UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION

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# The Garden Bench

## July/August 2023

Gardening and home landscape information from UGA Cooperative Extension in Houston County. Our newsletter provides research-based horticulture information to help Middle Georgia gardeners.

**Inside this issue:**



## Special Points of Interest:

**Mark your calendars!**

### → Ask a Master Gardener

Bring your gardening questions to the Master Gardener booth @ the Perry Farmers Market 9am-1pm

Sep 9, Oct 14, Nov 11

### → Gardening with the Masters

Sep 12—Fall Turf

Sep 19—Edible Landscape

Sep 26—Dividing Perennials

Classes will be held at Hafley Park (1527 Sunshine Ave. Perry, GA) unless otherwise noted.

Registration fee of $10 covers all materials

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Stay up-to-date with Agriculture and Natural Resources in Houston County! Subscribe at** Agriculture & Natural Resources | Houston County (uga.edu)

## Plant Spotlight : Turfgrass Diseases

Spring brought a change in our lawns from dormant brown to vibrant green. Unfortunately, while the warm, moist weather in our area allows our lawns to get a jumpstart on summer, it also makes them susceptible to a variety of turfgrass diseases, including Brown Patch, Fairy Rings, Dollar Spot, Leaf Spot, Pythium Root Rot, Take-all Root Rot, Large Patch, Leaf Spot, Anthracnose, and a variety of Slime Molds. The UGA Extension publication, Turfgrass Diseases in Georgia: Identification and Control: https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201233_8.PDF is a useful tool for identifying the type of fungus that has affected your lawn.


Slime Mold


Gray Leaf Spot


Fairy Ring

Proper turf management is of utmost importance in preventing turf disease. Culture and environment are the key reasons diseases develop since potential turf pathogens are nearly always present. Disease problems are encouraged by improper watering, soil compaction, drainage problems, improper fertilization, nutrient deficiencies, excessive thatch, and improper mowing. In most cases, presence of a disease indicates an underlying cultural and/ or environmental problem that needs to be addressed.

Choosing a turf species that is appropriate to your environmental conditions and following recommended cultural practices will reduce the likelihood of turfgrass disease in your lawn, but sometimes fungicides are necessary. When used, fungicides should be part of a total management program. Follow label recommendations for rates and safety precautions when using all pesticides.

The Georgia Pest Management Handbook: Home and Garden Edition contains non-commercial recommendations for pest control. The section addressing both insect and disease control in home turf is available at: https://ipm.uga.edu/files/2022/10/Home-Edition_Turf.pdf In this publication you will find both management tips to help prevent development of these fungal diseases and fungicide recommendations for various fungal turf diseases.

# Home Garden and Landscape Tips for Middle Georgia

### *Lawn Tips:*

Good cultural practices can prevent many lawn problems. The most important practice for a healthy lawn is to keep it mowed at the right height. Don't remove more than 1/3 the grass blade height at a mowing. Keep mower blades sharp to avoid damaging the lawn by tearing the grass blades.

Many lawn problems are due to improper watering: wait to water until the grass begins to turn bluish-gray. Most established lawns need only about one inch of water per week. **The most efficient and effective time to water is after sunset and before sunrise.**

Bermuda, St. Augustine, Zoysia, and Centipede lawns can be fertilized in July. Do not fertilize Centipede lawns after Sept 1 or other lawns after Sept 15, and don't fertilize if the grass will not be watered properly or is water stressed.

Post emergent herbicides can be applied to small actively growing weeds at air temperatures between 60-90 F. Applications to grass stressed by high temperatures or drought increases the possibility of injury and usually results in poor weed control.

For more information on Georgia lawns, visit *https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201009_2.PDF*

### *Flowers:*

Don't forget to keep those container plants watered! Water when the top of the soil dries, and apply enough water to run out the bottom of the pot.

Fertilize and "dead-head" annuals and perennials. Pinch back mums to make them bushier and keep them blooming longer.

Start seeds of favorite biennials and other fall flowers in pots. Seedlings should be ready for transplanting in the fall.

Sunflowers are ready to harvest when the back of the head turns brown. Plant or transplant daylilies and irises beginning in late August.

### *Fruits & Nuts:*

Apply a heavy mulch layer around strawberries to protect them from heat and drought. Fertilize strawberries in August.

Water fruit trees once a week, when the soil dries out.

Fertilize established figs if they are watered.

Apply mulch around fruit trees, but to avoid creating a path for insects and disease, do not place it right up against the trunk.

Prevent disease by promptly disposing of fallen fruit, leaves, and dead limbs.

| Planting Dates | Type of Vegetable |
|---|---|
| Through July 10 | Okra |
| Through July 15 | Tomatoes (indeterminate, grape, cherry, determinate) |
| July 1-Aug 1 | Beans (pole, lima), Butterpeas |
| July 5-Aug 10 | Bush beans |
| July 10-July 30 | Eggplant |
| July 15-Aug 15 | Cauliflower, Cucumber |
| July 25-Aug 10 | Peppers (bell, hot, hot-sweet) |
| Aug 1– Aug 25 | Summer squash |
| Aug 1-Sept 1 | Broccoli, Collards, Kale |
| Aug 1– Sept 20 | Beets |
| Aug 1-Oct 1 | Cabbage |
| Aug 10-Sept 15 | Turnips |
| Aug 15-Sept 15 | Mustard |
| Aug 20-Sept 15 | Carrots |

### *Vegetables & Herbs:*

Before spraying insecticides on your edible plants, check the label for how long you must wait after spraying before harvesting. Each insecticide has a waiting period after application before you can harvest.

With regular watering, vegetables and herbs can thrive in hot, dry environments. Keeping vegetables picked, well watered and fertilized will encourage continued production. If needed, fertilize every four weeks. Water twice a week with 3/4 inch water. Mulch to control weeds and water loss.

**Most vegetables are best harvested in early morning.** This is especially important for leafy greens like lettuce and chard, for fresh herbs such as parsley and basil, for crisp fruiting vegetables such as peas, and for anything in the cabbage family, such as broccoli and radishes.

Examine your plants regularly for insects and disease.

### *Shrubs & Trees:*

To encourage a second bloom on crape myrtles, fertilize, water, and remove faded flowers.

**Do not prune or fertilize spring-flowering shrubs like azalea, camellia, and viburnum after mid-July if you want flowers next year!**

Watch for damaging insects on shrubs like euonymus, azalea, camellia, pyracantha, holly, gardenia, and pittosporum. Azalea caterpillars, scale, spider mites, lace bugs and spittle bugs are common now. Spray roses for insects and diseases as needed. For additional information on the control of common pests of landscape plants, visit https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201074_8.PDF

Apply a light application of fertilizer to newly planted ornamental trees and shrubs during July. See https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201065_7.PDF

Newsletter compiled by Nancy Edger, Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

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