



Riverview Garden Club Helpful Hints



November 2019

November is here. The leaves are falling and it's getting colder and wetter. As autumn turns to winter, your main jobs in the garden are mostly about protecting plants and structures from the wilder weather to come.

Trees and Shrubs--If natural precipitation is sparse and ground is not frozen, water evergreen trees and shrubs to ensure they are well hydrated heading into winter. Remove dead or diseased branches from trees and shrubs. Continue planting container grown and balled and burlapped plants as long as the ground can be worked and the weather permits. Mulch well and keep watering new plantings until the ground freezes. Protect landscape plants that are prone to winter windburn damage by wrapping them in burlap or building burlap barriers between the plants and the prevailing wind. This is mainly a threat to some broadleaf evergreens such as camellia, Nadina, cherry laurel, boxwood and some hollies.

Winterization—Don't forget to blow out your irrigation systems. Winterize lawn mowers and rototillers by either draining the gas or adding a fuel stabilizer. (Follow manufacturer recommendation) Clean and sharpen dirty garden tools and treat with oil or other rust inhibiting products. Disconnect hoses from water spouts to avoid freezing damage. Stow away any breakables that don't care for sub-freezing temperatures, such as plastic rain gauges, ornaments, statuary or fountains.

Lawns—Mow the lawn for the last time by lowering the cutting blade to 2 inches and use a bag to catch any weed seeds. Aerate your lawn now as there still is time before winter sets in. You can either use a lawn aerator or simply insert a garden fork at regular intervals and lean it back slightly to let air in. Continue to clear fallen leaves off the lawn to keep it healthy.

Vegetable Gardens—Heap chopped leaves on vegetable gardens to insulate soil and encourage worm activity. Prepare a bed for planting autumn garlic. Improve heavy soils with organic matter before planting.

Perennials—Leave coneflower, aster, liatris, and anise hyssop seedheads in place to feed birds.

Bulbs—Continue to lift dahlia tubers, begonias and gladiolus corms to store dry over the winter months. Remove the dead foliage before storing.

Birds—Fill and hang bird feeders and install a birdbath heater. Encourage hungry birds into your garden by investing in bird baths and bird feeders. They will keep pest numbers down and bring joy on a bleak winter's day.

Houseplants—Houseplant growth will slow so apply less fertilizer and water. Move houseplants closer to windows or to sunnier exposures if plants are dropping leaves. Don't allow the leaves to touch the glass because they will freeze in winter.

Fruit—Strawberry plants need protection from winter extremes. Apply winter protection when plants are dormant but before temperatures drop below 20 degrees F, usually late November or early December. Divide mature clumps of rhubarb once they're dormant. Prune pear and apple trees anytime between now and February.

Deer—Get your deer protection in place, whether it's fencing or repellents. As native food supply dies off with the season, deer go looking for what's left, and that's often the evergreens and tasty tender shrubs in yards.



*Happy
Thanksgiving*

--Sandy