

LAWN & LANDSCAPE Digest

SPRING ALERT

Record Winter May Cause Lawn Damage

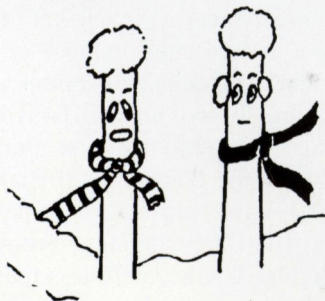
■ Many homeowners in the cool-season regions may discover that their lawns just won't green-up this spring; particularly those with older lawns with common grass varieties. Warm-season lawns can also experience winter damage.

"Winter kill" is a term used to describe a number of problems that can occur in the lawn. One of the most common causes of winter kill is from "desiccation"; becoming too dry. Even dormant, brown, warm-season grasses are subject to dessication. It generally occurs on elevated sites that are exposed to frequent

Continued next page

Blades of Grass

by BC Roberts



"Now the storm of '96... That was really a blizzard!"



Return of the Green...At Last!

■ As we watch winter play itself out, it's hard to imagine that spring will soon burst out around us. Thoughts of warm sunny weather are particularly nice at this time of year. When the weather does start to break and you start thinking about summer, take a minute to reflect on the services that a healthy, beautiful lawn does for you. A lawn—helping you? Here's how:

- Your lawn enhances the look of your home, gives a beautiful outdoor breathing space, separates you from your neighbors, and plays a vital part in real estate values.

- Green, healthy lawns control mud, dust, and erosion.

- Grass is a natural air conditioner. Blades of grass absorb the sun's heat without reflecting, like blacktop and cement surfaces do. Some blacktop surfaces measure 15 to 20 degrees higher than nearby lawns in summer. Grass also evaporates water through the leaves, adding cool air to the surroundings.

- Grass absorbs airborne pollutants and gives off pure oxygen. Experts say that a 25-square foot plot of healthy grass can release enough oxygen to sustain daily life for one grown person. Your lawn is an active part of the ecological system.

- What better place to play than on a carpet of green grass? You have a natural area for a host of outdoor living activities ranging from football to entertaining to just reading in a lounge chair.

- Grass is much simpler to maintain than wood plants, annual and perennial flower gardens, and vegetable crops. It plays a major role in a landscape as the focus or as a contrast to other plants.

Sometimes the simple things are the best. ♦

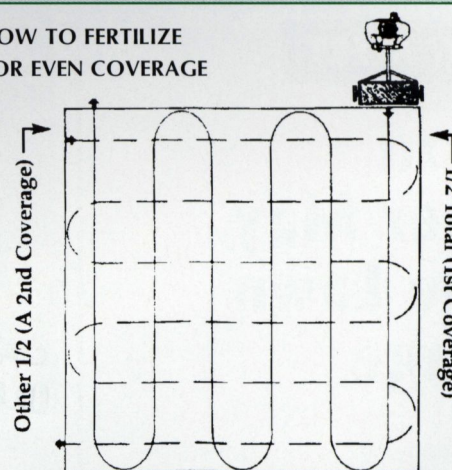
SPRING NOTEBOOK

■ **Want to get a jump on crabgrass? Keep an eye on your lilacs.** A good rule to follow in determining when crabgrass seed will germinate is to keep track of the full flowering lilacs. The herbicide control should be spread a week or two ahead of full lilac bloom. Several pre-emergence herbicides, often in combination with fertilizers, give good results. The following give good results: benefin, bensulide, DCPA, siduron, and oxadiazon. *Note: These are not trade names of products. For post-emergence control of crabgrass (after germination) look for products with methanearsonates. There are several formulations including: AMA, DSMA, MAMA, and MSMA. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for rates, timing, and frequency. The best defense against crabgrass and other weeds is a dense, healthy lawn.*

■ **Turf will tell you when to fertilize.** Fertilizer timing should be a function of turf growth and not the calendar. In both the north and south, the fertilizer program should begin when the grass begins to grow. In the north, fertilizer should begin in the early spring and stop when growth begins to slow down as summer temperatures increase. Fertilizer is again applied as the

cool fall temperatures encourage renewed growth. Researchers have found that a final application, after the grass has stopped growing in the fall and before it freezes, improves the lawns quality for the following spring. In the south, fertilize with spring greenup and continue when needed throughout the summer. The last application should be about 6 to 8 weeks before the average killing frost date. Most lawn experts recommend that a lawn fertilizer should have at least 1/2 of its nitrogen in a slow release form. In the absence of a soil test, all lawn grasses will do well with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio of N-K-P on an established lawn. ♦

HOW TO FERTILIZE
FOR EVEN COVERAGE



LAWN & LANDSCAPE Digest

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Record winter may cause lawn damage

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dry winds and in areas where temperatures are low, but with little snow cover. Ice covers may have caused the biggest problems from this severe winter, as grass continued the photosynthesis process even when dormant.

A layer of ice can prevent this exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide with the atmosphere, causing the grass plants to die. Serious damage often occurs on wet, slushy lawns with poor drainage and with a later ice freeze. Low temperature kill can also bring damage to the grass both in the north and south. This is especially true if the temperature drops quickly below freezing.

Injury is associated with ice formation within the plant tissue. Generally, the lawn will survive leaf kill or "tip burn", which is mowed off in early spring. However, if it gets to other parts of the plant, such as the crown and nodes, a total loss of the lawn

can occur. There are also some lawn diseases that can occur during the winter and early spring that bring problems; particularly "snow mold" in northern lawns and "spring dead spot" in the upper south.

The prospect of doing some lawn renovation isn't necessarily bad. It's an opportunity to upgrade the quality of the lawn by incorporating the new and improved grass seed varieties now on the market. These improved, named varieties are generally heartier and have been developed to be more tolerant to cold, heat and drought, and more resistant to insect and disease damage.

In most cases, you will want to purchase a quality seed mixture or blend containing Kentucky bluegrasses, perennial ryegrasses (not annual), fine fescues, and turf type tall fescues. Perennial ryegrass is the quickest germinating of the cool-season grasses for partial renovation. The following steps are recommended for lawns where less than 50% renovation is needed:

Step 1. Remove dead grass, thatch, and weeds. Fill in holes to make the lawn

smooth and avoid missteps or sprained ankles. Remember to clean up toys, sticks, and rocks before mowing. After closely mowing your lawn, use a power rake or dethatcher. Usually, this requires several passes over the area in different directions. Rake off the debris so that the soil surface is exposed between grasses that are left.

Step 2. Apply fertilizer and other nutrients. A soil test can determine what is needed. In the absence of a soil test, apply a slow-release type fertilizer with an N (nitrogen)-P (phosphorous)-K (potassium) ratio of 3-1-2 following the manufacturer's recommended rate.

Limestone may also be added to correct soil acidity, generally at a rate of 50 lbs./1,000 sq. ft. Note: If the soil seems hard and compacted, consider using an aerifier to loosen the soil. As with the power rake or dethatcher, this will take several passes in different directions. This will also help work the fertilizer and other nutrients into the soil.

Step 3. Apply a quality mixture or blend of named varieties lawn seed. Use a broadcast or drop seeder at the rate recommended on the container. If you are only renovating a few small areas, spread by hand and scratch in with a rake. Note: Kentucky bluegrass and K-31 are not named varieties. Use only mixtures that contain perennial (not annual) ryegrasses. Be wary of lawnseed mixtures or blend which have VNS (variety not stated) on the seed label, as you don't know what you're getting.

Step 4. Add Water. Like the establishment of a new lawn, renovated or over seeded lawns need to be kept moist, but not soaked, until the new seeds begin to grow and develop a root system. In 4 to 6 weeks, treat it as a reestablished lawn. With over 50% of the lawns more than 10 years old, most could benefit from over seeding or renovation with the newer varieties, even if not damaged from the winter of '96. If you feel this is too much work or you just aren't going to have the time, contact a licensed professional lawn care or landscape company for the service. Be sure to ask to see the seed label of the lawnseed they recommend using. ♦

TECH CORNER

QUALITY GRASS MIXTURES AND BLENDS PROVIDE ADDED STRENGTH TO THE LAWN

■ It's unusual that any one lawnseed variety can be a perfect fit for any particular environment or use. More than likely it will prove desirable to select more than one species of grass in a mixture or more than one variety of a particular species in a blend. This is why the homeowner generally finds a number of mixtures or blends to select from at the retail nursery or garden center.

Quality mixtures and blends are developed to bring out the best of each desirable characteristic. For example, if the lawn has some shaded areas, then including fine fescues with bluegrasses makes sense. If the lawn will encounter some high traffic areas, then the addition of perennial ryegrasses is incorporated into the mix.

Another advantage of using quality mixtures or blends is the fact that **grasses vary in their resistance to insect and disease attacks.** When several different grasses or varieties of the same species are used, the chances that they will all be susceptible to the problem is reduced.

These statements are true when you purchase mixtures or blends with the named, improved turfgrass varieties which will be listed on the seed label (see Premier Issue, *How to Make Sure You're Buying Quality Seed*, p.6). **Be wary of seed that lists common names**, i.e. Kentucky bluegrass, K-31 fescue, perennial ryegrass, fine fescue, or annual ryegrass. Also, pass by mixtures or blends that state VNS (variety not stated) for the majority of the varieties listed. VNS means you don't know what you're getting in the seed container.

Refer to the **Seal of Approval Recommendations** also listed on p.6 of the Premier Issue; though not all of these varieties will be available in all parts of the country this spring. There are numerous other quality varieties available; just remember that they should be "named" grasses on the label.

PLANTING SCHEDULE FOR WARM-SEASON GRASSES

■ **Mid-May through July** are ideal times for planting warm-season buffalograss, bermudagrass, and zoysiagrass. For **buffalograss**, when irrigation is available, summer planting in June and July is preferred. However, when irrigation is not available, April and May planting is recommended to take advantage of spring rainfall for seed germination.

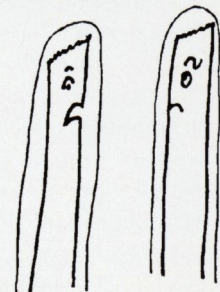
Zoysia plugs and sprigs should be planted between late-April and June with May usually being the best time for planting.

Bermudagrass can be planted anytime from mid-May through July. Later plantings of warm-season grasses may not completely establish before the end of the season, while earlier plantings are slow to establish and are often overrun by weeds.

Like cool-season grasses, warm-season grasses may be sodded at anytime of the year, except when the ground is frozen. ♦

Blades of Grass

by BC Roberts



"After that icestorm I feel like a turfsicle!"

GETTING READY FOR THE GREEN

Get Your Lawn Mower "in Shape" for Spring's Fast-Growing Grasses

■ Spring's warm sun and gentle rains provide the perfect conditions for lawn seed to grow. Newly-seeded lawns seem to "take off" once they develop root growth. Established lawns turn lush and green as plants thicken and spread out root systems. This "greening up" period is a signal for homeowners to begin frequent mowing, sometimes twice a week. The Lawn Institute recommends that homeowners check to make sure that lawn mowers are in working order and that mower blades are kept sharp.

When mower blades go dull, they can pull grass leaves and leave ragged edges. Grass can be weakened by too much pull-

ing by mower blades, and the ragged leaf edges make plants more susceptible to lawn diseases.

A lawn mower overhaul early in the spring can save time during the busy mowing season, as well as extend the life of your mower. Here are some suggestions:

1. Clean any debris off the mower before filling with gas or oil. Use sprayed water from a hose or a scraper for cleaning.
2. Check the air filter and replace if necessary.
3. Disconnect the spark plug wire, remove the spark plug, and check it. Replace if necessary.

4. Drain any leftover liquids and replace with fresh materials, taking care not to overfill.
5. Remove the blade. Use a medium file to hone the blade, or take it to a hardware store for sharpening.
6. Paint or touch up if necessary.
7. Check to make sure all parts are reconnected, and start the engine.
8. Take the running mower to a driveway or sidewalk to check for oil or fluid leaks, which damage grass.
9. Remember not to refuel a hot engine or run an electric mower over wet grass.

If you have a new mower, practice operating it correctly. Know the safety instructions and remember that a mower is only as safe as its operator. Also, think twice before having children younger than 14 operate a mower. ♦

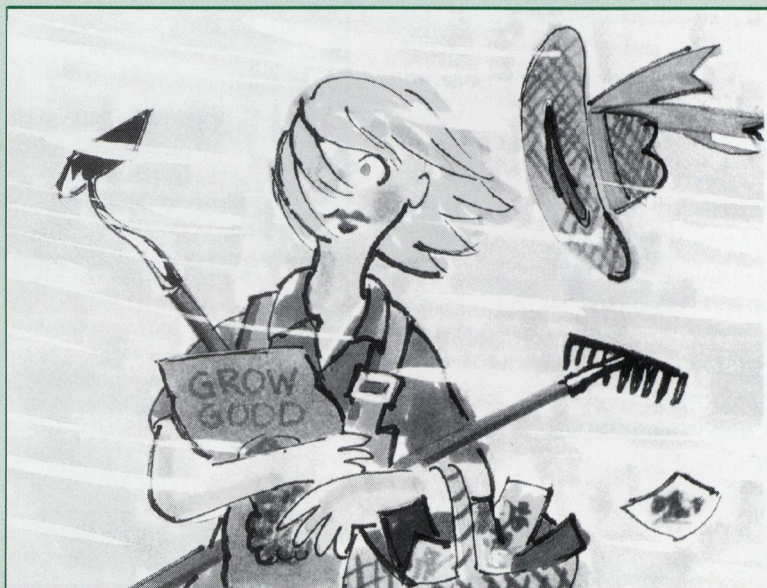
How Early Should I Start?

■ By late winter, many of us are ready to get outside and hasten the coming of spring. We pore through seed catalogs and visualize magnificent flower borders and crops of prize-winning vegetables. We try to clean up the still-frozen lawns while ankle deep in mud and leaves left from late fall. We tell ourselves, "If we're out here working, then it must be spring."

Gardening experts warn you to forget these premature impulses to work in the yard. March, as we all know, is undependable. It usually sends us a farewell snowstorm or two (as can April, in northern areas of the country). If it doesn't snow, the winter thaw makes many yards a sorry-looking mass of grass and mud. If it's still cold, your footprints can freeze in the turf and take weeks to come out.

While March is an ideal time for a spring treatment of fertilizer, you should forget yard work in March. Check your lawn mower instead. Try to start it. If the mower gives you trouble, take it to a repair shop for an overhaul. Clean it up. The blades probably need sharpening.

Stay warm inside and watch your neighbor raking his soggy yard. He will probably catch a cold in the process and most likely, new rains or snow will undo his work. Read a book, let the ground thaw and the deep frost melt away before you start to work.



Did you know you can actually damage the structure of the soil in your garden by working it before it's ready? The gardener should use a time-tested method for determining the readiness of the soil for spading and planting.

The method suggested by the American Association of Nurserymen is this: take a handful of soil and squeeze it into a ball. If it sticks like a mud ball, the ground is too wet and the gardener should wait until conditions are drier. When a squeezed handful does not form a ball, but breaks apart into a soft, crumbly mass, it is ready for working. ♦

QUICK CUTTINGS . . .

■ **SHORT ORDER COMPOST.** Want some quick compost to enrich your garden? The American Association of Nurserymen, in its Green Survival program, recommends the following procedure for making a small amount of compost in a fairly short time. Crumble a bushel of leaves into a clear polyethylene plastic bag. Add two gallons of water and five or six pounds of high-content nitrogen commercial fertilizer (20-10-5 works well). Place the bag in a sunny spot and turn it over ever other day. In three or four weeks, you should have a good quality compost. It can be stored until ready for use. This recycling of nature's materials will make you a part of Green Survival, a series of small steps each of us can take to improve the quality of our lives.

■ **A HINT FOR HEALTHY HEDGES.** This is a good time to give your hedges their annual trimming to maintain their good appearance and healthy life. One suggestion—while your personal preference as to design and shape of the finished hedge should be observed, the bottom should be wider than the top. If an attempt is made to trim the hedge to a perpendicular form or with too narrow a base, lower branches are likely to die from lack of light and air, and practically nothing can restore new branches to take their place.

■ LEAVE YOUR CLIPPINGS ON THE LAWN.

When you mow this season, leave your grass clippings on the lawn. They decompose quickly and put nutrients back into the soil. It's a built-in fertilization program every time you mow, and it keeps them out of the landfills. No, grass clippings do not create thatch! Follow the "rule of thumb" of removing only one-third (1/3) of the leaf surface each time you mow.

■ **SPRING LAWN DISEASE.** In spring the main lawngrass disease of Kentucky bluegrass is leafspot. Fungicides can hold the disease in check, but perhaps the most effective way to fight this ubiquitous ill is to introduce lawngrasses that don't succumb. Almost all of the newer, named "varieties" are resistant to leafspot, one of the first virtues for which they are selected.

■ **ECONOMICAL LAWNSEED.** It is true that lawnseed prices are a bit higher than they were some years ago. Like everything else, production costs have risen, and better varieties which yield less seed are becoming preferred. But good lawnseed is still quite a bargain, considering that there may be 2 million bluegrass seeds to a pound, 8 million bentgrass. With such lawngrasses thousands of seeds still cost only a penny—a drop in the bucket compared to other lawn-related costs. ♦

FERTILIZATION GUIDE FOR VARIOUS GRASS TYPES BY CLIMATIC ZONE

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
NORTHERN ZONE												
Bluegrass					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Fine Fescue					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Tall Fescue					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Ryegrasses					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
TRANSITION ZONE												
Tall Fescue		Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Bermudagrass			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Zoysia			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Centipede					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
DEEP SOUTHERN ZONE												
St. Augustine			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Bermudagrass			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Zosia			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Centipede					Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Bahiagrass			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light

Light Fertilization Treatment

Medium Fertilization Treatment

Full Fertilization Treatment

—Journal of Environmental Turfgrass, Vol. III, No. 1

Protect Your Shade Tree Investment

Trees and humans suffer from quite similar diseases.

■ Many homeowners have a tangible investment in the elegant shade trees which grace their property. Shade trees add value as well as beauty to the home landscape.

Often, however, trees are overlooked at fertilization time, according to **The Fertilizer Institute**. Special attention should be given trees that have roots confined by streets, curbs or other structures. These large plants should be fertilized more often.

Horticulturists advise regular fertilizer applications three times per year—in early spring, again in midsummer, and also in mid to late fall in milder winter regions.

For large trees in open areas, fertilization in early spring, preferably just before

new growth begins, often is recommended. Lawn fertilizers can be used. Also, many manufacturers now prepare special fertilizer blends for trees and other woody ornamentals. As with all fertilizer products, follow the manufacturer's directions for application rate and placement.

Check Tree Health

You don't hear a tree complain when it's sick. It can't shout or frantically wave its branches at you. But when a tree is suffering it will reveal symptoms.

When a tree is injured, diseased, devoured by insects, starving for nourish-

ment or parched for water, there are signs that signal its distress. A routine careful examination of leaves, twigs, branches and trunk bark will reveal that your tree is happily healthy or silently suffering.

First, of course, you should be able to recognize how the leaves, twigs, branches and trunk appear when the tree is in good health. Once a normal seasonal visual pattern is established in your mind's eye, any unusual departure from it will be quite evident.

Trees and humans suffer from quite similar diseases. Both are subject to the inroads of bacterial cocci, bacilli and spirilli as well as virus and fungus infections. Where humans suffer visibly with acne,

TREES GET HUNGRY, TOO, SAY ARBORISTS

■ If you haven't been feeding your trees for the last year or two, it is time that you considered it.

A hungry tree may not dramatically reveal its condition to you—it has no arms to clutch a missing tummy, and no tongue to loll out. But if its leaves are not as deep or rich a green, or as plentiful, as you remember them, or if there are dead areas in the centers or edges of the leaves, a degree of starvation is present.

Trees growing in confined spaces, in compacted soil, or competing with a lawn for nourishment usually need extra help. Planning the proper menu for your trees may seem confusing. If you shop at your local garden supply store you are confronted with stacks of bagged fertilizers, all hinting at instantaneous results but rarely clearly labeled "for trees". Which kind should you buy? How much will you need? What is the right time of year to put it down?

The **National Arborist Association**, an organization of men devoted to tree care, offers these helpful tips:

• **Read the numbers on the fertilizer bag.** If you see 10-6-4, for example, that indicates the percentage, or "grade" of nitrogen (10%), phosphorus (6%), and potassium (4%)

contained in the bag. The National Arborist Association recommends grades 12-7-5, 12-6-6, 10-8-6, or 10-6-4 for use as tree food.

The amount you will need to adequately feed your trees can be gauged by measuring the diameter of the tree trunk at a height of four and one-half feet above ground level.

The following scale can then be applied: 2-3 inch diameter = 1 1/2 pounds per inch; 3-5 inch diameter = 1 1/2 to 3 pounds per inch; 6 inch diameter = 2 to 3 pounds per inch, and larger trees = 3 to 5 pounds per inch.

• **Punch holes with a crowbar or power auger** in concentric circles from a point 2 1/2 feet or more from the base of the trunk. Stagger the holes about two feet apart and locate them under the crown spread of the tree to the outer tips of the branches. After inserting the fertilizer to a point two inches below grade, fill the remainder of the hole with peat, humus or soil.

• **Avoid overfeeding.** Too much food can be as injurious as none! American beech, crabapple, and white oak trees should be given half the above amounts, and never in early spring. ♦

athlete's foot, boils, influenza and pneumonia, trees likewise give visible symptoms with leaf spot, rusts, twig blight, tar spots and cankers.

Serious vascular diseases in man are echoed by similar afflictions in trees, where they are referred to as "wilt". Oak wilt and Verticillium wilt are the most common diseases of this nature in trees.

When examining a tree, first check the leaves. Chewed holes, raised welts, brown or black irregular spots, sooty deposits, yellowed or contorted leaves are all symptomatic indicators of a variety of serious problems. Next check the twigs, branches and bark. The appearance of streakiness, cankers, galls, holes, swollen nodes or loose bark indicate trouble for your friendly tree.

If you are uncertain as to the cause of the condition or the remedial procedure, the National Arborist Association recommends that you obtain advice or assistance from a professional arborist in your locality. A delay in treatment or an inaccurate self-diagnosis followed by incorrect counteraction could be expensive to you, perhaps fatal to the tree.

A healthy, well-nutritioned tree has more stamina and resistance to infection than one that is weak and undernourished. Like humans, trees benefit from occasional professional care ranging from preventive medicine to the application of counter-disease materials and surgery.

The comparisons are many. Raking and disposal of fallen leaves from trees infected with antracnose or powdery mildew is similar to the quarantine practices used in dealing with communicable diseases in man. The care and sterilization of surgical instruments in modern hospitals applies equally to the tools used in pruning or removing branches from infected trees. The principles are the same and failure to observe them is just as predictable—transfer of the infection from one individual to another. Most shade and ornamental trees represent a substantial investment. Given proper care and protection they will serve quietly and handsomely for decades. If you have a sick tree treat it almost like a member of the family. Give it tender loving care! Call your professional tree doctor! From time to time take a closer look at you trees. Maybe they're trying to tell you something! ❖

—National Arborist Association

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT MOTHER'S DAY OR FATHER'S DAY GIFT? GIVE A TREE!

Give something unique for Mother's Day or Father's Day (or for that next birthday, anniversary, wedding or birth). Give a tree! **American Forests and Global ReLeaf** will plant 10 trees in the honor of the individual you name for a contribution of \$ 10. A certificate notifying the person honored by your contribution will be sent to them. Since 1990, more than 3 million trees have been planted in 64 Global ReLeaf forests in 32 states. In 1995, trees were planted in Wisconsin's Black River National Forest, the Pine Creek Watershed in Idaho, and the Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve in Florida. (The latter two projects are in a partnership with **The Nature Conservancy**.)

For more information about the project, or to make a contribution, call **1-800-873-5323**, or fill out and send in the coupon below.

Please plant _____ trees. (10-tree minimum)

In the name of: _____

To celebrate or commemorate this occasion: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed. \$ 1 per tree.

(make out check to Global ReLeaf Forests)

Please charge my (circle one) MC VISA Disc AmEx

ACCOUNT NO. _____

SIGNATURE _____ EXP. DATE _____

Please send certificate (if different from above address):

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Return this form to: American Forests, Global ReLeaf Forests
PO Box 2000, Washington, DC 20013

The Package of Seeds

*I paid a dime for a package of seeds
And the clerk tossed them out with a flip.*

*"We've got 'em assorted for every
man's needs!"*

*He said with a smile on his lip,
"Pansies and poppies and asters and peas!
Ten cents a package! And pick as you please!"
Now seeds are just dimes to the man in the store,
And the dimes are the things that he needs,
And I've been to buy them in seasons before,
But have thought of them merely as seeds,
But it flashed through my mind as I took
them this time,*

"You have purchased a miracle here for a dime!"

*"You've a dime's worth of power which no
man can create,
You've a dimes worth of life in your hand!
You've a dime's worth of mystery, destiny, fate,
Which the wisest cannot understand.
In this bright little package, now isn't it odd?
You've a dime's worth of something known
only to God!"
These are seeds, but the plants and the
blossoms are here
With their petals of various hues, In these little
pellets, so dry and so queer,
There is power which no chemist can fuse.
Here is one of God's miracles soon to unfold,
Thus for ten cents an ounce is Divinity sold!*

—Edgar A. Guest, 1926

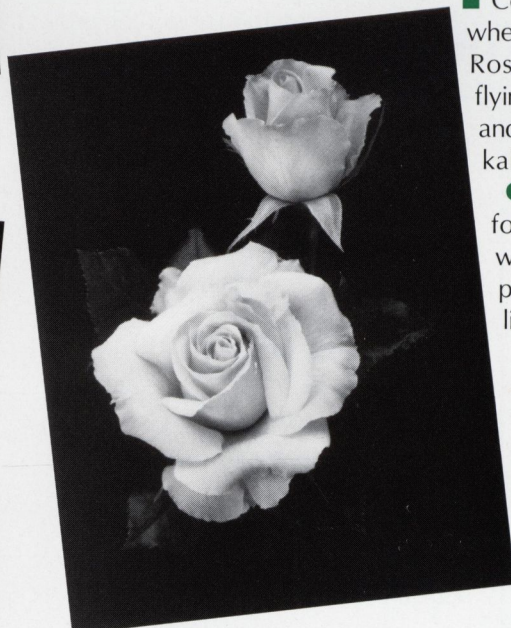
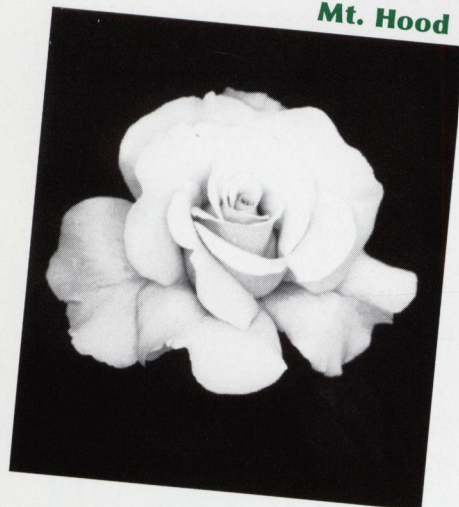
Focus on Flowers

Rose Winners Exhibit Kaleidoscope of Color



Livin' Easy

Mt. Hood



St. Patrick

■ Color is the top attribute that gardeners look for when choosing a rose, and the 1996 All-America Rose Selections (AARS) passed that test with flying colors. **Carefree Delight**, **Livin' Easy**, **St. Patrick** and **Mt. Hood** bring to the AARS winner's circle a kaleidoscope of color and flower form.

Carefree Delight features dense, dark green foliage and flowers with carmine pink petals laced with a creamy white center. With its masses of 5-petaled 2-inch flowers, Carefree Delight looks like a winner in any home garden or landscape.

Livin' Easy is well suited for mass plantings around the home. It is a constant bloomer, producing ruffled apricot orange blooms—a perfect partner to go with a myriad of colors in the landscape. With medium long stems suitable for cutting and a mild fruity scent, you'll find Livin' Easy makes your life sweeter.

St. Patrick is distinguished by its unusual

GARDENER' GUIDE: GREAT PLANTS FOR A GRUELING SUMMER

■ In case last summer's record high temperatures and low precipitation repeats itself this summer, **The National Garden Bureau** has prepared a list of flowers and vegetables that can be relied upon to perform. All plants are easy to grow from seed, and are heat and drought resistant. Please note, there could be more classes on this list. For example, *Amaranthus* is heat resistant in the midwest, but not in the southeast. It is not listed because it is regionally, not nationally, heat resistant.

ANNUALS/ORNAMENTALS

Basil
Celosia
Cleome*
Cosmos
Gazania**
Gomphrena
Hellchrysm (strawflower)
Kochia (Summer Cypress)
Marigold**
Melampodium

Mirabills (Four O'clocks)

Morning Glory
Nicotiana
Ornamental Peppers
Portulaca
Statice
Sanvitalia
Sunflower
Vinca***
Zinnia*

PERENNIALS

Achillea (Yarrow)
Ascieplas (Butterfly weed)
Coreopsis
Gaillardia
Lavender
Rudbeckia

VEGETABLES

Cucumber
Muskmelon (Cantaloupe)
Okra
Squash
Tomato
Watermelon

* Not recommended for areas with high salts in soils

** Best performance under cooler night temperatures.

*** Best sown indoors.

CELEBRATE NATIONAL
GARDEN WEEK!
APRIL 7 TO 13, 1996

Carefree Delight

color. Novel chartreuse buds unfurl slowly (unusual amongst yellow roses) to reveal a yellow gold flower with shades of green. Its slow opening buds lend themselves nicely to an indoor bouquet.

The classic simplicity of the ivory white petals of **Mt. Hood** complement the old-fashioned flower form of this rose. Growing to about 4 to 5 feet, with a multitude of clustered 3 inch flowers, this grandiflora gives the appearance of being almost snow-capped. The snowy white buds open to release a medium old rose scent that provides new heights of pleasure in the garden.

The four new winners will be available to gardeners this spring. Like all AARS winners, the roses honored for 1996 have completed a rigorous two-year test program. In the competition, roses are scored for bud and flower form, vigor, hardiness, growth habit, disease resistance, foliage and fragrance. Only truly outstanding introductions can win high marks in all of these areas and be named AARS award winners. ❖

Gardening from January to December

■ It's easy to develop a garden that looks colorful and interesting all year 'round. The trick is to **include early and late blooming plants** and plants that bloom in peak season. Plant a mix of annuals, perennials and bulbs, perhaps defining your plant area with ornamental grasses and dressing up your trellis or deck with vines. Also, don't forget plants that show off interesting berries or bark in the winter.

Another key to a four-season garden is to **boldly mix different plants and flowers** in several beds or borders, rather than growing only one or two types in each. This provides variety and interest.

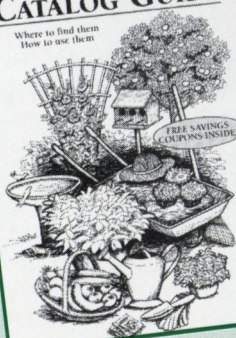
Creating a healthy, colorful and fragrant four-season garden requires matching your plants with your garden's soil, wind, water and temperature conditions. You'll be amazed at the vast number of possibilities you have. If you're not sure which plants to select, talk with people at your better nursery/lawn & garden centers. Since growing seasons vary according to geographic location, they'll refer to "**growing calendars**" which contain information specific to your area. Many local county extension offices also have information to help you with selections that can keep you blooming from the first spring days to the end of fall.

For placement, consider how color and heights of plants will look together in various patterns. A good "rule of thumb": place tall, brightly-colored plants in the back and short, dark ones in the front. Hot colors like red, orange, and yellow jump out, while cool greens, blues, and violets tend to fade into the background. To get a sense of how these colors will interplay, use a color wheel (see Premier Issue, Determining Color Combinations in the Landscape, p.11). You may decide on a monochrome scheme for uniform color or a polychrome arrangement of dramatic contrasts.

The key to easy maintenance is selecting plants that flourish in your local climate. In addition, ask for drought-tolerant, and disease-resistant varieties. ❖

1996 GARDEN CATALOG GUIDE

Where to find them
How to use them



The Catalogue To Have If You're Having Only One

■ Are you a garden catalog junkie? If you are, here's the catalog for you—the **1996 Garden Catalog Guide**, published by the **Mailorder Gardening Association (MGA)**. As the title states, the catalog is a listing of many of the most popular garden catalogues—what they feature, where to get them, how much they cost (most are free), and so forth. In addition, there are money saving coupons included, tips on how to order by mail and what to do when plants arrive, plus other gardening info.

To obtain a copy of the **1996 Garden Catalog Guide**, send \$2.00 (for postage and handling to: MGA, Dept. CD 96, Columbia, MD 21045

For all you internet surfers who just can't wait for the mail, the Mailorder Gardening Association now has a Home Page on the World Wide Web. The site resides at <http://www.gardenscape.com>. ❖

■ Here's a sample of the new 1996 flower introductions to be found in seed catalogs and garden centers this spring. The varieties are listed alphabetically by class, with the seed source listed in parentheses after the description.

Notice, also, the "R" (retail) or "W" (wholesale) designation. A retail seed company is one from which gardeners may purchase these new varieties directly by mail order, or in stores that carry the variety in seed packets. A wholesale seed company does not sell seed directly to gardeners, but the seed is available at seed suppliers or as bedding plants at garden centers.

✿ **Begonia F1 Hybrid 'Charisma Pink'** is more heat tolerant and humidity tolerant than some other varieties, and is also less susceptible to powdery mildew. Excellent for use in patio containers, hanging baskets, and garden beds. Benary Seeds. W

✿ **Begonia F1 Hybrid Tuberous-rooted 'Ornament'** series offers a striking contrast between bright flowers and the rich, deep foliage. The flowers are fully double, 3 1/2 to 4 1/2 inch in size, and offered in separate colors of orange, pink, scarlet, and yellow. Benary Seeds. W

✿ **Begonia F1 Hybrid Fibrous Rooted 'Varsity Pink'** and **'Bright Scarlet'**. Each color has been selected to provide season-long color, and they love heat and humidity. S & G Seeds, Inc. W

✿ **Dianthus F1 Hybrid 'Floral Lace'** series is a new line with excellent garden performance. The largest flowering series in its class, it has the flower size of an 'Ideal', but the habit of 'Telstar' or 'Princess'. All the colors are pure or bicolor, and the entire series has a lacy or serrated edge on each flower petal. Plants are 1 1/2 inch across. Ball Seed Co. W

✿ **Geranium F1 Hybrid 'Avanti Orange Bicolor'** displays a pattern of



true orange accented with white. This is an early blooming, multi-flora type geranium, featuring good uniformity and large flowers. Bred especially for garden performance. Floranova Ltd. W

✿ **Geranium F1 Hybrid 'Glamour White'** was introduced last year, but has been improved to bloom more. Joining Glamour White are Rose Pink, Light Salmon, and Scarlet. Ball Seed Co. W

✿ **Geranium F1 Hybrid 'Venus'** has a distinctive flower pattern of soft salmon pink with a red eye. Flowers are large and well rounded, and the reverse side of the petals are red pigmented in contrast to the pink inner side. Floranova Ltd. W

✿ **Gomphrena 'Dwarf Gnome Mix'** is a highly resistant, dwarf and compact gomphrena. It is outstanding for its tolerance of heat and arid conditions. Free flowering from spring

into late autumn, this mix is recommended for garden beds, low borders and in pots. Sakata Seed America. W

✿ **Impatiens F1 Hybrid 'Impulse Deep Pink'** is the 19th color in the Impulse series. The plants are excellent garden performers, with a spreading habit and flowers that are about 20 percent larger than other series. Deep Pink is a rich, non-fading color for bright areas where other pinks may look too pale. S & G Seed, Inc. W

✿ **Impatiens F1 Hybrid 'Showstopper'** is the large-flowered 10 to 12 inch series that is excellent for hanging baskets and where a taller impatiens series is wanted, and features three new colors: Apricot, Rose, and Soft Blue. Ball Seed Co. W

✿ **Impatiens F1 Hybrid 'Sun & Shade'** is a weather-tolerant impatiens. Billed as a down-to-earth series that grows well in the garden under difficult conditions. New colors in the popular series are

AT YOUR
GARDEN CENTER
OR IN YOUR
SEED CATALOG
NOW!

New 1996
Flower
Varieties
Boast Color,
Hardiness

Fuschia, Pink Mist, and Sunset, an apricot shade. Grimes Seeds. W.

✿ **Impatiens F1 Hybrid 'Tempo'** offers three colorful mixes. Frosty Mix' is a combination of Pink Frost and Peach Frost; 'Salsa Mix' is a striking combination of Red, White, and Pink Frost; and 'Wedgewood Mix' combines rich burgundy with soft blues. Bodger Seeds, Ltd. W

✿ **Lobelia erinus 'River Mixed'** blend four different Blues, a White and a unique Lilac and Blue/White bicolor shades. This compact mix is early to bloom and is very eye catching in baskets, pots, window boxes and in garden beds. Waller Flowerseed Co. W

✿ **Melampodium paludosum 'Derby'** offers a more compact, 8 inch height and slightly larger and more abundant blooms than previous varieties. Bright golden yellow blooms cover the ball-shaped, small leafed plants. Melampodium has proven to be a strong performer in pots and in the landscape. Binary Seeds. W.

✿ **Pansy F1 Hybrid 'Imperial Lavender Shades'** is the 11th distinctive color in the Imperial series. A very early bloomer, it produces masses of 2 1/2 to 3 inch blooms. The plants grow vigorously in both high and low temperatures. American Takii Inc. W

✿ **Petunia F1 Hybrid 'Fantasy Pink Morn'** is an All America Selections Bedding Plant Award Winner for 1996. This petunia begins a new class called 'Milliflora,' meaning many small blooms. Plants are about two-thirds the size of ordinary petunias. Compact and free flowering, the plants do not have to be pinched or pruned for continuous blooms. Plants should be at retailers and in many catalogs by spring.

✿ **Petunia F1 Hybrid 'Heavenly Lavender'** is a 1996 All America Selections Bedding Plant Award Winner. It is a greatly improved double petunia. The pure lavender color is unique, having no veining in the petals. Grow in full sun for best performance in beds or containers. It should be widely available this spring.

✿ **Petunia F1 Hybrid 'Merlin Burgundy Picotee'** has a deep burgundy center with the flower petal edged in white. This is a multiflora hybrid, offering abundant summer blooms. Sakata Seed America. W

✿ **Salvia splendens 'Sizzler Pink'** is a pastel pink addition to the Sizzler Series. It is among the earliest of the salvias, holds its color well in packs and in the garden. Sizzler's best show of color is in late spring and early summer. Floranova Ltd. W

✿ **Salvia farinacea 'Strats'** is the 1996 All America Selections Flower Award Winner. It offers a unique bicolor with 8 to 10 inch spikes of white with small, delicate blue flowers. Strats likes a sunny garden and plants can reach 1 to 1 1/2 feet tall under favorable conditions. Very undemanding, these plants should be available from retailers this spring, and seed will be available from many mail order catalogs.

✿ **Stock 'Harmony Light Rose' joins Cherry Blossom and Purple** as the third color in this series. Flower clusters are dense and maintain their compactness. Plants start to flower at 5 inches tall. Will be available as bedding plants and pot plants. American Takii Inc. W

✿ **Sunflower F1 Hybrid 'Moon-bright'** is a hybrid pollenless cut flower-type sunflower. The petals are lemon yellow, and the center is the same dark brown disk as its companion, Sunbright. The lack of pollen makes this Sunflower excellent for cut use indoors. Saska Seed America. W

✿ **Sweet Pea 'Old Spice Cupani'** brings back fragrant memories when Sweet Peas were all the fashion. Old Spice Cupani has maroon and deep blue-violet petals, and was the first sweet pea introduced into England from Sicily in 1699. Exceedingly fragrant, and more heat tolerant than the usual cultivars. Shepherd's Garden Seeds. R *Continued*



Husker Red 1996 Perennial Plant of the Year

■ **Pestemon digitalis 'Husker Red'** has been selected as the 1996 Perennial Plant of the Year by the **Perennial Plant Association**. This plant was selected for its long season ornamental effect, adaptability to most areas of North America, and ease of production. In the landscape, 'Husker Red' can be massed at the back of the perennial border or used as a specimen plant. Its open, airy, and upright architecture adds a touch of elegance to the summer garden. Gardeners should be able to obtain this exciting selection through their local garden center or through the many mail order perennial nurseries. ❖

Garden Tips

■ If you're shopping for annuals, pass by any that look **root bound**. When a plant's roots are confined, it can't draw sufficient nutrients and water from the soil to keep the foliage healthy. To guard against losing your plants, score and loosen their rootballs before planting. This better ensures that the roots will grow out into the soil, producing healthier plants.

■ As soon as flowers on annuals and perennials fade, remove them. Like regular fertilizing and watering, this practice (known as "**deadheading**") better ensures healthy growth and a long bloom. When the blooms go to seed, the plant focuses all its support on the seeds, not on developing additional blooms. To keep your plants blooming throughout the season, pick the seed receptacles, too, while you're taking off the old flowers.

■ It's a good idea to plant low water demand plants at a higher elevation than plants needing more water. When you water low water demand plants, the excess water will trickle down to the water-loving plants below. ❖

New Flower Varieties

Continued from page 11

✿ **Sweet Pea 'Sweet Dreams'** is a tall, climbing, Spencer-type variety that has stems long enough for cutting. The large, ruffled, bicolor blooms are a mix of jewel tones of rose, deep blue, lavender, salmon and maroon at the base, accented with light pink, lavender and white on the wings. Plants grow 6 to 8 feet tall and need support. Burpee Seeds. R

✿ **Verbena 'Romance Silver'** brings a silvery lavender color to the annual garden. It features a low spreading habit and a very free flowering character. Heat and drought tolerant. S&G Seeds, Inc. W

✿ **Vinca 'Pacifica Mixed'** features large blooms, a compact branching habit,

and six distinctive colors for wide appeal. Heat and drought tolerant, this mix does best in well-drained soils or where water is scarce. The 12 to 14 inch mature plants provide a brilliant display. Waller Flowerseed Co. W

✿ **Viola F1 Hybrid 'Jewel Maroon & Yellow'** is an early blooming 6-inch plant that is compact and covered with small 1-inch attractive flowers when in bloom. It has excellent heat tolerance with abundant flower production. American Takii. W

✿ **Viola F1 Hybrid 'Sorbet Lavender Ice'** brings the colors in the series to six. These dainty plants are often called 'Johnny Jump Ups' and the colors are intense under cool conditions. Waller Flowerseed Co. W

—National Garden Bureau.

PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

■ If you haven't heard of the 'Plant a Row for the Hungry' program, listen up! It's a grass roots (no pun intended) campaign by the **Garden Writers Association of America** to encourage gardeners to plan their garden so that one row of veggies is set aside for contribution to a local foodbank or soup kitchen. If you are interested, we have a free row marker for you. To pledge your support for this worthy project, write Lawn & Landscape Digest, 1501 Johnson Ferry Rd. NE, Suite 200, Marietta GA 30062. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and we will send back your free row marker.

Last year's 'Plant a Row' campaign yielded up to 15 tons of needed food donations in some areas of the country. Spread the word about '**Plant a Row for the Hungry**'. Do your part to help the hungry get the food they need for happier and healthier lives. ❖