



“From the Potting Shed”
Riverview Garden Club – Helpful Hints
November 2022

November is generally a cool, gray month in the Northeast with wintry weather on the way! Time to finish up your garden chores and put your garden to bed for the winter. Here are some tips selected from Margaret Roach’s blog, “A Way to Garden”. November is a time to protect your plants, trees and shrubs from harsh winter conditions and prepare your garden for a successful start next spring.

Things to do in the garden this month...

Transform leaves and other debris

- Rake leaves to reduce thick accumulation in formal beds and borders to prevent voles and mice from burrowing and nesting over winter.
- Prevent matted buildup of leaves on the lawn to avoid pests and disease.
- Recycle leaf litter into mulch and compost - try not to send leaves to the trash!
- Create “leave the leaves” zones at the edges of your yard to support the larvae and eggs of moths, butterflies and beneficial insects that will emerge in the spring.
- Start a leaves-only compost pile for leaves and use the proceeds as mulch next year. Running over dry leaves with the mower to shred will speed its breakdown.
- Extract finished compost and top dress your vegetable-garden beds with it, getting a jump on spring soil prep.

Plant the last of your bulbs

- Many flower bulbs can go in the ground this month before the ground freezes
- Don’t let spring flowering bulbs sit forgotten in your garage all winter-get those bulbs in!
- Plant a container with a variety of spring bulbs using a layering method shown in this YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgktdLLepk4>

Focus on prevention—of pests, weeds, and disease

- First tend to any plants that showed signs of disease, weed or insect infestation before weather interferes with your clean-up
- Pest control: Eliminate habitat and hiding places for the specific pests where they occurred and eliminate some of the population by removing egg cases.

- Clear turf or weeds from around the trunks of fruit trees and ornamentals to reduce winter damage by rodents and rabbits. Hardware cloth collars should be in place year-round, sunk an inch or so into the soil, and standing 18 inches high. Use half-inch mesh or smaller.
- Last call for soil samples for testing. If you had areas where something didn't fare well, gather a soil sample before the ground freezes and take or send it in for analysis your local Extension Service.

Trees and Shrubs

- Be on the lookout for dead, damaged, diseased wood in trees and shrubs and prune them out as discovered.
- Prune before winter arrives with its harsher weather, where weaknesses left in place invite tearing and unnecessary extra damage to limbs and branches.
- Remove suckers and water sprouts, but don't do aesthetic pruning now.

Vegetables, Fruit and Herbs

- If planning a patch of strawberries or asparagus for next spring, do the tilling and soil preparation now so bare-root plants ordered over the winter can be planted extra early come spring.
- Mulch existing strawberry plants with a couple of inches of straw.
- Let asparagus foliage go brown on its own; don't cut back till later, or even earliest spring.
- Plant garlic a month before frost is in the ground
- Prepare a sunny spot, and plant each clove 2 or so inches deep and 6 inches apart in the row, with about 12 inches between rows, then mulch. Not to worry if green growth may appear this fall.
- Parsley and chives can be potted up and brought indoors for offseason use. A few garlic cloves in a pot will yield a supply of chive-like (but spicier) garlic greens all winter for garnish!

Caring for Perennials and Roses

- Protect roses from winter damage by mounding up their crowns with a 6- to 12-inch layer of soil before the ground freezes. After all is frozen, add a layer of leaf mulch to further insulate.
- Cannas, dahlia and other tender bulb-like plants need careful digging for indoor storage.
- Once frost blackens the foliage, cut back tops to 6 inches and dig carefully, then brush or wash off soil and let dry for two weeks or so to cure. Stash in a dry spot, like an unheated basement or crawl space, around 40-50 degrees, in boxes or pots filled with bark chips or peat moss. With the cannas, skip the medium, and just put them in cardboard boxes or bins that are left open in the cellar.
- If you want perennials and biennials to self-sow, shake pods around before removing plant carcasses.
- Plants with showy or bird-friendly seedheads, like grasses and coneflowers can be left for the winter and cleaned up in spring.
- Prepare new beds for future planting by smothering grass or weeds with layers of recycled cardboard or thick layers of newspaper, then put mulch on top.

Caring for the lawn

- Keep mowing until the grass stops growing.
- Make the last cut a short one.
- Take your mower in for service after the final mowing, rather than in the spring rush.
- Store the mower without gas in the tank - run it dry. If it's got too much fuel in it, add stabilizer from the hardware or auto supply store.

November Birth Flower (from Birds and Blooms)

Autumn's most popular bloom, the chrysanthemum, is also the November birth flower. Chrysanthemums bloom in a variety of bright colors, making them a decorative focus for gifts—especially for November birthdays and Thanksgiving tables. Mums represent friendship, honesty and loyalty. The meaning of chrysanthemums change based on the color of the bloom. White mums symbolize loyalty and honesty; yellow mums represent a broken heart; violet mums are known for get-well wishes; and red mums symbolize love.



Happy Fall Gardening!