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What's Growing On?

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 1 SPRING 2024 EDITION

GARDEN GAB

Spring is the season for new growth. If you haven't already now is the time to pick your varieties. You will soon begin sowing some seed indoors, and transplanting outside. If you run into any problems in your home garden our website has a webpage titled "Resources for Homeowners". Each topic will direct you to scientific resources. If you have any additional questions or issues stop into the office during the week or give us a call. Our office is open to the public Monday through Friday 8:30am-4:30pm for soil testing, insect and disease identification, or any gardening and lawn care advice.

Resources for homeowners located on our website:

- Lawns & Alternatives
- Plant Problems
- Weeds & Toxic Plants
- Small Space & Urban Gardening
- Insect & Wildlife Pests
- Native Plants
- Trees & Shrubs
- Vegetable Gardens
- Rain Barrels & Gardens

Connect with us!

Facebook - facebook.com/CumberlandRCE

Radio - 99.9

Online - [Resources for Homeowners](#)

Rutgers Cooperative Extension
of Cumberland County
291 Morton Ave.
Millville, NJ 08332

856.451.2800 x4

Kaylynnhy@cumberlandcountynj.gov

RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station
**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

Spring Flowering Bulbs

Spring flowering bulbs can provide your landscape with years of seasonal color. Not only do spring bulbs make beautiful cut flowers, but they are also relatively easy to maintain because of their ability to store food underground.

Planting Requirements:

- An optimum pH range of 6-7 (A soil test can provide recommendations for ideal pH)
- Ample phosphorus encourages root and bud development.
- Well drained and moisture retentive soil
- 5-6 hours of direct sunlight per day
- Plant at a depth 2-3x the height of the bulb
- Watering bulbs after planting helps the soil in the planting bed to settle
- Bulb beds should be covered with 2-3 inches of mulch to minimize temperature fluctuation

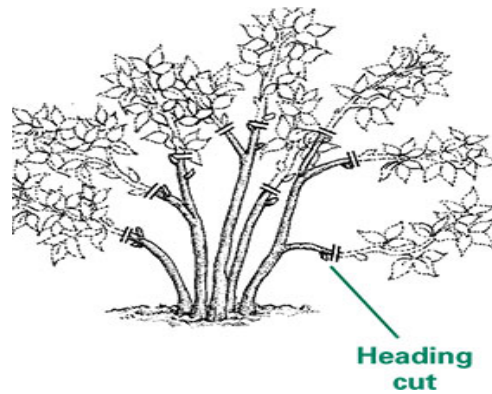
Maintenance Requirements:

- When flowers fade cut them off to reduce seed formation, seeds take stored food away from the bulb
- Following peak bloom, foliage should not be removed until it dies back naturally
- Plant bulbs behind taller growing perennials or shrubs
- When flowers become smaller or fewer in number, dig them up and divide bulbs before replanting

Problems:

- Diseases – Most spring flowering bulbs have been selected for tolerance and/or resistance to most of the serious soil-borne diseases. Avoid planting diseased bulbs. The most prevalent foliar disease is Botrytis. Remove heavily infested bulbs.
- Insects – There are several insects that can attack spring flowering bulbs. Among them are aphids, thrips, and mites. Assistance with insect identification and the selection of the prop-er insecticide can be obtained from your local Cooperative Extension office.
- Weeds – Use a combination of cultural and mechanical techniques to control weeds. Hand pull or hoe emerged weeds. Two to three inches of organic mulch will also help to control weeds.
- Animals – Many spring flowering bulbs (such as tulips and crocuses) are edible to animals (voles, squirrels, rabbits, and deer). Know the susceptibility for each bulb type. Refer to Rutgers Cooperative Extension publication E271, “Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance”. Cover the susceptible bulbs at planting time with wire mesh screening that allows the shoots to grow through. Repellants may be necessary.

PRUNING FLOWERING SHRUBS



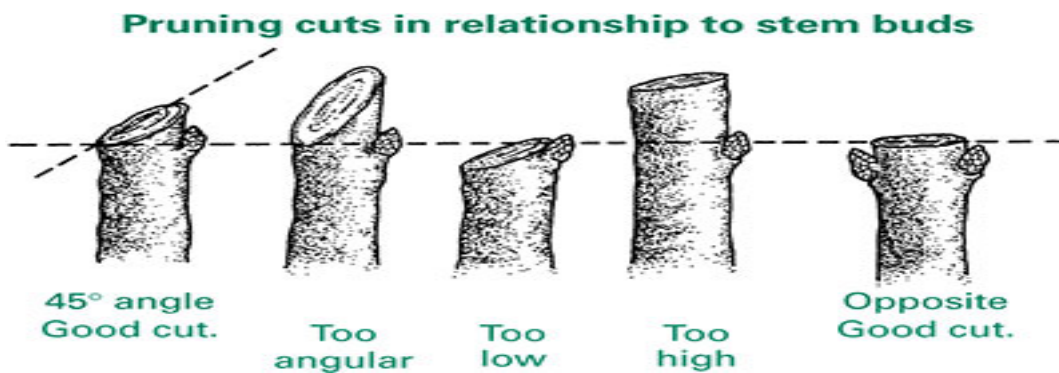
Pruning is the selective removal of plant parts for the benefit of overall plant health. Benefits of pruning include increased plant health, improvement of flowers, growth restriction, plant training, and decrease of disease.

When to prune:

Pruning stimulates new growth, it is crucial not to prune before a cold season, as this will prevent plants from hardening off. This could lead to winter injury and cold damage. The exceptions is dead, diseased, damaged, or double crossed limbs (The Four D's). The four d's should be pruned at any time. Do not prune newly planted shrubs unless limbs have already died off, newly planted shrubs need all of leaves to encourage root growth.

What to prune:

The first consideration for removal should be the four d's. Suckers and water sprouts should be removed next. Older wood that is no longer flowering should also be removed.



How to Prune:

Heading Cuts- remove part of a branch back to a bud. The direction in which the top remaining bud is pointed will determine the direction of new growth.

Thinning Cut- remove an entire limb to the point where it originates. This opens up the canopy and increases light penetration and air circulation. Thinning cuts can be used to reduce the overall size of a plant without changing its natural form.

DO NOT USE WOUND DRESSING OR PAINT ON PRUNING CUTS.

GARDEN INVADERS

Voles: Voles are small ground dwelling rodents. Most damage they cause occurs between fall and winter because other food sources are scarce. The winter months are when voles cause the most damage as snow cover provides them protection and they can venture into wide open areas of your lawn. Though they will usually become less of a problem in the spring and summer, there are several ways you can get rid of them in your yard. Since they are most active in the winter, that is the best time to set traps for them. You can place live traps or snap traps along tunnels baited with peanut butter or apples. Beware you may catch other small mammals like chipmunks. Repellents, fumigants, and toxic baits are often not advised as they are usually ineffective.

Aphids: Aphids are a common pest to both houseplants and garden crops. As the weather warms up, aphid eggs that overwintered on plant material will begin to hatch. Check your plants regularly for these small, pear-shaped insects that can range in color from green, red, black, or yellow. They feed on the sap of plants and you will often find them on new growth, flower buds, and the underside of leaves. When infestations occur it causes curled leaves, yellow foliage, and stunted plant growth. Aphids are capable of transmitting plant viruses and can reproduce quickly, so it is important to frequently check for them and control them rapidly. When populations are small, you can easily get rid of them by rinsing affected leaves off with water or manually picking or smushing them. Using pesticides is often not necessary for aphid problems in home gardens.

Spotted Lanternflies: This sap-sucking leafhopper is now established across New Jersey. They begin to lay their eggs in the fall and continue to do so into December. Spotted Lanternflies undergo several stages of growth where it transforms from a small black and white nymph to a red and black nymph to a winged adult. Though these insects have the potential to cause damage to certain plants and crops, they are primarily a nuisance pest in the home landscape. If you have maples, willows, birches, roses, grapes, tree of heaven, or black walnut plants on your property, you should monitor them closely for spotted lanternfly as these are some of their favorite plants to feed on. However, pesticides are unnecessary in most situations and the use of homemade pesticides with dish soap, vinegar, or gasoline are not recommended at all. Sticky band traps and circle traps are effective ways to manage them on vulnerable trees. If you come across Lanternfly eggs, you should scrape them off into a bag or container and smush them.

If you come across any of these species or others that you are unsure of, bring a sample into the Rutgers Cooperative Extension office in Millville. Specimen can be placed in a bag and put in the freezer or submerged in alcohol.

COMMON SPRING DISEASES

Anthracnose: is a common disease of many shade tree species, Diseased leaves appear “scorched” along veins and leaf margins. Twigs and branches may die back if infection is severe or if the tree is in poor health. Leaves infected with anthracnose are often shed. As with leaf spot diseases, anthracnose is more severe when moisture remains on leaf surfaces for long periods of time. Since anthracnose does not usually cause serious damage to healthy trees, application of fungicides is recommended only when it is necessary to keep trees as blemish-free as possible.

Proper Management

Improve plant vigor, prune dead branches, avoid planting highly sensitive plants, and remove leaf litter to reduce inoculum. Irrigate in the early morning hours and avoid overhead watering to prevent excessive moisture from remaining on foliage.

Diplodia (or Sphaeropsis) shoot blight and canker: affects 2- and 3-needle pines and is most devastating on Austrian, mugo, and Scots pines. The fungus *Sphaeropsis* infects and kills developing needles, resulting in dead candles that are much shorter than healthy ones. Sunken cankers may form on branches and stems, killing the tissue beyond the cankers. The lower branches of pines are usually affected first. Tiny, black, spore-producing structures called “fruiting bodies” can be seen with the aid of a hand lens at the base of dead needles and on cones. Spores are released from these fruiting bodies in cool, rainy weather and are transmitted to susceptible tissue. This disease is more severe on trees that are stressed. Japanese black pine is tolerant of this disease and offers an attractive alternative where *Diplodia* shoot blight has been a problem in the past.

Proper Management:

Improve plant vigor and prune affected branches 6 to 8 inches below diseased tissue during dry weather with sterilized pruning tools. Remove as much plant debris as possible and use tolerant species.

Leaf spots: are very common and can occur on many species of ornamental plants. Leaf spots are caused by leaf-inhabiting fungi that discolor and kill small, discrete regions of tissue between or on the leaf veins. Frequently, these spots have a light-colored center with a distinct dark-colored border. Individual spots may grow together to form larger leaf blotches. Most leaf spot fungi produce spores in dead leaf litter on the ground. Spores are splashed or carried by wind to developing leaf tissue at budbreak. The development of leaf spots is favored by abundant moisture and cooler temperatures. Severe spotting can occur when moisture remains on leaf surfaces for long periods of time. Fungicides are effective only if they are present on leaf surfaces at the time the fungi are producing spores. Fungicides applied after leaf spots are visible are ineffective. Most damage caused by the fungi that cause leaf spots is merely cosmetic.

Proper Management

Improve plant vigor and reduce inoculum by removing leaf litter. Irrigate in the early morning hours and avoid overhead watering to prevent excessive moisture from remaining on foliage

Starting Seedlings Indoors

Types of containers used for starting vegetable seedling:

Types	Comments
Peat Moss	Made from compressed peat moss. These pots are filled with mix and seeded. The whole pot is then planted with the seedling. When planting outside, make sure the entire peat pot is covered with soil to avoid drying out.
Peat Pellets	Compressed peat which expands when placed in water. Seeds are placed directly in the pellet after it has expanded. The entire pellet is placed in the soil and covered like peat pots. Peat pots and pellets are recommended for seedlings that transplant poorly since roots remain relatively undisturbed.
Plastic Pots & Flats	These are filled with mix and seeded. When planting, carefully slide the seedling out of the container. Plastic flats can be reused if cleaned after use with a 1:10 solution of household bleach and water. Soak them in this solution for 10 minutes. Allow them to thoroughly dry before using. This will eliminate any disease problems

Recommendations for starting vegetable seeds indoors.

Vegetable	Ability to Transplant	Weeks to Grow	Depth of Seed (Inches)	Season	Optimum Soil Germination Temp. (F)
Brussels Sprouts	Good	6-7	1/4	Cool	80
Pumpkins	Moderate	2-3	1	Warm	90
Peppers	Good	8-10	1/4	Warm	85
Tomatoes	Good	6-8	1/4	Warm	85

2024 ECO Fair



Save the Date!

Saturday, May 4, 2024

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. rain or shine

Wheaton Arts, 1501 Glasstown Road, Millville, NJ 08332

In partnership with the Authority of Cumberland County, WheatonArts presents the 17th annual ECO Fair, a FREE Family Day event inspired by natural and artful living!

Rutgers Master Gardener's Plant Sale:

The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland County focus on growing native, pollinator-friendly plants and Rutgers varieties. Stock up on a wide variety of flowers, vegetables, herbs, trees, and shrubs. To attract pollinators to your yard, buy native flowers like milkweed, joe pye weed, and bee balm. Native shrubs like summersweet, viburnum, and dogwood will keep the birds happy! Build your herb garden with offerings of parsley, basil, chives, oregano, and more. Try growing some unique vegetables like shishito peppers, okra, and tomatillos. Many traditional vegetable crops like eggplants, tomatoes, and peppers will also be available. Plan Ahead: Bring a box or wagon if you plan on buying a lot of plants!

Visit the Rutgers Master Gardeners booth for Helpline on the Road, to submit your gardening and lawn questions to be answered by the Master Gardeners!

Stop by the childrens table to do educational crafts with the kids!



SEASONAL CHECKLIST

- Pick you varieties to begin planting.
- Make a time line to transplant outdoors.
- Remove infected plant material from vegetable and flower beds.
- Get your soil tested.
- Look for spotted lanternfly eggs.
- Water your plants deeply.
- Mow grass 3" or taller to help it survive the heat.
- Plant brocolli, brussel sprouts, and kale indoors starting in March .
- Leave seed heads for birds to eat.
- Buy local produce!
- Avoid pruning trees and shrubs.
- Order bulbs.
- Plant trees or shrubs.
- Remove summer annual weeds such as crabgrass before they go to seed.
- Provide birds and pollinators with water.
- Check for scale insects on your trees and shrubs.
- Visit a local botanical garden.

Interested in receiving bi-weekly pest and disease reports for southern NJ? The Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland County will be sending out bi-weekly integrated pest management (IPM) reports to inform gardeners of current and upcoming garden pests, and how to control and prevent them. This free report will be sent right to your email, starting next spring. Call 856-451-2800 x4 if you would like to receive this informative report.

RESOURCES

Spring Flowering Bulbs:

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1220/>

Pruning Flowering Shrubs:

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1221/>

Garden Invaders:

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1293/>

<https://extension.psu.edu/voles>

<https://ag.umass.edu/turf/fact-sheets/vole-damage-to-lawns>

<https://extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden-insects/aphids#using-pesticides-344413>

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/pestnotes/pn7404.html>

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/pests-diseases/spotted-lanternfly/about/>

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/spotted-lanternfly/>

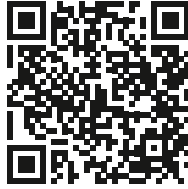
Common Spring Disease:

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.php?pid=E160>

Starting Seedlings Indoors:

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs787/>

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Wesley L. Kline, Ph.D
Cooperative Extension Agent
Vegetable Production and Food Safety
wkline@njaes.rutgers.edu

Timothy J. Waller, Ph.D
Cooperative Extension Agent
Nursery Production
twaller@njaes.rutgers.edu

Salvatore Mangiafico, Ph.D
Extension Department Head
Environmental and Resources Mgmt. Agent
mangiafico@njaes.rutgers.edu

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