a possibility as a street tree, especially when kept pruned.

At 45 feet in height the State Street Maple is an excellent source of shade. It displays a beautiful fall color of yellow. The leaves hold a typical maple shape with 5 lobes but the leaf margins are slightly rounded at each tip.



Hardiness zone is 4 to 7. This cultivar originated from a parent at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois.

Hot Topic - It's Spring Baby!

by Sarah Denkler

There is only one thing on my mind in April. It is finally here, SPRING! What do I do first? By the end of this month I want my summer vegetable garden in full swing. While I have been planning and changing my mind on what varieties I want to see this year, it is now time to implement that plan.



After deciding where to place the garden, begin with soil preparation. Before tilling add a little compost and saved leaf litter to the topsoil if you don't have a cover crop so it will be incorporated into the soil after tilling. Some may prefer to minimize tilling but one good till each year helps to incorporate organic matter and destroy insect eggs in the soil. Some weed seeds will come to the surface but are easily removed early with a hoe or by hand.

Remember to use succession planting for corn and bush beans by starting the first few rows the first half of April and continuing new rows every other week as late as August if you prefer. This will maximize the harvest time for each variety by giving you 2 to 4 rows to harvest at one time with produce becoming available every other week.

Plants that prefer warmth should be planted the last part of April. These include watermelon, tomato, pepper, okra, cucumber, pole and lima beans.

Companion plants can aid in pest management. Marigolds can be used around tomato and beans, basil is good with pepper and tomato. Corn grows well with beans, cucumber, melons, squash and peas.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Contact your local Extension Center if you have questions about any event on the calendar or if you have a horticultural event for the calendar.</p>					1 Garden Education, Delta Center in Portageville. 9AM Fee: \$10 Contact	2
3	4 Parkland MG, 6:30pm @ Courthouse Annex (3rd floor)	5 Poplar Bluff MG, 6:30 pm @ PB Ext. Center	6	7 Organic Gardening - MG Adv. Training, 6pm-9pm, Black River Electric, Fredericktown, MO, Fee: \$15	8	9
10	11	12 Raised Bed Gardening Bollinger County Library @ 6:30 p.m.	13	14 Delta Area MG, 7 pm, Medical Arts Bldg..	15	16 MG plant sale, 7-2pm. Arena park Conservation Shelter, Cape
17	18 Ste. Genevieve MG Meeting, 6:30pm, at the Ste. Genevieve Co. Ext. Center	19	20	21 Cape Girardeau Co. MG, 7 pm, Cape Co. Ext. Center	22	23
24	25 Perry Co. MG meeting, 6:30 pm, Perry Co. Ext. Center	26 Vegetable Grafting - MG Advanced Training, Cape County Extension Center. 6:30 p.m. Fee: \$15	27	28	29	30 Shiitake Mushrooms - MG Advanced Training, Cape County Extension Center, Jackson, MO, 9am—noon. Fee: \$20

Upcoming Events....

May

- ?? - Tree ID - MG Advanced Training, Perryville Seminary, Perryville, MO Fee: \$10
- 2 - Parkland MGs 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Farmington Courthouse Annex (3rd Floor)
- 3 - Poplar Bluff MGs 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm, Butler County Ext. Center
- 12 - Delta Area MGs 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm, Medical Arts Building, Sikeston, MO
- 16 - Ste. Genevieve MGs 3rd Monday, at Ste. Gen. County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- 19 - Cape Girardeau County MGs 3rd Thursday at Cape County Ext. Center at 7pm.
- 23 - Perry County MGs 4th Monday at the Perry County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.

June

- 6 - Parkland MGs 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Farmington Courthouse Annex (3rd Floor)
- 7 - Poplar Bluff MGs 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm, Butler County Ext. Center
- 7 - Culinary Herbs, MG Advanced Training, United Methodist Church in Poplar Bluff, MO from 9am-noon. Taught by Vanessa Williams. Fee: \$10
- 9 - Delta Area MGs 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm, Medical Arts Building, Sikeston, MO
- 11 - Culinary Herbs, MG Advanced Training, Cape Girardeau Extension Center in Jackson, MO from 9am-noon. Taught by Don, Carol and Jaime Koehler. Fee: \$20
- 16 - Cape Girardeau County MGs 3rd Thursday at Cape County Ext. Center at 7pm.
- 20 - Ste. Genevieve MGs 3rd Monday, at Ste. Gen. County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- 27 - Perry County MGs 4th Monday at the Perry County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- 30 - Shade Garden Field Trip to Homestead Farms in Owensville, MO. If interested call Donna 238-2420, Kate 883-3548 or Sarah 686-8064.

Editor's Corner

The Garden Spade is published monthly by University of Missouri Extension staff for individuals and families living in Southeast and East Central Missouri. This newsletter is provided by your local extension council.

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We welcome and encourage Master Gardener groups and individuals to submit items to the newsletter. We encourage the submission of any news such as upcoming volunteer opportunities, community events related to gardening, warm wishes or congratulations to fellow gardeners. We also encourage Master Gardeners sharing experiences and writing articles on timely topics.

All entries into the group news sections must be received by 4:30 on the 15th of each month for the following months news.

Email News to: kammlerk@missouri.edu,
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