

MARYLAND Home & Garden

INFORMATION CENTER



September - October 2010

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Vegetable Garden Wrap-up: 2010 Season Ends on a Stinking Note

By Lew Shell, Certified Professional Horticulturalist and Jon Traunfeld, Extension Specialist, Fruits and Vegetables, and State Master Gardener Coordinator

Well, as the 2010 growing season winds up, we should take some time to look back upon our successes, challenges, and failures in the food garden.

On the positive side, many fig trees displayed phenomenal growth this spring and produced more figs than usual (perhaps the heavy snow cover protected the tender wood from cold damage?). Early season leafy vegetables were very productive due to higher spring temperatures, and most vegetable and fruit crops were harvested 2-3 weeks ahead of the "normal" schedule.

On the negative side we experienced the usual pests at typical levels- harlequin bugs, flea beetles, squash vine borers, cucumber beetles and the associated bacterial wilt. Squash and other cucurbits suffered from choanephora wet rot as the fruit began to develop, often as a result of poor air circulation, overhead watering, and humid nights. Downy mildew was confirmed on cucumber and pumpkin plants in July and August but did not prove to be a serious issue for many gardeners. Again, this was no more than usual. Late blight of tomato and pepper was confirmed early in the season in Southern Maryland and more recently in Garrett Co. We are very thankful not to have experienced a repeat of the 2009 late blight devastation!

However, there were some atypical problems. Downy mildew of basil appeared early in the season on transplants but did not become a major problem in gardens. Tomatoes and peppers suffered high rates of early season blossom end rot due to inconsistent soil moisture in May and June. Tomatoes also suffered from mid- to late-season splitting due to excessive heat and inconsistent moisture. The pollen of tomato, pepper, and bean flowers died from excessive heat in mid-season resulting in poor and late productivity.

Stink bugs

The worst problems of the year were the unprecedented stinkbug populations. Our native stinkbugs- the brown stink bug and the green stink bug - have always been a minor problem, mostly on tomato and pepper, but warm weather boosted their numbers this year. A third stinkbug, the **brown marmorated stinkbug** (BMSB), is an East Asian native that has been slowly spreading across Maryland. In recent years this has been mostly a nuisance insect congregating on the outside and inside of houses



Call us at 800-342-2507 (in state) 301-531-1757(out of state)
or visit us on the web www.hgic.umd.edu

TOP



Green stink bug - adult



Brown stink bug - adult
photo R. Bessin, U of KY Extension



Brown marmorated stink bug - adult

in the fall. They feed on the foliage and fruits of many different food garden plants including, raspberry, blackberry, fig, apple, pear, peach, nectarine, tomato, pepper, corn, and bean. Having no natural predators, they have become enemy #1 to gardeners, farmers, and orchardists.



Brown marmorated stink bug eggs and nymphs
photo S. Mathew U of MD

Stink bugs are hard to kill. They are secretive and evasive and are strong fliers. They drop down when disturbed and it is difficult to hit them directly with an insecticide spray. Some organic solutions include spraying pyrethrins (effective against the nymphs, but only marginally effective

Stink bugs insert their slender mouthparts and suck plant sap, mostly from fruit and seedpods, although BMSB also apparently feeds on leaves. They leave behind toxins that cause "catfacing" of fruits and the "cloudy spot" symptom in tomato and pepper. While one or two stinkbugs on a tomato or pepper will cause only superficial damage, 25 or 30 stinkbugs on a tomato, pepper, or bean will ruin the fruit. Unfortunately, heavy stinkbug activity can allow fungi and bacteria to enter and ruin the fruit. And if that wasn't enough, the leaf-footed plant bug, not typically a garden pest, was observed hatching on and feeding on tomatoes!



against the adults), hand-picking adults and nymphs, and tapping plants or individual leaves to dislodge them over a waiting bucket of soapy water. You can exclude this pest with a floating row cover if it's left on all season. Removing all plant debris from the garden during and after the growing season can also help by eliminating overwintering habitat. Unfortunately, stinkbugs love the shade, moisture, and protection afforded by organic mulches, so spreading newspaper, straw, and leaves thickly in the garden can exacerbate the problem.



Leaf-footed plant bug,
photo S Klick, CMREC

This pest caused significant economic losses to commercial fruit producers in MD and surrounding states in 2009 and 2010. There is a USDA BMSB Task Force that is researching the pest and control options. Stay tuned for more info on this stinker of a pest!

Fighting them on the home front

You could very well be dealing with this critter year-round. BMSBs will be leaving your garden plant and landscape plants and looking for a way into your home this fall. Seal up cracks with caulk, use weather stripping around doors and windows, remove window air conditioners, and close all possible entry points. Once they are inside you can use a shop-vacuum to suck up the bugs. Empty your vacuum cleaner frequently into an outdoor trash receptacle. Their odor can be very strong if many of them are squashed or pulled into a vacuum cleaner. Oh yeah- their poop will produce orange stains on fabrics!

Scout Your Black Walnuts for a New Disease in Maryland - Thousand Cankers Disease

David Clement, University of Maryland Extension Specialist, Plant Pathology

Emerald ash borer, sudden oak death... just when you think it can't get any worse, another disease appears on the horizon, this time threatening our black walnut trees!

Originally found only in western states, a recent report from Knoxville Tennessee confirmed that Thousand cankers disease of walnut has become established in that area. This new finding suggests that the walnut twig beetle was introduced and established in the Tennessee a very long time ago. How it got there is still a mystery, but hopes of keeping this disease confined to western



Fig. 1 Walnut twig beetle

states is now not possible. Infested wood may have been transported out of Tennessee to other eastern states for years. Alerts are being sent out and several states are now considering initiating surveys for initial symptoms.



Fig. 2 Crown dieback, yellowing leaves (inset) and attached leaves that have collapsed and wilted are symptoms of Thousand cankers disease of black walnut

The walnut twig beetle is reddish-brown and 1.5 to 1.9 millimeters long (Fig. 1). The disease is spread by this beetle when it makes galleries under the bark. The fungus causes the tissue to die disrupting the trees' ability to take up water. The beetles entrance holes into the black walnut aren't much bigger than a pin hole. While it's unlikely you will see the insect, its damage is more obvious. To scout for symptoms look first in black walnut trees with existing crown dieback. Then look for individual branches that show flagging with either yellowing leaves remaining attached or leaves that have collapsed and wilted (Fig. 2). The latter is a somewhat stronger possible symptom. Then try to collect a dead or dying limb and look for the minute exit holes.



Fig. 4 Walnut twig beetle galleries under the bark of an infested tree showing evidence of canker disease

When branches are peeled carefully, the exit holes will have associated larval galleries (Fig. 3). This can be considered confirmation of this disease since the damage caused by the walnut twig beetle, *Pityophthorus juglandis* will be closely associated with the fungus *Geosmithia morbida* which causes thousand cankers disease (Fig. 4). The best size for looking for evidence of colonization is walnut branches 1-2 inches in diameter.



Fig. 3 Walnut twig beetle galleries under the bark of an infested tree

If you find black walnut trees with suspicious symptoms please call HGIC (1-800-342-2507) or e-mail the location, description and photos to HGIC so we can alert the Maryland Department of Agriculture about this disease in Maryland.

Additional information is available on [Colorado State's Thousand Cankers Disease website](#).

Consumer Alert: EPA Advises Care When Selecting Pesticides for Bedbug Control

On August 5, 2010, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released this statement on bed bug control in the U.S.

There has been an increase of individuals or companies who offer to control bedbugs with unrealistic promises of effectiveness or low cost. Because bed bug infestations are so difficult to control, there have been situations where pesticides that are not intended for indoor residential applications have been improperly used or applied at greater rates than the label allows. While controlling bedbugs is challenging, consumers should never use, or allow anyone else to use, a pesticide indoors that is intended for outdoor use, as indicated on the label. Using the wrong pesticide or using it incorrectly to treat for bedbugs can make you, your family, and your pets sick. It can also make your home unsafe to live in - and may not solve the bedbug problem.



Bedbugs can cause itchy bites on people and pets. Unlike most public-health pests, however, bed bugs are not known to transmit or spread diseases. Pesticides are only one tool to use in getting rid of bedbugs. A comprehensive approach that includes prevention and non-chemical treatment of infestations is the best way to avoid or eliminate a bedbug problem. While more information can be found on [EPA's website](#), a few examples of non-chemical methods of control include:



- Removing clutter where bedbugs can hide
- Using mattress covers designed to contain bedbugs
- Sealing cracks and crevices
- Vacuuming rugs, and upholstered furniture thoroughly and frequently, as well as vacuuming under beds (take the vacuum bag outside immediately and dispose in a sealed trash bag)
- Washing and drying clothing and bed sheets at high temperatures (heat can kill bedbugs)
- Placing clean clothes in sealable plastic bags when possible
- Being alert and monitoring for bedbugs so they can be treated before a major infestation occurs

This comprehensive method of pest control is called integrated pest management (IPM) and includes a number of common sense control methods.

If you need to use pesticides, follow these tips to ensure your safety and that the product works:

- Before using any pesticide product, **READ THE LABEL FIRST**, then follow the directions for use
- Check the product label to make sure it is identified for use on bedbugs. If bedbugs are not listed on the label, the pesticide has not been tested for bedbugs and it may not be effective
- Any pesticide product label without an EPA registration number has not been reviewed by EPA to determine how well the product works
- Make sure that the pesticide has been approved for indoor use

To learn more watch HGIC's [bedbug videos](#). Additional information is also available on EPA's website.

<http://epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs>

Summer 2010 Damages Maryland Lawns and Weeds Abound

Peter H. Dernoeden, Ph.D., University of Maryland Extension, Turfgrass Specialist

Hot and dry summers are not uncommon to Maryland, but 2010 was one of the toughest in recent years. Summer-like conditions began in spring with record breaking high temperatures in April, which continued almost unabated to the current period. Most of Maryland experienced a hot and dry period during the latter part of June, which resulted in many lawns turning brown and becoming drought dormant. Crabgrass allowed to go unchecked for even one or two summers can dominate and push turf out of the stand thus degrading lawn function and aesthetic quality.



Crabgrass is probably the most common and invasive weed in Maryland lawns. Crabgrass is an annual plant that emerges from seed in April, but the highest populations usually emerge in May and June. Normally hot and dry soils in July and August do not allow for much additional emergence of crabgrass, even in occasionally irrigated sites. Crabgrass plants die following a few autumn frosts leaving brown and sometimes muddy voids in winter. Crabgrass has a special physiology that enables it to grow more rapidly and to become more competitive when air temperatures



are high in summer. In College Park, crabgrass seedlings were first observed on 7 April 2010, which was 7 to 10 days earlier than usual. Normally, few crabgrass plants emerge in April and those that do only very slowly mature to produce new shoots called tillers. Crabgrass plants generally go unnoticed until early July, when they become tall enough to be seen in the lawn. Tillering normally begins in late June when air temperatures are routinely in the 80's F., but this was accelerated in 2010. What really made crabgrass a much greater problem than usual was the June drought that turned non-irrigated lawns brown or at least stopped them growing and resulted in some thinning. This lack of turfgrass vigor, and ability to compete with the crabgrass, was a large part of the problem. The thunderstorms rolled through the central counties and stimulated more crabgrass seed germination in July and August. These thunderstorms were accompanied by very hot days, which stimulated both emergence and growth of weeds. Environmentally stressed-out lawns are not able to compete with the more heat-loving crabgrass. The result was major crabgrass breakthrough as well as other weeds including yellow foxtail, yellow nutsedge, spotted spurge, yellow wood sorrel and many others. Homeowners who had taken the precaution of managing crabgrass with a spring applied herbicide, or who have a lawn service that provides for pest control, probably are seeing much more crabgrass than in the past.

The best type of herbicide for controlling crabgrass is called a preemergence herbicide since it is applied before crabgrass seed germinate. These herbicides are applied in late March and April (some can be effectively used in early May). There are several chemically different preemergence herbicides that are commercially available. These herbicides do not kill seed in soil. Instead, the germinating crabgrass plant emerges and the very young roots take-up the herbicide, which prevents root development and the young seedlings die before they can be seen. Preemergence herbicides are degraded in soil by microorganisms. In general, an April applied preemergence herbicide will have broken down to ineffective levels by late July. This is exactly as planned since dissipation by microbes is desired so that overseeding of a lawn (and more importantly sports fields) may be safely performed by mid- August without worry that the herbicide exists to prevent newly planted turfgrass seed from developing properly. When soils become very warm and are kept moist by either irrigation or rain, preemergence herbicides breakdown much more rapidly than normal. The early breakdown of herbicides combined with thunderstorms in July resulted in much more crabgrass than would normally emerge and compete. Hence, by late July or early August it was apparent that a major breakdown of preemergence herbicides had occurred for many. It was environmental stress damage to lawns combined with thunderstorms that also encouraged the many other weed problems, which are now apparent in most Maryland lawns.

Photos courtesy of Bob Mugass, U. of MN Extension

TOP

Fall is Baby Snake Time!

By Ray Bosmans, Professor Emeritus, University of MD.

Late summer and early fall is when the eggs of snakes hatch. The most common large snake in our region has to be the Black Rat Snake. The mother snake typically lays her eggs in piles of mulch, compost piles, and under logs. The eggs have a leathery shell. The average female black rat snake ranges in size from 4-7 feet at maturity. A mature snake may lay 20-36 eggs in early summer. Like most other reptiles, she does not protect the eggs nor help rear her babies. This may sound like she is a neglectful mother but this method has been working very well for millions of years! The warmth of the ground is all that is needed to make the babies develop.

Black Rat Snakes are harmless and non-poisonous, although a wild one may defend itself when threatened. They used to be limited to country settings but now are commonly found in suburbs, anywhere where they can find their favorite source of food ...rodents. They play a very important role in managing rat and mouse populations. Never harm these or any other snake. All native snakes are protected by the [Maryland Department of Natural Resources's](#) Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act.

The interesting thing about the hatchling black rat snake is that it is not black at hatching. Its background color is a light gray with dark brown or black rectangular blotches down the back and small spots of black on the sides. They actually are quite attractive. They gradually turn completely black when they reach an average length of 16-20 inches.

Sometimes the hatchling snakes accidentally find their way inside basements. If you find one pick it up and place it outdoors. If you are not willing to touch it gently push it with a broom into a trash can or box and then place it outdoors. If snakes and other wildlife keep finding their way into your basement, you need to seal with caulk or weather stripping, all openings around the house foundation.

Although the Black Rat Snake is the most commonly encountered snake in many areas, there are other species that lay eggs that hatch in the fall. They include: Eastern King Snake, Hog Nose Snake, Ring Neck Snake and Black Racer. The live-bearers include: Eastern Garter, Northern Brown Snake, Water Snake, Copperhead and Timber Rattlesnake. To learn more about snakes [watch our videos](#) and read [HG 64](#).



Adult black rat snake



Hatchling black rat snake



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Is all this social media technology new to you? Facebook is an online gathering spot where you can connect with friends and people who have similar interests. Go to [HGIC's facebook page](#) for a preview. Like what you see? Click the Facebook Sign Up button to get started. If you are already on Facebook, enter Home and Garden Information Center in the search field and click on the like button. Once you "like" the HGIC page, you can read posted comments, post questions, and comment on posts by others.

Twitter is another way we are communicating with Marylanders. Tweets are very short messages (140 characters or less) and often include hyperlinks to other web sites or publications. To learn more visit [our twitter page](#) and click the Join today button.

Questions and Answers

by Debra Ricigliano, Certified Professional Horticulturist

Question:

For the past few years we have been having trouble with our well-established grape vine in the backyard. The grapes form and look healthy, but then turn brown/black and then look like raisins. The vine was pruned in early spring to improve air circulation, but the grapes are starting with the same problem. Eventually this happens to all the grapes while they're still green. The leaves start to brown and die as well. We have never sprayed for diseases and insects. What do we need to do to prevent this from happening?

Answer:

Sounds like a classic case of black rot, a very common fungal disease that affects grapes. The disease causes brown circular leaf spots and reduces many berries to black, shriveled, raisin-like mummies. Unfortunately, it is too late to treat the grapes for this season.



Sanitation is important; remove infected fruit and clean-up all of the mummies from the vines and the ground to reduce the amount of overwintering fungal spores. In order to control the fungus, you must begin a fungicide spray regimen early in the spring; spray new shoots when they first emerge from the vine, and are about 1 inch long and then when they are about 4 inches long. Continue spraying every 10-14 days until the fruit skin hardens or according to the label directions. Recommended fungicides are Bordeaux mixture or sulfur which are organic and captan, immunox or mancozeb, which are chemical fungicides. For additional information [order EB 125 Home Fruit Production Guide](#),

Question:

Autumn is my favorite season and I enjoy being out in my garden at this time of year. Do you have any suggestions for plants other than mums and pansies that will look good in my garden in the fall? I am mostly interested in perennials.

Answer:

Yes, there are many plants that add beauty to the fall garden. Ornamental grasses provide interest throughout the growing season, even after the first frost. *Muhlenbergia capillaries* (pink muhly grass) is one outstanding ornamental grass that produces a mass of reddish-pink flowers that sway gently in the fall breeze. *Panicum* (switch grass) and *Pennisetum* (fountain grass) are also beautiful grasses in the fall. Asters, Japanese anemone, sedum, *Solidago* (golden rod), *Salvia elegans* (pineapple sage), and the groundcover *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides* (leadwort or plumbago) will enhance your fall garden. Although zinnias are annuals, they are spectacular in the fall. Zinnias are an excellent addition to a cut flower arrangement that can be enjoyed indoors.



Ceratostigma plumbaginoides



Maybe it's just me but it seems like the authors of the Grow It Eat It Blog have thoroughly enjoyed sharing their gardening experiences (both fruitful and frustrating) with readers this season. As I read the posts I think, "Wow, that never would have occurred to me!" and "What a great picture!" and "I wanna be their new BFF next year and visit their gardens!!!"

So what are the authors blogging about? Tips on new or little known vegetable varieties, personal experiences keeping deer and other varmints out of the garden, recipes and short cuts for managing bumper crops, trellis ideas, and more! You'll just have to go to the blog to find out more and add your tips in the comment box.



As of this writing, there are a whopping 70 videos on our YouTube channel - 28 new food gardening videos this season alone! Master Gardeners from Baltimore City, Howard and Prince George's Counties share their secrets and show how you can get the most out of your vegetable garden. More gardening footage has been captured over the season and is in the queue awaiting editing by our trio of fine student video production artists. The students and on-screen talent had a blast making these videos this year. Check them out and let us know what you think! Visit YouTube/UMDHGIC or the GIEI video page for the newest releases.

CURRENT PLANT & PEST PROBLEMS The Grow It Eat It website has a **new** feature, **Current Plant & Pest Problems**. We have created pages of the most common pests in the vegetable garden including detailed descriptions of the pests and the recommended control, photos and videos. We hope this will help you to identify the problem and help you solve it.



Looking for a food gardening class? Many counties have fall food gardening classes scheduled. Click here to see the schedule. Don't see one near you? Contact information for each county and Baltimore City are listed on this page. Let them know you're interested in taking a class!

What new gardening information would you like to see on the Grow It Eat It website? Drop us a line and let us know at grow.eat@gmail.com.

Note to our readers:

In December the HGIC newsletter will begin publishing seasonally - 4 times a year. Our winter issue will cover the months of December, January and February!





The College in Your Backyard

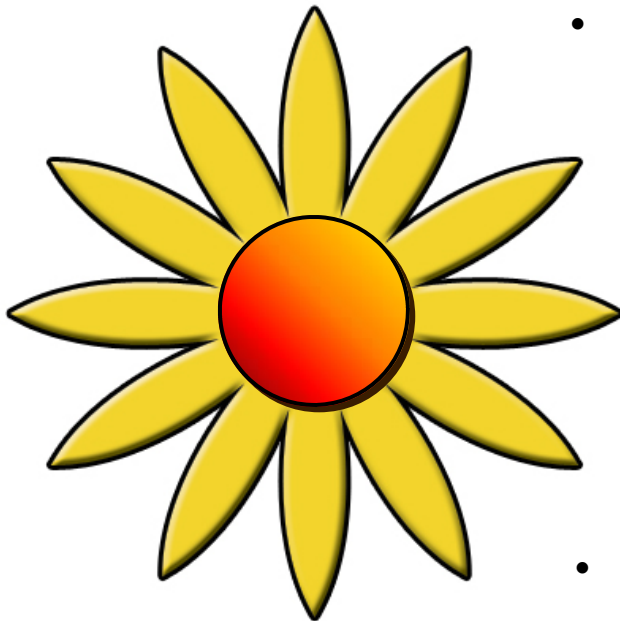
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MONTHLY TIPS FROM HGIC

Every month we publish timely tips on our website. This year we will be highlighting some “best of” tips. If we pique your interest, please visit our website to read more (www.hgic.umd.edu) or call us with your questions - 800-342-2507. Be sure to click on the [blue links](#) to view related publications or photos.

SEPTEMBER

Lawns

- NOW is the time to renovate, reseed, fertilize and treat your lawn for weeds. Cool season grasses should be fertilized with 1 lb. of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Whether renovating or over-seeding, the seed bed should be raked vigorously with a metal rake to loosen the soil and promote good seed to soil contact. If your entire lawn is compacted, machine aerating will help improve seeding, water and fertilizer penetration. After seeding, the area should be lightly covered with straw and watered twice each day, even after the grass emerges. Broadleaf weed killers can be applied after newly seeded grass has been mowed at least 3 times. Winter annuals like henbit ([photo](#)) and chickweed ([photo](#)) can be controlled using a preemergent herbicide around the 3rd week in September. But remember, you cannot apply a preemergent and sow grass seed at the same time. Read [HG 37](#).

Woody Ornamentals

- Poison ivy turns red now. Wear plastic bread bags or newspaper bags over gloves when removing poison ivy and throw the bags away when the job is done.
- Evergreens naturally drop their old leaves and needles. This is not a cause for concern.
- Early fall is generally a good time to transplant trees and shrubs, with the exception of broadleafed evergreens.
- The large tents of the fall webworm ([photo](#)) may be seen at the ends of tree branches. Many other kinds of caterpillars are feeding on shade trees. No controls are necessary unless severe defoliation is observed.

- Spruce spider mites ([photo](#)) will become active again on evergreen trees as the weather cools down. Monitor for this pest by tapping branches while holding a piece of white paper underneath. Look for moving specks. They can be controlled with ultra-fine horticultural oil.
- Continue spraying roses with a labeled fungicide if they are susceptible to black spot disease. Powdery mildew is a late season disease that infects flower buds and can cause petal distortion next spring.

Ornamental Plants

- Plant hardy mums now so they will become well established prior to cool weather. Pansies, ornamental cabbage and kale can also be planted. September is a good time to transplant, divide and plant perennials.
- Irises with leaves that are flopping over may be infested with iris borer. The borer is the larva of a clear wing moth. The eggs are laid on the foliage in the spring and the larvae move down to the crown and bore into the rhizome. Dig up infected plants and cut out the larvae and damaged tissue. Re-plant the healthy rhizomes.
- Consider laying a wire screen over your pond during the fall months to keep leaves out. Cut down and remove all plant parts that succumb to frost and freezing weather.

Fruit

- Harvest figs when they soften slightly. Pears are beginning to ripen. Most pear cultivars are picked when background color begins to lighten but fruits are still firm. Pears should be kept in the refrigerator and brought to room temperature to ripen. Asian pears should be allowed to ripen on the tree. Pick an apple every few days when harvest time approaches to determine the peak harvest time. Harvesting fruit before peak ripeness will help you to minimize problems with yellow jackets and sap beetles. Remove and dispose of all rotted or fallen fruits from trees, vines and bushes.

Vegetable and Herb gardening

- Plant cool season vegetable crops now that will mature into the later fall months. These

include Chinese cabbage, turnips, kale, mustard, spinach, lettuce, carrots, and beets.

- Cover crops of oats, winter rye, winter wheat and crimson clover can be sown now through the middle of October.
- Plant garlic now through the end of October.
- Dig storage potatoes on a cloudy, warm day after plants begin to die back. Let them lay on the ground for a few hours before bringing them inside. They should not be washed, washing increases the chance of rot in storage. Store potatoes in a dark, cool location (35° - 40°F) Sweet potatoes should be harvested the same way except that it helps to “cure” the roots for 10-14 days in a warm, dark location (85° F). Curing helps to heal over cuts and scrapes before being stored for the winter in a cool, dry location (55° F).
- Now is a good time to propagate herbs by stem cuttings.
- Herb leaves are most intensely flavored right before the plant blooms. Snip foliage in the morning after the dew has dried.

Seasonal and Indoor Plants

- Get houseplants ready to bring back into the house by inspecting for disease and insect problems. If the plants have out-grown their pots repot them into the next size pot or remove them, trim back the roots and repot in the same container. Some houseplants will drop leaves and slow their growth, as they become accustomed to low light conditions indoors. Be careful not to over water them during this adjustment period which may take several weeks.

Indoor and Outdoor Pests

- Crickets, ladybird beetles, boxelder bugs, cluster flies, elm leaf beetles and other innocuous insects will attempt to enter your home this fall for protection. Caulk, weather strip and seal up all cracks and entry points around your house foundation, vent openings, windows and doorways to prevent these critters from coming indoors.
- Yellow jackets can be a nuisance, but will soon die off for the season.

Wildlife

- Leave the large seedheads of black-eyed susans,

coneflowers, and other perennials for birds to feed on over the winter.

- House mice and sometimes field mice may be more noticeable around and in homes due to the onset of cool weather. Keep turf and weeds properly mowed around your house and seal all cracks.



OCTOBER

Lawns

- Cool season grasses, like bluegrass and fescue, should be fertilized with ½ - 1 lb. of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Read **HG 103** Fertilizing Facts for Home Lawns, and **TT 63**, General Guidelines for Lawn Maintenance in Maryland.
- Use a turf-type tall fescue cultivar at a rate of 4 lbs. of seed per 1,000 sq. ft. of area for overseeding, or 8 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. for new lawns.
- Herbicides are quite effective now, but do not apply herbicide to areas that you will be reseeding.
- Leaves that fall onto the lawn can be shredded with a lawnmower and left to decompose naturally.

Woody Ornamental Tips

- If you had problems with scale insects, dormant oil can be applied in late fall.
- Wait to fertilize woodies (trees and shrubs) until late October or early November.
- Tree and shrub branches should be pruned at this time only if they are dead or damaged.
- Powdery mildew is a common late summer and early fall leaf disease of dogwood, lilac and other landscape plants. Affected leaves turn white and droop. No fungicide sprays will be effective now.

Ornamental Plant Tips

- Now is the time to plant daffodil bulbs in a sunny spot in well-drained soil.

- Perennials can be divided and replanted at this time.
- Geraniums can be over-wintered in several ways. Entire plants can be brought inside and grown in a sunny window, or cuttings can be taken from existing plants. You can also take cuttings from other annuals like begonias, salvias, and coleus.
- Tulip bulbs should be planted from mid-October through November.
- Early October is a good time to apply glyphosate to bamboo, multiflora rose, and other difficult to kill plants, because this is when the plants are transporting food to the roots for winter dormancy.

Fruit

- Brown rot on stone fruits causes fruits to mummify. If you had this disease problem this year, reduce its chances for next year by removing all mummified fruit and fruit stems from trees and from the ground and throwing them in the trash.
- Be on the lookout for peach tree borer damage. The borers enter the lower trunk around the soil line and feed on the cambium. They kick out a mixture of frass and sap, which can be scraped away to expose the feeding tunnels. Insert a fine flexible wire into these holes and kill the borer.

Vegetables and Herbs Tips

- Pumpkins and winter squashes can be harvested when they are fully colored and you can't push your fingernail into the rind. Store them in a basement.
- Carrots can be over-wintered in the garden by covering the bed with a deep straw or leaf mulch. Pull carrots through the winter as needed.
- Pick green tomatoes prior to the first frost. They can be slowly ripened indoors by placing them in a paper bag.
- Lettuce, spinach, radishes, and corn salad can be planted through the middle of the month. Cover these late plantings with a cold frame, temporary greenhouse, or floating row cover. (GE 004)

Soil

- Bare soil is prone to erosion and should be covered with mulch, groundcovers, or turf. (GE 006)

Mulch

- Mulches should be applied only 2-3 inches deep around ornamental plants and kept away from shrub and tree trunks. Mature trees do not benefit from being mulched. Mulch perennial beds, trees and shrubs with fallen leaves to help protect crowns and shallow root systems from severe cold weather
- Here are some ideas for dealing with fallen tree leaves:
 - ◆ Shred them with a mulching lawnmower and leave them in place.
 - ◆ Shred them and add them to your compost pile.
 - ◆ Cover your garden soil with shredded leaves.
 - ◆ Mulch perennials, trees, and shrubs with shredded leaves.

Indoor Plant Tips

- Begonias and geraniums can be cut back and brought indoors.
- If your African violet has become leggy cut the rosette off, leaving a 2-3 inch stem. Repot into clean, moist potting soil, cover with a plastic bag sealed at the top and place the pot in diffused light. In about six weeks, new roots will form.

Pests

- Ticks remain active as long as daytime temperatures are above freezing. Keep grass and weeds mowed and move bird feeders to the edges of your yard to minimize tick problems.

Wildlife

- October is a peak month for fall migration. This is a good time to observe hawk migration. Several hawk species may be seen on their flights to their wintering homes. The white-throated sparrow migrates from the north and frequents our area until spring.
- Where voles are a problem try using mouse snap traps baited with apples.



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