

Horticulture Hints

November 2009

What to do with all those LEAVES!?

The air turns brisk, college football moves into conference play and the autumn leaves have fallen. What once was a beautiful backdrop of fall color is now scattered on the lawn like toilet paper after a Halloween prank.

It is a bit overwhelming to see the lawn covered in leaves, knowing you should do something to remove them.

A thin layer of leaves will not harm a yard; maybe a big gust of wind will blow them down the street.

But a heavy layer of leaves can be detrimental to your lawn and needs to be removed. Generally, mowing will take care of most leaves. A mulching mower works the best, chopping them into smaller pieces. A side discharge mower will also work, but you may need to go over the leaves twice to get them chopped into small enough pieces.

If this is not going to take care of the masses of leaves in your yard, composting is always a great option.

When Nancy composts leaves at her house, she shreds them with the lawn mower, layers three inches on top of the vegetable garden and tills them in. If she has more leaves than needed on the garden, she piles them up to make compost for the following year.

If you build your own compost bin, it should be at least three feet cubed for the best results.

When composting leaves, mix in nitrogen as you add leaves to the pile. Leaves are high in

carbon, which makes great compost, but they are low in nitrogen.

Add nitrogen in the form of a fertilizer or fresh green organic matter such as grass clippings. The best ratio is 1 part green to 2 parts brown. If you use a fertilizer, be sure it doesn't contain any weed killers.

Including a layer of soil is also good for quicker composting.

As you add leaves to the compost, moisten them until they are the consistency of a wet sponge. Check the compost regularly and water to maintain adequate moisture content.

Moisture is slow to soak through a leaf pile, but it's needed for decomposition. Be careful not to over-water; you don't want the leaves to be soggy.

Turn your compost pile frequently to assure oxygen is getting into the middle. Turning also keeps the pile from compacting, increases airflow and speeds decomposition.

Knowing what to do with those extra leaves is half the battle. Now get to mowing and raking! ❁

What to do in November

- New Garden Store hours:
Mon-Fri 8:30-5 and Sat 8-5
- Plant trees, shrubs, bulbs and mums
IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO PLANT!
- Apply fertilome Winterizer to the lawn
- Add Cotton burr compost to clay soil in your vegetable and annual gardens for better plants next year
- Mulch strawberries and roses around Thanksgiving
- Choose from our wide selection of quality birdfeeders give as a gift; early holiday shoppers - check out all of our other great gift ideas!
- HAVE A GREAT THANKSGIVING

Blueville's Garden Store will be closed from Thursday, Nov. 26 through Sunday, Nov. 29 for the Thanksgiving holiday. We are thankful for your patronage over the past 47 years and look forward to serving you in the years to come.



Nancy's Notebook

Putting the landscape to bed

It is almost Turkey Day, and just around the corner is Christmas! Once again, the year has gone by so quickly.

This is the time of year to put the landscape to rest.

There are two things you should do to insure next spring you will have a healthy, green lawn.

After you have removed all those leaves from the lawn (see article on previous page), apply Fertilome Winterizer for a good strong root system and faster green-up in the spring.

If you have hybrid tea roses, by Thanksgiving cut them back to about 18" and mound 12" of mulch or cotton burr compost around the crown to protect the graft through the winter.

Shrub roses, such as Knock-outs and Homeruns, do not need any extra care, but it wouldn't hurt to add a little extra mulch. Wait until spring to prune, clean up any dead branches or shape up the shrub.

Perennials that will need extra

protection with a layer of mulch through the winter months include mums, butterfly bush and agastache.

You will also need to mulch your perennials if the hardiness of your plant is classified in a zone 6 or above (Manhattan is in zone 5).

Hydrangeas are another plant that may have difficulty surviving our hard winters. Mulch heavily to insure the plant will come back in the spring and to encourage more blooms.

Endless Summer Hydrangeas bloom on both old and new wood. Therefore, if you want more blooms, it is essential you provide that extra defense against these cold Kansas winters.

Don't forget to store tender bulbs like elephant ears, caladiums, cannas and dahlias in a cool dry place (above freezing) for the winter.

Use vermiculite or perlite to store them in; do not store them in a plastic bag, as it will hold moisture.

If you have any more questions on over-wintering certain plants, or when to prune or transplant trees or shrubs, email me (nmoore@bluevillennursery.com) or give us a call at the Garden Store.

Happy Thanksgiving! ❁

BUY 3 TREES, WE'LL PLANT 'EM FREE!

Saturdays; October 31, November 7 & 14

Buy three container trees at the Garden Store
and we will plant them for free.

Standard charges apply for additional trees and planting.

