

# Tips for the Landscape and Garden

Tips adapted from Bob Westerfield, State Consumer Horticulturist for the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, and Walter Reeves, Retired Extension agent for DeKalb County and Saturday Morning Gardening Show Host on WSB Radio.



Order peony roots now for planting in October. Plant them at least a month before the average first frost date in your area. Planting should be completed before the first killing frost occurs.

Check your hanging baskets' watering needs constantly during the summer. Wind and sun dry them more rapidly than other containers.

Take 6 to 9 inch cuttings of roses for rooting, using a sharp knife. Remove all but the top two or three leaves. Insert the cutting 4 to 6 inches deep in well-prepared soil in bright light. Firm, water well, and cover with an inverted glass jar or base of a 2-liter plastic bottle to conserve moisture. Be sure the cutting does not receive direct sun, or it might overheat.

Apples and pears trained as cordons, espaliers, and other formal shapes can be summer pruned in early August.

Prune tropical hibiscus plants you plan to bring indoors. Reduce them to a size that will fit in front of your sunniest window in December.

To reduce the number of pests on your fruit trees for the coming year, pick up and destroy all fallen fruit. Worms hide in fallen fruit and then pupate in the soil.

They will be ready to lay eggs the next year if not removed now.

Water your plants several hours before applying pesticides, especially during dry weather. Drought-stressed plants have less water in their plant tissues, and the chemicals that enter the leaves consequently will be more concentrated and may burn the leaves. Avoid pesticide use if possible by hand-picking pests.

If you had tremendous numbers of Japanese beetles this year, you may get some control next year by poisoning the grubs. Now is the best time to do it; remember to water heavily after the insecticide application.

Consider treating your lawn grubs with an organic control called milky spore which is most effective if most of the neighborhood participates. Milky Spore is a naturally occurring bacterium that affects only Japanese Beetle grubs. Milky Spore begins working as soon as it is applied if grubs are feeding. Once grubs are infected they will multiply the Spore by several billion times and spread it further. In warm climates good control can occur in one to three years. Once established in a lawn, Milky Spore has been known to last 15 to 20 years.

Now is the time to fertilize roses with 1 tablespoon of 10-10-10 or rose food, per foot of plant height, to stimulate some new growth. Prune back to encourage sturdier growth. As the weather cools, you will get roses for the fall. Continue to deadhead as flowers fade always cutting back to a five-leaf cluster of leaves.

It is easy to see the webs of the fall webworms in your trees. If you can reach it with a stick, destroy the webbing to expose worms to the elements and predators.

Continue to water only 1 inch for lawns if needed throughout the summer. Keep track of rainfall in your

yard with a simple rain gauge. Avoid watering when it rains to save water and money.

Remove old plants that have stopped producing to eliminate shelters for insects and disease organisms.

The last two weeks of August is the time to spray Kudzu with a brush killer type herbicide containing glyphosate or triclopyr, or mow all visible foliage, since it will be at its weakest stage of growth this time of year. Pull as much as possible to remove roots.

Snap bean, tomato, and pepper flowers may fail to develop fruit when daytime temperatures rise above 90 degrees. Try installing some shade cloth to reduce temperatures.

If birds get more of your berries, cherries, and raspberries than you do, try some yellow varieties. Birds think the yellow fruits are not ripe and do not eat as many.

During the first half of the month you can still plant summer grasses, such as Bermuda grass, Centipede, St. Augustine, and Zoysia.

Sweet corn, lettuce, melons, and green onion will hold their quality after harvesting if you lunge them into ice-water for 20 minutes before storing.

Plants signal their need for water. Turfgrass lies flat after being walked on and many plants lose their shine and droop a little. Water only when needed to reduce runoff and save water.

Start selecting your favorite spring bulb varieties now by searching out bulb catalogs. It is time to order so bulbs can be planted this fall. Plant your spring blooming bulbs in October.

Colorful, plastic golf tees can be inserted in the ground to mark the location of dormant plants, such as spring bulbs or perennials.

Do not let your hybrid, annual flowers go to seed. This weakens the plants and reduces bloom. In addition, the seed is not desirable to save because the resulting seedlings usually will be very different from the parent and often of poorer quality.

The larvae of fireflies (lightning bugs) and Lady Bugs [Lady Bird beetles] aid gardeners by eating mites, slugs,

snails, aphids, soft-bodied insects, and larvae. Learn to recognize these creatures and protect them.



*Firefly larva.*

*Lady Bug larva.*

Check the ground around blackberry and raspberry plants. Any canes snaking across the ground should be tied back to their wire arbor.

Make slug traps near vulnerable plants using a board raised about an inch above the ground on small rocks. The soil beneath should be slightly moist. Check the underneath side at noon and scrap slugs into a bucket of soapy water.

If you want to save sunflower seeds to eat yourself or for the birds later in winter, cover the sunflower seed heads with cheese cloth to keep off birds. Sunflower heads are ripe when the back of the sunflower turns from green to brown.

If English Ivy has climbed into your trees, pull out as many vines as possible. Cut the vines at the base and pull out of the tree. Keep watch and keep cutting off new growth to starve the roots. An herbicide can be applied to the cut end if desired to speed up the process.

Remember to keep hydrated when working outside especially on hot, humid days. Wear a hat and sunscreen to protect your skin from sunburn.

Time to start seeds for fall vegetables. Consider planting kale, lettuce, mustard, beets, and cabbage which will be ready to plant out in mid-September.

See [The Xerces Society](#) for ways to make your yard more pollinator friendly, reduce pesticide use, and increase habitat by providing pollinator plants and larva host plants.

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