

JUNGLE TAMING

MONTHLY HORTICULTURAL NEWSLETTER

803.463.2655

Volume 1, Issue 5

May, 2012

Helping to minimize the effects of original sin in your Garden of Eden!

Monthly Horticultural Newsletter is distributed free of charge each month by Jungle Taming, LLC, an upscale yard restoration landscaping company proudly serving the Columbia, SC area.

Visit www.JungleTaming.com for more information.

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Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter has been compiled by local experts in horticulture and landscaping, and combines scientific and practical applications of horticultural theory. Suggestions are general, and individual results may vary.

Amy's May Horticultural Tasks

Written by Amy Bledsoe

Annuals

By Mother's Day, the soil is warm enough to plant Caladiums and Elephant Ears. Planting of warm season annuals should be completed by mid-May. This will give young, tender roots a better chance to get established before the sweltering, summer heat sets in at the end of May. Remember, don't overwater or water too frequently as this will promote shallow



root growth. The goal is to water enough to keep the annuals alive, but to stress them just a little to encourage deep root growth; this will help them survive the hot, dry summers we experience in Columbia. Continue to monitor plants for insects. Don't cut back daffodil foliage; they need the leaves to make energy for next year's blooms.

Turf

Turf



Warm season grasses have come out of dormancy and should have been fertilized. Centipede is an exception to the rule in that it prefers very low rates of nitrogen, and needs only a little phosphorus. Centipede should be fertilized with 16-4-8 in the spring and 15-0-15 in July. Other warm season grasses need a higher rate of nitrogen. Water conservatively. Grasses, too, should be stressed just enough to encourage deep root growth. Water early in the day to keep fungal diseases to a minimum. Remember to vary mowing patterns to keep ruts from developing. As temperatures rise, raise the height of the lawn mower. Keep the blade sharp, and cut no more than a third of the height of the grass to reduce stress and minimize weed invasion.

Perennials

Perennials have emerged from winter's dormancy and need to be fertilized with a slow-release fertilizer. It's a great time to divide and transplant many perennials, especially now that you are sure of their bloom color. Irises, Daylilies, and Cannas are good ones to

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Gardening for Everyone

Better Safe than Sorry? I Wish It Were So with Pesticides

Written by Donald McInnes, Ph.D.

This is part one of a two part series on the safety of pesticides and herbicides commonly used by homeowners. Next month, Dr. McInnes will discuss how the government monitors and controls the manufacture and use of these chemical products.

It seems every week there's a new report of something previously thought benign threatening our health or environment. Vinyl purses, kids' bouncy houses and lipstick can contain unsafe levels of lead. Lake Wateree fish contain PCBs. Lake Murray fish can contain high levels of mercury. Perfume, make-up, shampoo and other personal care products often contain known carcinogens and toxins (sometimes hidden in the ingredients list as "fragrance").

Some of the scariest reports involve the pesticides we use in the home and garden. After all, these chemicals were designed to kill living things. According to Beyond Pesticides, out of 30 commonly used lawn pesticides, 17 may cause cancer, 13 can cause birth defects, 21 can affect reproduction, 11 can affect the endocrine system, 15 are nervous system poisons, and 26 can cause liver or kidney damage. And all of them are approved for use by the Environmental Protection Agency.

2,4-D is a synthetic plant hormone widely used as a broadleaf herbicide. It's probably been applied to your lawn. It's the most used herbicide in the world, and the third-most in the U.S. It's been around since WW II and is a component of Agent Orange. 2,4-D is also an endocrine disruptor and has

been linked to prostate cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, thyroid problems and reproductive abnormalities. It's been banned or restricted in several European countries, Kuwait, Belize and parts of Canada.

You probably know atrazine as well. It's the second-most used herbicide in the U.S., applied primarily as a pre-emergent weed preventer, although it can kill very young plants as well. Atrazine is an endocrine disruptor. At concentrations in water the EPA would label safe to drink, it turns male frogs into functional females. Studies of its links to prostate and breast cancer have been inconclusive. In 2004, the European Union banned atrazine, citing its prevalence as a water pollutant and a lack of evidence showing that it's safe. Recent research done in Croatia showed the active ingredient of

atrazine alone did not cause cancer, but could cause cancer in combination with the so-called "inert" ingredients with which it is usually formulated.

You know glyphosate too. It's the active ingredient in RoundUp and several other non-selective herbicides and is the most used herbicide in the country. I'd always thought glyphosate was safe



Upcoming Events

Bill and the Jungle Taming gang are very active in community activities around the Columbia area. They will be providing gardening information at a variety of events.

Details about each event are located on the website:

www.jungletaming.com

Forest Acres Festival
Saturday, May 19, 2012
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
AC Flora Athletic Field
Poison Ivy Identification Booth
Admission: FREE

Palmetto Health Employee Discount Advantage Fair
Tuesday through Thursday
May 29, 30 and 31, 2012
Palmetto Health Employees Only



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Amy's May Horticultural Tasks

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divide. Continue to monitor for insects, especially aphids, in daylilies.

Roses

Roses are in their full glory. Deadhead faded roses to encourage re-blooming. Knockout roses are vigorous growers and may need to be pruned back so they don't interfere with sight distance or traffic. For sanitary reasons, keep pruners sharp and clean. Older varieties of roses may need to have older canes pruned out to encourage new canes to develop. Most roses are heavy feeders, so be sure to apply water



soluble fertilizer on a regular basis in addition to slow-release fertilizers. Regularly inspect roses for spider mites and aphids.

Shrubs

By now, all deciduous shrubs have leafed out. Loropetalums have finished blooming and can be cut back. It's not too late to cut back azaleas if needed. Spireas are in bloom, as are Abelias, Indian Hawthorns, and ligustrums. It's OK to prune back the ligustrums, hollies, and Indian Hawthorns once they are finished blooming. Abelias will continue to bloom throughout the summer, and if pruned, will shoot out wildly. It is best to prune abelias by individual branches rather than a shearing approach. Better yet, do not prune abelias at all and let them maintain their natural weeping shape. Severely limit watering established shrubs. They should have a large enough root system to survive hot, dry weather. Newly planted shrubs will need irrigation for the first two years. Monitor shrubs for insects and diseases.



Trees

Keep mowers and string trimmers away from trunks and roots of trees. There should be a six foot diameter of mulch around a tree to prevent the grass and weeds from growing too close to a tree. Never volcano mulch; only a 3" or 4" layer is needed. Continue to water newly planted trees throughout the warm weather.

Now through the end of August is the best time to plant palm trees. They need well-drained soil and full sun. Palms may need to be staked, but never nail anything into the palm. Use a board and banding system of support. Re-



move after one year. Older leaves of palms die out naturally and will need to be pruned out to encourage new palm fronds. Palms are heavy feeders. In addition to a slow release palm fertilizer, palms can benefit from a monthly feeding of Epsom salts which provides magnesium.

When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.



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Professor Ron's Timely Tips**Lawn Care and Landscape Construction Courses
at Midlands Technical College***Written by Ron Cowart***Lawn Care Course**

Professor Ron will be the instructor for the Lawn Care course, offered by Midlands Technical College, Thursday nights, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., May 10 through June 28. Call 732-0432 to register.

What's wrong with this lawn? Many homeowners are asking, "What's wrong with my grass? It was looking good a few years ago, but look at it now." The problem is either a disorder or a disease.

Disorders are caused by unfavorable growing conditions such as temperature extremes, soil compaction, injury from machines and chemicals, too little or too much water, fertilizer, or light.

Diseases are caused by pathogens such as fungi, bacteria, and soil nematodes, which can multiply and spread to other areas of the yard.

To solve the lawn problem, the homeowner must first identify the cause of the disorder and/or pathogen behind the decline. Once the cause has been identified, the homeowner can address the problem with proper treatment. Homeowners who spend hard earned dollars on materials and new sod, never correcting the underlying problem, face the same lawn issues over and over.

Call (803) 732-0432 to register for the Lawn Care course, and discover the appropriate course of treatment for your lawn problems.

Landscape Construction Course

Professor Ron will be the instructor for a Landscape Construction Course offered at Midlands Technical College, Northeast Campus, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00p.m. on Wednesdays, May 9 through June 27. Call (803) 732-0432 to register. Learn how to turn your backyard into an enjoyable extension of your home!

Prepare the site. Remove trees or plants that interfere with the overall landscape plan. Grade the surface of the yard for proper drainage, and construct fences and retaining walls, if needed.

Now begins the fun part!

- Build a koi pond. Listen to the water fall and watch the fish.
- Extend your back entry or porch by constructing a patio.
- Build a wooden deck attached to your home to enjoy the afternoon summer breeze.
- Construct a raised vegetable garden. Enjoy red tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers, water melons, fresh onions and much more—tastier than any vegetable purchased from the grocery store.
- Construct an outdoor kitchen. Walk a few steps, pick your vegetables, return to the outdoor kitchen, prepare them to taste and presto, you have your meal. You can't get any fresher than that!
- Install an outdoor lighting system. A low voltage landscape lighting system extends your evening time, allowing you to enjoy the above landscape features. It also provides added security at night.



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Growing Little Green Thumbs

Buy One, Grow Many

Written by Ruby Haycock DeLoach

Survivor Pink geraniums, Peppermint Double Impatiens, flats of flowers and Boston ferns of green are appearing everywhere!

Spring flowers are my kryptonite: They cause me to become as helpless as dandelion seeds blown into a spring breeze by a



child. Then, reality checks in to calm the flower frenzy. One cannot spend \$100 of grocery money on flowers. My compromise? A hanging basket of roses, such as double Peppermint Impatiens.

You can grow new plants from ones already growing in your garden, or buy a new plant and grow many:

- Use sharp garden pruners to cut off new but mature growth shoots at 30 degree angles from the parent plant.
- Strip at least half of leaves from the lower part of the cutting, remove the bottom two leaves and pinch off the top pair of leaves—roots grow from leaf nodes.
- Remove any flower buds as they will compete for the nutrition that the plant needs to grow

new roots.

- Root the cuttings in a weak mixture of water and fertilizer (provides nutrients).
- Place the cuttings under a single fluorescent light or in indirect sunlight.

Rooting cuttings is a fun science experiment for young children; they can easily see when the plant is ready to transplant.

Other easy to root plants include coleus, mums, althea, hydrangea, gardenia and herbs like basil, mint, rosemary and lavender. Grow many and give rooted cuttings to family and friends, and they will think of you every time they see them.



Gardening for Everyone

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because I read it binds quickly to soil particles and becomes inactive. Glyphosate has been linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and birth defects. A recent study has shown that exposures very much less than the application rate cause developmental abnormalities in chicken and frog embryos.

These three examples are some of the most used and most studied pesticides in the world, and we still don't really know how dangerous they are. Terms such as "linked to" and qualifiers like "may" or "can cause" are used because some studies show they are dangerous and others show they are benign. Each of these three chemicals has been the subject of scores or even hundreds of studies. Newer and lesser used chemicals have not been tested nearly as much.

When asked how to control weeds or insect pests, I'm not sure, in good conscience, I can recommend these products to clients ... at least not without explaining some of the risks and encouraging a consideration of safer alternatives. I encourage you to do the same. A good place to start is beyondpesticides.org. There you can find factsheets on the safety of commonly used pesticides and articles on safer alternatives.



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Miss Patsy's Secret Weapon Recipes**Miss Patsy's Barbeque Sauce Recipes For Chicken***Written by Patsy Cowart*

There are many ways to cook chicken and one of the ways is to barbeque chicken quarters. For a cook out, select as many leg quarters as will fit on your grill, place on grill with skin up, and slow cook until the leg turns in the thigh connection. Remove from heat and place into a baking pan. Liberally apply one of the following sauces. Cover with aluminum wrap, and let stand until cool to eat. Remember, the sauce will be pulled into the meat as it cools, so please don't apply sauce while cooking. Enjoy!

John Boy Barbeque Sauce

*Easy to make and tastes great!
Probably originated in the 1930's*

1 Cup Dukes Mayonnaise
1 Cup Apple Cider Vinegar
Ground Cayenne Red Pepper to taste

Mid-Carolina Mustard Barbeque Sauce

*Mustard-based is most popular sauce
in Richland, Lexington & Kershaw counties*

1 Cup Prepared Mustard
 $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup Honey
1 teaspoon Oregano
1 teaspoon Lemon Juice

**About the Authors**

Amy Bledsoe, who has a degree in horticulture, is a Certified Nursery Professional, Pesticide Applicator, Environmental Landscaper, Arborist, and Landscape Technician. She is currently the landscape designer for the City of Columbia. She has consulted on gardening articles for Columbia Metropolitan magazine and The State newspaper, appeared on ETV's "Making It Grow," and has also been a radio guest on "The Andy Thomas Show" to answer questions on gardening. Email Amy at abledsoedesign@msn.com.

Patsy Cowart, "Miss Patsy," is the eldest of four children, all born in a country house built before 1900. She was taught to cook at an early age by her mother, Miss Mildred Ross. It was and still is a sign of respect in certain pockets of Kershaw county to refer to locals by their name with Miss or Mr. preceding the first name. Simple home cooking was the rule of the day, and nothing was thrown away. A cook book was hardly followed and recipes were shared using terms like "use a pinch of this, pinch of that," and "add to taste." Miss Patsy is pretty darn good cook—so Professor Ron married her 41 years ago.

Ron Cowart has 40 years of landscaping experience. Since 1975, he has owned and operated Tookeedoo Farms, a landscaping and nursery business. With two degrees from Clemson University, he is also a horticulture and landscape instructor at Midlands Tech, and owner of Cowart Landscaping Consulting, LLC. To contact Ron, call (803) 513.4242 or email cowartconsulting@gmail.com. You can visit Ron's website at www.cowartconsulting.com.

Ruby Haycock DeLoach has an Ed. D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Carolina. After retiring as an educator, she developed her artistic abilities and illustrated her first nonfiction children's science book, **Earth Turns on Its Axis, and...** She has another book under production called **Growing Little Green Thumbs**. To contact Ruby, email rhdeloach@aol.com. Also visit her website at www.crookedcreekart.org/deloach.htm.

Donald McInnes has degrees in biology from Duke, Northwestern and Florida State. He has worked for Clemson Extension in Richland County for more than a decade, assisting thousands of consumers with landscape, garden, wildlife and pest control questions. He is also the owner of Southeastern Environmental Design, a landscape coaching, consulting and design service, and chairs the City of Columbia's Tree and Appearance Commission. He can be reached at seenvdes@aol.com.

About Jungle Taming

Jungle Taming, LLC is an upscale yard and garden restoration company that specializes in pruning, cultivating and uncovering hidden beauty from overgrown landscapes. Call Jungle Taming for fence line cleaning, ivy and weed removal, bed improvement, trimming and cleaning shrubs, tree trimming, debris removal, herbicide application and much, much more.

Owner **Bill Kunze**, certified in Landscape Management, has over 15 years of hands-on experience in the Midlands area. For more information, contact Jungle Taming at (803) 463-2655 or email info@JungleTaming.com. Visit the website: www.JungleTaming.com.

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