

Out in the Garden

Rockport Garden Club, October 2019



Horticultural Classroom: Putting Your Garden to Bed

Now that fall has arrived, it is time to prepare our gardens for winter. Before getting started on your fall garden tasks, check the garden beds for overcrowding and gaps. Take photos, place markers, and make notes and plan for next spring while this summer's garden is still fresh in your mind and you can still see those plants, which will soon disappear underground.



Remember, fall is the best time to plant and transplant trees, shrubs and perennials because the soil is still warm and air temperatures are cooler, creating an ideal condition for good root establishment.

In your perennial beds, you can divide overgrown perennials and relocate, as well as move those suffering from too much sun or too much shade to a more suitable location. (If you have too much of something, tag it for digging in the spring for the Plant Sale.) When the perennials are completely spent, start cutting them back following the rule "cut down when brown." Be sure to remove diseased plant debris to inhibit disease and pests from reoccurring next year. Mulching to protect most perennial plants is done when the soil has started to harden, which is generally after the first hard or killing frost. See: <https://www.thespruce.com/winter-mulching-in-cold-climate-gardens-1403588>.

You may prune summer- and fall-blooming trees, but overall, limit tree and shrub pruning to dead, diseased, or damaged branches as pruning promotes growth, and that is the wrong signal to send plants when shutting down for the winter.

Lawn care continues into fall. While it is still growing, keep cutting the lawn progressively 1/2" shorter leaving it

Questions? Contact your Home Gardening Committee:

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at 1 1/2" – 2" for the winter. Now that Rockport's water restrictions have been lifted on sprinkler use, you can spread Winterizer or pelleted lime (depending on results of your soil testing) in early October and water in per the instructions. Continue to rake leaves off lawns and put in the compost pile or rake them into your perennial beds.



After all that, you can relax, with enticing nursery catalogs in hand, and dream of all the great projects you have in store for next year!

October Garden Reminders

- Plant evergreens; plant/transplant deciduous trees, shrubs, groundcovers after leaf fall
- Divide and move perennials
- Dig up gladioli, dahlias and other summer tubers to store over winter in a cool, dry location
- Rake leaves off lawn and compost; apply Winterizer early October
- Plant spring blooming bulbs now until ground freezes
- Water broadleaf evergreens and newly planted trees until ground freezes



Happenings

Workshop, "Create Your Own Autumn Wreath," Thursday, October 3rd, 10 – Noon, Nunan Florist & Greenhouses, 269 Central Street in Georgetown.

You will only pay for the materials you use, including a grapevine base, approximately \$35 – \$40. To register email:

moorbymary@gmail.com.

