

Horticulture Tips

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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR SEPTEMBER!

David Hillock

Landscape

- Watch for fall specials at garden centers and nurseries since fall is a great time for planting many ornamentals.
- Choose spring flowering bulbs as soon as available.
- Plant cool-season annuals like pansies, ornamental cabbage or kale, snapdragons and dusty miller when temperatures begin to cool.
- You have all of September to plant cool-season vegetables like spinach, leaf lettuce, mustard and radishes, and until the middle of September to plant rutabagas, Swiss chard, garlic and turnips.
- Watch for and control any late infestations of tree webworms.
- Twig girdler insects should be controlled if large numbers of small branches of elms, pecans, or persimmons are uniformly girdled from the tree and fall to the ground.
- Begin to reduce the amount of light on outside tropical houseplants by placing them under shade trees before bringing them indoors for the winter.

Lawn

- Last nitrogen fertilizer application of the year on warm-season grasses should be applied no later than September 15. (F-6420)
- Winter broadleaf weeds like dandelion will begin to emerge in late September, which is also the best time to control them with a 2, 4-D type herbicide.
- If pre-emergent control of winter-annual weeds (henbit, chickweed, annual bluegrass, etc.) is desired in lawns, the application should be completed by the 2nd week of September. (F-6421) *Note: Do not treat areas that will be seeded in the fall.*
- Continue bermudagrass spray program with glyphosate products for areas being converted over to tall fescue this fall. (F-6421)
- Plan to seed bluegrass, fescue or ryegrass as needed in shady areas in mid- to late-September. Fall is the best time to establish cool-season lawns (F-6419).
- White grub damage can become visible this month. Apply appropriate soil insecticide if white grubs are a problem (F-7306). Water product into soil.

Dollarspot Common Across Oklahoma

Dennis Martin

Currently, Dollarspot disease is visible on many lawns throughout the state where rainfall was moderate to heavy in August. This fungal disease is common on common bermudagrass lawns as well as in cool-season lawns that are at least partially composed of older Kentucky bluegrass varieties. The disease is worst when heavy dews are present and night time lows are in the 60s with day time highs anywhere in the 70s through 90s. The disease is worst where the individual varieties are very susceptible to the disease as well as where nitrogen and potassium are deficient. Presence of the disease cannot always be used as an indication of nutrient deficiency. Common bermudagrass sold as U-3 is particularly susceptible to dollarspot disease in Oklahoma. Affected turf often has dime to silver dollar sized patches that are tan or very light brown in color where leaves have been killed. The actual fungus causing the disease can often be seen in the morning as a cottony-white colored fungus (the mycelia). Although not always present, purple or dark brown color bands often separate the light tan dead areas on leaves from the green unaffected parts of the individual leaves.

An integrated pest management approach to dollarspot disease is suggested. This includes learning to tolerate small amounts of the disease. In severe cases, control of the disease can be improved by assuring that no potassium deficiency is present as well as making sure that nitrogen levels are adequate. If several weeks have elapsed since the last nitrogen fertilizer application has occurred on bermudagrass, then 0.5 to 0.75 lbs of actual nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. may be appropriate to help suppress the disease symptoms on common bermudagrass through alleviating nitrogen deficiency. On cool-season lawns, the first application of the fall season should not normally occur prior to mid- to late-September, depending upon the weather.

In some cases, only a fungicide application will work in controlling or suppressing dollarspot. Fungicides that normally provide good control include Bayleton (triadimefon), Rubigan (fenarimol), Banner (propiconazole), Chipco 26019 (iprodione), Prostar (flutolanil) and Eagle (myclobutanil), where the lead name is the trade name and the active ingredient is shown in parentheses). Heritage (azoxystrobin), commonly used for brown patch and *Rhizoctonia* blight control, should not be applied for dollarspot control as it may make dollarspot symptoms worse. Daconil (chlorothalonil) traditionally used by consumers and professionals for dollarspot control on residential lawns, can no longer be used on the home or residential lawn. However, commercial/professional applicators can use chlorothalonil containing products for dollarspot control on commercial and institutional lawns. Various additional consumer formulations of the above mentioned fungicides are available. Most importantly, examine the fungicide label for its ability to control the target disease on the appropriate use site as well as its use rates, intervals of application and other safety precautions. OSU Fact Sheet 7658: Dollarspot of Turfgrass provides an overview of identification and control measures for the disease. Copies of the fact sheet may be obtained at the local OSU County Extension office or on the web in pdf format at: <http://pods.dasnr.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-216>.

2005 Rose Winners

David Hillock

This year the All-America Rose Selection winners include four rose varieties - **DayDream™**, **Elle™**, **Lady Elsie May™**, and **About Face™**. There are 15 critical traits used to determine the outstanding performers, including hardiness, vigor and novelty. These four roses earned this honor after two years of rigorous appraisal in test gardens across the United States. While there are no test gardens in Oklahoma that participate in the All-American Selection program, test sites are found in Texas, Missouri and other states throughout the southeast.

Many roses are usually not without some challenge to grow in Oklahoma, but are often worth the effort. Of course, any time we can find roses that are resistant to the many pest problems they typically have, we welcome them in our gardens. Here are four that might be worth the effort. **DayDream™** is a landscape shrub rose that is compact and neat in size growing to about 2 feet. It is tolerant of diseases and has glossy, dark green leaves. Flowers are produced in abundance, are fuchsia-pink in color and slightly scented.

Elle™ is a hybrid tea rose with shell pink flowers with deep yellow undertones. Flower buds are held high on the shrub and have a strong spicy, citrusy fragrance. Elle™ has better than average resistance to mildew, rust, and black spot.

Lady Elsie May™ is an upright, spreading shrub rose with coral pink flowers with slight fragrance and appearing in clusters at the end of strong stems. Foliage is dark green and waxy and has excellent disease resistance.

About Face™ is a grandiflora with novel “backwards” colors. The inside of the petals is a light color of deep golden yellow while the back side of the petals is a darker bronzy orange-red. Flowers are up to five inches across and offer a mild fresh apple fragrance. Foliage is a rich green and has excellent disease resistance.

For more information on these and other All-America Rose Selections go to <http://www.rose.org/>.

Plant Profile - Surprise! Lilies

David Hillock

As I have driven to and from work lately I have noticed a number of brightly colored flowers growing in the middle of many yards. These brightly colored, lily-like flowers stand atop bare flowering stems that seem to have appeared out of nowhere as no foliage is present at this time.

More than likely this is probably one of several *Lycoris* species that bloom in late summer or early fall. *Lycoris* is a member of the amaryllis family and consists of approximately 11 or more species of herbaceous bulbs. One common name is Surprise Lily, obviously appropriate for their sudden appearance in late summer. Other common names include Spider Lily or Resurrection

Lily. Naked-lady, or perhaps a better name Naked-lily, is also attached to this plant though this common name is more commonly associated with the belladonna lily, *Amaryllis belladonna*, a closely related species. In fact, the flowers of *Lycoris squamigera* resemble those of belladonna lily and was once known as *Amaryllis hallii*.

Probably the most common species is *Lycoris radiata* with coral red flowers and long, curved stamens protruding well beyond the petals giving it that spidery look. Flowers appear on stems 1 ½ to 2 feet tall. *Lycoris squamigera* has large rose-lilac or pink flowers with less pronounced stamens. *L. squamigera* is considered by some to be easiest to grow. Other species worth noting include *L. sanguinea* with orange-red flowers also lacking prominent stamens and *L. aurea* or golden spider lily that produces 3-inch bright yellow blossoms in early fall, but may not be as hardy as the other species listed. Several other species or hybrids of *Lycoris* are available ranging in shades of reds to pinks, orange to yellow and even white. Most *Lycoris* species are hardy to at least zone 6 and naturalize throughout the southern states.

Foliage of *Lycoris* species are strap-like and produced after flowering in the fall and persist through winter in mild areas or appear early spring, only to die back early summer. Most forget the plants are there until late summer, early fall when suddenly the stout flower stalks emerge giving rise to the clusters of flowers.

Lycoris are easy to grow and not too picky about their growing conditions. They actually prefer sunny locations that remain fairly dry during their summer dormancy. Water regularly while plants are growing and then allow soil to go dry when foliage begins to wither.

Harvesting and Storing Vegetables

David Hillock

Vegetables such as carrots, beets, rutabagas, turnips, and Irish potatoes, when harvested, may be stored in a cool, moist location and remain in usable condition until late winter. Place the vegetables in ventilated plastic bags in a cool basement cellar or “store” them in place in the garden. Once produce reaches maturity, it will “keep” in place through early January. For protection during the cold of December, January, and February, the soil layer over the mound should be six to 10 inches thick. Limited quantities of vegetables may be kept in the refrigerator in order to reduce the problem of frequent removal from the soil mound. Other crops that produce and store easily include winter squash and pumpkin. These require cool, dry storage conditions.

Pecan Nut Drop

David Hillock

Recently I have received several calls related to pecan nut drop. Since I am not a pecan specialist, I started to research the problem and luckily found an article written by former Extension Specialist, Dean McCraw. Here is what Dean had to say on the subject.

Homeowners often inquire about the pecan tree's tendency to drop some or in some case all of its nuts prior to nut maturity. Pecans routinely drop nuts at four somewhat regular intervals during the season.

The first drop is not obvious and will go unnoticed unless the crop is carefully observed. Pecan trees bear female flowers in clusters terminally on current season's growth. Flowers produced toward the apex of the cluster tend to be weaker than those produced toward the base of the cluster. These weak flowers as well as other improperly formed or defective flowers either as individuals or in clusters will drop almost immediately after flower opening in early to mid-May. Short, non vigorous shoots normally drop more flowers at the first drop than longer, healthier shoots. Ideal shoot length on mature pecan trees varies with variety and condition but is about 6 to 10 inches.

In order for a nut, or most other fruit for that matter, to develop and mature, it must be pollinated, i.e., pollen must be transferred from the male flower or flower parts to the female flower or flower parts. In pecan the male flower is the catkin and the female is the cluster of flowers born on the terminal of current season's growth. In Oklahoma pollination occurs from mid- to late-May or just prior to drying and falling of the catkins. The second and third crop consists of those female flowers that were not pollinated and those that abort due to self-pollination. Self-pollination increases the second and third drop thus the need for cross-pollination even in pecan varieties that can be self-pollinated.

The fourth and last normal nut drop begins about nine weeks after pollination, usually in late July and continues through August. During this period those nuts that were not properly fertilized or for various reasons failed to develop properly will drop.

Pecan trees normally will set in the range of 16-66% of the flowers they produce. In other words, from about 34 to 84% of the flowers produced will normally fall. In heavy crop years trees that are heavily laden and under some kind of stress will also drop additional nuts. This is part of the tree's natural defense mechanism.

Excessive nut drop during the fourth drop, July through September, in moderate crop years is usually due to insect and/or disease injury. Feeding injury caused by insects, e.g., stink bugs, late season pecan nut casebearer, nut curculio or pecan weevil can cause nuts to drop. Pecan weevil and curculio damage appears as a dark stain fluid on the surface of the shuck. Casebearer damage usually consists of a larva in the nut or fecal material from a puncture near the base of the nut. Nuts severely affected by pecan scab will also drop.

Growers and homeowners who observe excessive nut drop in July and August should check the nuts closely for injury. If insect or disease is found to be the problem, then a judgment must be made as to the advisability of pesticide application. Factors weighing into this decision include the pest involved, closeness to harvest and grower goals and capabilities.

Bear in mind that for large fruited varieties such as 'Mohawk' an ideal crop load is 50% of the terminals bearing nuts. Smaller fruited varieties and most natives should have no more than 65 to

75% of the terminals bearing nuts. Heavier loads often lead to, among other things, poorly developed kernels and reduced bloom next year.

Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference, November 16-18, Stillwater

Dennis Martin

The 60th Annual Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show is set for November 16- 18, 2005 in Stillwater Oklahoma. The event will be held at the Watkins Center on the corner of Washington and Hall of Fame. Special conference lodging room rates are available at the Fairfield Inn (\$65/night) and the Best Western (\$69/night). Lodging room reservations can be made by calling the Fairfield Inn at 405.372.6300 or the Best Western at 405.377-7010.

The opening day of the conference, Wednesday, November 16, features a general session and a sports turf management session being offered concurrently in the morning and afternoon. The trade show will open from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday. Wednesday evening will feature the traditional Casino Night entertainment.

On Thursday, November 17 concurrent golf turf management, lawn care and sod production sessions will be offered in the morning and afternoon. The trade show will be open during mid day and conclude in early afternoon of November 17.

Friday, November 18 will feature a pesticide applicator continuing education session featuring an overview of current turf pest management research at OSU on weed, insect and disease control.

Conference pre-registration flyers will be sent out in October to those people on the Oklahoma Turfgrass Research Foundation (OTRF) Mailing list or by email on the Oklahoma Turfgrass Notes email list serve. To be placed on the OTRF mailing list contact Tonya Murray at 918.437.0835. To be placed on the Oklahoma Turfgrass Notes email newsletter list contact Dennis Martin at Dennis.L.Martin@okstate.edu.

Master Gardener Corner

David Hillock

2006 State Master Gardener Continued Training Conference - Plans are already taking place for the 2006 State Master Gardener Continued Training Conference to be held in McAlester on **Friday, May 19, 2006**. The **Pittsburg County Master Gardeners** will host the conference and are already enthusiastically making plans. Stay tuned for more details! Be sure to mark your calendars now and we hope to see you all in May 2006!

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Ornamental Plant Materials Conference

September 21-22, 2005, Holiday, Inn, Stillwater

Keynote Speaker: Tom Buchter, Holden Arboretum, Kirtland, Ohio.

Nursery, Landscape and Greenhouse Trade Show and Convention

September 30-October 1, 2005, Tulsa Convention Center

Contact Wendy Gerdes – Oklahoma ONLAOGGA@aol.com

Greenhouse Growers' Fall Update

October 26, 2005, Holiday Inn, Stillwater

Contact Mike Schnelle at mike.schnelle@okstate.edu or 405-744-7361

Tree Care Issues Conference

November 9, 2005, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

Poinsettia Open House

December 2, 2005, TLC Greenhouses, Oklahoma City

6th Annual Oklahoma/Arkansas Turf Short Course

January 11-12, 2006, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

The event is an introductory short course that targets those practitioners in the landscape and lawncare industries who have not had the opportunity to take an introductory turf course. However some attendees are those who are new to the AR/OK region or those simply wanting to brush up on regional turf recommendations. The course covers turf identification, selection, establishment and the maintenance practices common to the region. The focus of the short course is on the "why" behind the "how" turf is managed in the region. More information on the conference will be available in October.

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.