

Calendar of Events

January

- Garden catalogs arrive. Order seed early while stock is adequate.
- Continue to fertilize cool season bulbs.
- Enjoy hellebores, witch hazel, winter jasmine, daphne and other winter interest plants.
- Water shrubs and container plants during extended dry, cold, windy weather.
- Fill and clean birdbaths regularly. Consider a birdbath heater.
- Have soil tested to determine fertilization rates for spring application and send to North Carolina Department of Agriculture. (Kits available at the Extension Office.)
- Mist indoor plants to raise humidity and remove dust.
- Plan spring gardens, ornamental and vegetable.



February

- Reset plants that have been dislodged by freezing and thawing of the soil.
- Prune grape vines correctly according to type.
- Spray dormant oils on fruit trees to control over-wintering insects.
- Control broadleaf weeds with post-emergent herbicides.
- Mow or prune liriopse to stimulate growth and remove winter damage.
- Transplant trees



- and shrubs.
- Divide and replant summer and fall flowering perennials
- Cut back ornamental grasses.
- Fertilize pansies for continuous show with high phosphorous fertilizer.
- Plant asparagus in well prepared beds.
- Inspect all birdhouses. Repair and clean for new arrivals.
- Start cole crop and annual flower seeds indoors.
- Avoid the spring rush by taking mowers, tillers, and other lawn and garden equipment for service.

March

- Prune buddleia (butterfly bush) and beautyberry for increased bloom.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicides to control crabgrass and other turf grass weeds.
- Treat turf for grubs if necessary to prevent mole damage.
- Start summer vegetable and flower seeds indoors.
- Plant cold crop vegetables outdoors. Also, beets, lettuce, radishes, spinach, turnips, potatoes and onions.
- Prune evergreen shrubs carefully to reduce size and to shape. Blooms and berries may be borne only on last year's growth depending on the variety.
- Prune roses. Apply a sealer to canes larger than pencil to discourage borers. Begin a regular spray program to prevent disease as



- soon as foliage appears.
- Overseed thin cool season turf.
- Fertilize cool season lawns with slow release fertilizers.
- Redefine bed edges and replenish mulch.
- Remove spent blooms on spring bulbs. Leave foliage to encourage next year's buds/blooms.

April

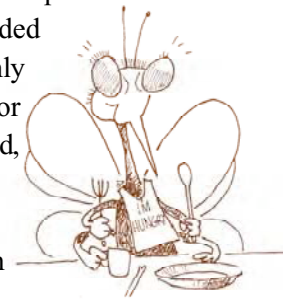
- Fertilize ornamental shrubs with a product specifically formulated for that plant.
- Monitor shrubs, bulbs and other plants for vole damage. Control with snap traps or baits.
- April 15 is considered the last frost-free day in the Piedmont. Plant tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, squash, corn and other tender annuals.
- Pinch and shape perennial herbs. Plant tender herbs.
- Tender plants may need protection from late spring frost as the weather indicates.
- Plant summer flowers after mid-April.
- Fertilize vegetable transplants and ornamentals with a high phosphorous starter solution for good root development.
- Spray boxwoods with pesticides to kill boxwood leaf miner adults and larvae. Infestation is indicated by a tiny yellow-orange fly.
- Be aware of potential insect bites. Check thoroughly for ticks when returning from the outdoors. Note on



- the calendar when a tick is removed.
- Patrol gardens for insect pests. Treat as necessary – hand pick when possible.
- Remove aphids with a strong water spray from the hose. Use a stick or pole to open tent caterpillar webs for the birds to enjoy.
- Pinch chrysanthemum (garden mums), asters, beebalm, speedwell (Veronica) and Autumn Joy sedum.

May

- Purchase fresh local produce at the Salisbury-Rowan Farmer's Market.
- Mow turf grass with sharp blades to the recommended heights. Remove/cut only one third of the height, or the plant may be stressed, exposing it to weed infestation.
- Plant all warm season vegetables by May 10, such as, pumpkins, okra, melons, gourds, beans, and eggplants.
- Harvest cool season crops.
- Remove poison ivy sprouts as soon as they appear. Identify poison ivy by its three shiny leaves.
- Make May mulch month. Conserve moisture, reduce weed growth, control erosion and water runoff and improve esthetics with mulch. Mulch depth should not exceed 6 inches deep.
- Fertilize azaleas and rhododendron as blooms fade. Check for lace bug indicators – tiny black specks underneath the leaves. Spray the underside of the leaves with an insecticide.



- Watch azaleas for yellowing leaves with green veins which indicates iron deficiency. Spray with iron chelate.
- Move houseplants outdoors to a shaded area. Repot and divide overcrowded plants. Remove diseased and damaged foliage. Water and fertilize on a regular schedule.
- Remove pansies and replace with colorful summer annuals and perennials that are attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies.
- Check trees and shrubs for winter damage. Prune/remove what can be safely reached, leave the rest for the professionals.

June

- Mow cool season lawns when grass is dry to avoid brown patch. Avoid high nitrogen fertilizer.
- Test soils for anticipated reseeding in the fall.
- Woolly aphids appear on silver maples. Chemical control is not practical.
- Stay ahead of Japanese beetle damage, with organic controls or insecticides, if necessary.
- Spray insecticides early in the day or late in the evening, to avoid killing bees and other pollinating insects, honeybees, bumblebees, etc. Beneficial insects pollinate many garden vegetables and fruits.
- Irrigate consistently throughout the summer and lime the soil to avoid blossom end rot in tomatoes and other vegetables.
- Mulch around vegetables to conserve water and reduce weeds.



- Continue to deadhead herbs, roses, daylilies and other flowers which are at their peak. Prune and shape. Propagate shrubs with tip cuttings. Azaleas, boxwood, holly, camellia, butterfly bush, hydrangea and gardenia are easily rooted.

July

- Pinch chrysanthemums for the final time by July 4th. Pinch leggy shoots of annuals to promote fullness and shape.
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- Consider an irrigation system for valuable trees and shrubs as well as turf. Water early in the morning to avoid evaporation and disease potential.
- Be aware of underground yellow jacket nests. Use an approved pesticide or aerosol spray very early in the morning.
- Watch for powdery mildew on crape myrtles. Improper pruning will promote poor air circulation. Improved varieties are more resistant to disease.
- Leave the foliage of summer blooming bulbs to encourage next year's buds/blooms. Continue to remove spent blooms (dead-head).
- Control grassy weeds in shrubs with an over-the-top herbicide. Read labels and instructions for application and restrictions.



Use glyphosate or other systemic herbicides to control bermuda grass.

- Have the soil tested if reseeding turf grass areas in the fall.
- Install a protective net if birds are after small fruits and berries.

August

- Use systemic herbicide to kill entire lawn if area is to be rejuvenated with cool season turf in the fall. May take several applications.
- Fertilize shrubs for the last time until spring. Make sure shrubs receive ample water; specifically azaleas, camellias and rhododendron, as they set buds.
- Remove spent summer crops and replace with cool season vegetables or plant a cover crop.
- Sow seeds such as leaf lettuces, beets, radishes, turnips, spinach and cabbage.
- Plant late tomatoes, squash and green beans.
- Check landscape for black/orange striped oak worms and fall webworms – control is limited, however, a forceful high pressured spray of water will dislodge. Later summer defoliation does not kill healthy trees.
- Spray fruits such as peach, cherry and plum for peach tree borers.



September

- Core-aerate, over-seed and fertilize fescue lawns. Apply pre-emergent herbicides if annual bluegrass or chickweed has been a problem in established lawns.
- Water current year's investments – trees,

shrubs and turf grass, as fall tends to be the driest season in the Piedmont. Adequate moisture will help insure plant health and survival through the winter.

- Divide perennials that bloom in spring and early winter such as daylilies, Shasta daisies, liriopse, beebalm and thread leaf coreopsis.

- Start a compost pile. Shredded leaves will break down quicker by adding vegetable kitchen scraps (excluding meats, bones, fat and grease), grass clippings and high nitrogen fertilizer (such as manure).

Dampening and turning frequently will result in fluffy, dark compost.

- Clean up garden plots. Remove and store stakes and cages. Spent garden debris should be removed. If disease and insect free, debris can be composted.
- Plant a cover crop of clover or wheat to enrich the soil for next year's vegetable garden.

October

- Harvest pumpkins, gourds and winter squash before frost after the vines dry. Wipe fruit with 1 part bleach to 10 parts water to kill bacteria and fungi.
- Side-dress cole crops with a complete fertilizer. Move houseplants indoors when nighttime temperatures drop below 50 degrees. Divide if needed. Treat for disease



and insects.

- Select and plant for fall foliage color and bloom - camellia sasanqua, sourwood, sassafras, ginkgo, scarlet oak, red maples and sweetgum (Roteundiloba – has no sticky gum balls).
- Continue to plant for seasonal color with pansies, chrysanthemums and asters. Select tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocus and other bulb varieties to add color in the spring. Plant promptly.

- Rake newly seeded lawns weekly to remove fallen leaves which will smother new grass.
- Control grubs in turf now with applications of granular insecticides.

- Continue to fertilize cool season fescue lawns.
- Visit the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh.

November

- Clean and disinfect bird feeders and baths. Keep the feeders stocked and baths full of clean water for the non-migratory birds. Consider plantings for winter food and shelter.

- Continue to set out new trees and shrubs. Protect plantings by refreshing mulch and

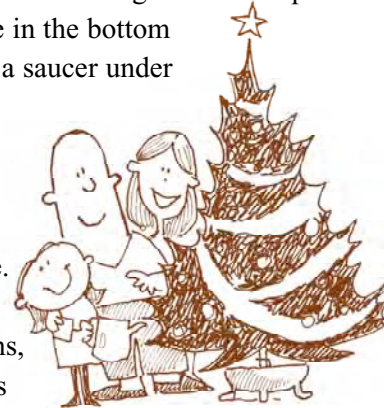


continuing to water during dry spells.

- Sow seeds of larkspur, poppies, and other hardy wildflowers for spring bloom.
- Fertilize cool season lawns for the last time until spring.
- Store leftover garden chemicals, fertilizers and spray materials in a secure place where they will not freeze. (Effectiveness is lost when materials are frozen.)
- Select poinsettias and Christmas trees early from local growers for best quality.

December

- Enjoy holiday plants longer by keeping them well watered. Provide adequate drainage by either removing the foil wrap or punching a hole in the bottom of the foil. Use a saucer under the container.
- Keep live Christmas trees watered and as cool as possible.
- Carefully prune evergreens, shrubs and trees for holiday greenery decorations.
- Cut back hybrid teas and other tall roses to 3 feet to prevent canes from whipping around in the wind and uprooting the bush. Leave climbers tall but secured to a trellis or fence to prevent wind damage.
- Remove snow and ice as soon as possible from valuable shrubs. Brush off with a broom.
- Apply lime as indicated by soil test.



• Master Gardener Volunteers •

Master Gardener volunteers are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and to help others.



What really sets Master Gardener volunteers apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture and their willingness to educate others. In exchange for their training, Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers, and work through Cooperative Extension to provide horticulture-related information to the public.

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Mission Statement: Rowan County Cooperative Extension is an educational partnership helping people put research-based knowledge to work for economic prosperity, environmental stewardship and an improved quality of life.



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Rowan County Gardening Calendar

*A Monthly
Gardening Guide*



Darrell Blackwelder
North Carolina Cooperative
Extension Service



Illustrations by Mark Brincefield