

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Commonwealth



HOME GARDENING NEWSLETTER – April (Hampton Roads Area, VA)

This newsletter is geared to the home gardener for the care of plants that grow in the Hampton Roads Area (Eastern Virginia and NE North Carolina). However, the plant information is based upon caring for plants anywhere in the American Horticultural Society Heat Zones 6-8 and the USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 6b – 8a, which includes a major portion of the Continental United States. Below are links to both maps in case you are not sure in which zones you garden.

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html>
http://www.ahs.org/publications/heat_zone_map.htm#1

Spring is here !!! The last average killing frost for this area is around April 20th. Know your plant and its cold and heat tolerance. Two good plant books for this area are: *The New York/Mid Atlantic Gardener's Book of Lists* (ISBN: 0-97833-261-8) by Bonnie Lee Appleton and Louis Trigg Chaplin and *Best Plants for Hampton Roads: A Landscape & Garden Companion* (ISBN: 0-07264455-0-0) by various authors (Foxy Lady Press Inc). Planting plants that are not tolerant of our heat or cold can be a waste of money or require extra plant care. Planting plants that are ideal for this area (or whatever area you live) requires a lot less work, care, time and money. Many 'summer' type plants are extremely susceptible to frost, such as tomatoes and cucumbers. Wait until May before you fertilize those warm season turf lawns or you may lose some of it in May if we get that late frost/freeze. Keeping up with your gardens now will make it much easier later this summer when it's hot. On average this month, it will be a high of 67 degrees and a low of 47 degrees and Hampton Roads will get 10 days of rain averaging 3.10 inches. On average this is the second driest month for the year next to November, so watch your new seedlings and plantings carefully. Remember all plants need 1 inch of water per week. Newly planted annual flowers beds and vegetables may need more frequent watering but not more water per week. DO NOT OVER LOVE YOUR PLANTS ... they can drown.

Lawn Care:

- When was the last time you did a soil test? If it has been over 3 years now is a good time to do it. Test kits are available from your local Extension Office. It only costs \$7 plus mailing. In Chesapeake, the test kits are available at every branch of the Chesapeake public library.
- Remember to sharpen you lawn mower blades every 8 hours of cutting. Dull blades and improper cutting heights will damage your turf grasses and cause a browning affect.
- Set lawn mower cutting height according to the type of lawn.

- Use a lower RPM when cutting grass. Greater RPMs tend to rip the grass blade rather than clean cut it.
- Deep water all turf grasses with 1 inch of water every 7-10 days in the absence of rain. Turf will readily let you know when it needs watering. When you walk on it and it stays down ... it needs water. Never Never Never ... water in short intervals or more than twice a week. Deep watering promotes deep root system so in July and August when it really hot and dry your lawn will still be green with minimal water.
- Alternate mowing patterns. Following the same path all the time just creates ruts and a place for weed seeds to congregate.
- Know how many square feet of **turf area** you have. This is extremely important when fertilizing, seeding, and composting. When measuring your lot, remember to subtract your house, other buildings, gardens, driveways and other non-lawn areas to determine your turf area.

Weed Control: Remember ... a weed is nothing more than a plant growing in the wrong spot.

Broad Leaf Weeds: If you are going to apply a broad leaf weed killer to control summer annual weeds then now through the end of May is optimal. If you already used a pre-emergent ‘crabgrass’ control for this year then you probably do not need to use a broad leaf weed control. The pre-emergent weed control will stop almost all ‘weed’ seeds from germinating. **Be careful, as several broad leaf weed controls are not for all lawns. Large doses of the chemical 2,4-d can be harmful to St. Augustine and Centipede lawns. Safe products with low concentration of 2,4-d are available and marked as safe for summer lawns or St. Augustine. Also, do not apply broad leaf weed control to warm season lawns (St. Aug, Centipede, Zoysia or Bermuda) during their spring green up period (normally mid April through early May). Do it before or after green up. For Cool Season lawns (Fescue) you can apply it any time now through the end of May.** Check your lawn to see if you really have a weed problem. Healthy and properly maintained lawns tend to preclude weed growth. You may be able to just pick those stray weeds out by hand. Weed seeds germinate based upon ground temperatures. Systemic broad leaf weed killers are absorbed by the leaf and not the roots of the plant. As such, you need to wait for the weeds to germinate and grow before applying these pesticides. Use a pesticide Broad Leaf weed control containing the chemicals 2,4-d, Dicamba and Mecoprop (MCP). Applying these chemicals too early is a waste of money and damages the environment. **Remember to always read the label and strictly adhere to instructions before applying any pesticide in your yard.**

Other unwanted grass control: If you haven’t already applied a crab grass herbicide you may be too late to control all the crab grasses, as many crab grasses are germinating. You can still apply it to eliminate new seeds that haven’t germinated yet and you will need to apply more pre-emergent crab grass preventer later this summer. **READ THE LABEL FOR REAPPLICATION TIMETABLES** as all chemicals are different. If you have a fescue lawn make sure you allow time between your last application of the pre-emergent and your plan to re-seed in early September. For the crabgrass you now have growing in your lawn you may need to dig or spot treat them. They’ll be easy to pull or dig now before their roots mature and take a firm hold in your soil. There are several off the shelf post-emergent crabgrass control products containing such chemicals as Dithiopyr (Dimension), Fenoxaprop (Acclaim), MSMA, DSMA, DMA, MAMA, and other arsenicals. Label directions must be followed for the correct rate of

the various formulations. These products are normally expensive and are time critical as to the height or number of tillers the crabgrass has when it is applied.

Mother Nature provides us with ample signs that are useful tips regarding PRE herbicide applications. Perhaps the most important phenological sign is the blooming of the forsythia. PRE weed control response is optimized sometime between 100% forsythia bloom to 50% bloom drop. Of course, PRE's can be applied earlier if desired, but the duration of control through the prime months for weed seed germination will be shorter with the earlier application date.

Are there "organic" weed control options available? Yes. Corn gluten meal has PRE herbicide activity on crabgrass. However, the best crabgrass control it has provided in Virginia Tech research is 60%. Is that satisfactory? It depends on your expectations of turf quality. By its composition, corn gluten meal is also a 10-0-0 fertilizer and will be delivering approximately 1 lb of N per 1000 sq ft at its labeled application rate. This N will be mostly water insoluble, so that is a plus. However, this material, just like the synthetic "weed and feed" products, is a significant nitrogen source and must be managed accordingly.

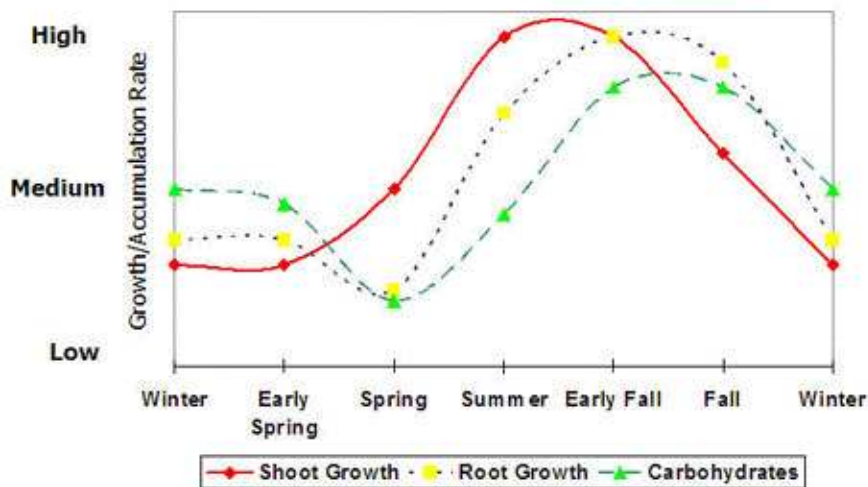
Cool Season Grasses (Fescue): Do not fertilize unless you did not apply any fertilizers last fall. Your lawn should be lush and green. If you must fertilize only apply ½ lbs of Nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft of lawn. Do this before mid April otherwise you will be feeding unwanted common bermuda and other weeds in you lawn.

Cutting height: 2 ½ inch minimum. 4 inch optimum. **pH:** 5.5 – 6.5

Warm Season Grasses (Bermuda, Centipede, Zoysia, St. Augustine): Do not fertilize too early. Allow your warm season grass to **fully** green up at least 2 weeks before applying any fertilizer (normally by mid May). If you apply the fertilizer too early a late frost/freeze can kill the new grass growth and leave large brown patches in your lawn in May.

The below chart should help show why fertilizing too soon is bad for warm season lawns. Right now your warm season lawn is still dormant and the roots are doing absolutely nothing !!! Nitrogen can not be absorbed and will only go into OUR ground water and pollute OUR environment. If we get a warm spell and you do fertilize your lawn too early the nitrogen can start earlier shoot growth. The problem arises if we have a late frost or several days of cold weather (below 40), your new tender growth of the plant will die and leave unsightly brown patches. In 2004, this did occur and many St. Augustine and Bermuda lawns paid the price. These brown patches should regrow by late July, but until then you may have to endure a patchy yard. Wait till May for your first fertilization. Your lawn will appreciate it as well as our environment.

Figure 2. Seasonal Growth Patterns of Warm-Season Turfgrasses



Cutting heights: Bermuda - ½” to 1”, Centipede and Zoysia - 1”. St. Augustine 2” to 3”
pH: Centipede 4.5 – 5.5, Bermuda and Zoysia 6.0 – 7.0, St Augustine 6.5 – 7.5

Establishing or Overseeding: The best time to establish and overseed these types of lawns is May through July. All are best established by sod or plugs. For overseeding, use 1 lb of seed for Centipede and 2 lbs of seed for Zoysia and Bermuda per 1,000 sq ft of lawn. St Augustine seed is rare and expensive. It is best to plug with St Augustine. You can not apply seed if you used a pre-emergent crab grass control.

Fertilizing: For all warm season grasses except Centipede, you can fertilize 3 times over the course of the season with 1 lb of nitrogen per 1000 sq feet of lawn. For Centipede, you only need ½ lb of nitrogen per application twice a season. Your first application is two weeks after green up (normally late April to mid May the later the better). The 2nd application is May-June, and the last is before the end of August.

Thatching/Core Aerating: Warm season lawns require periodic thatching or verticutting, which is removing the dense undergrowth. If the thatch is greater than ½ inch ... you need to thatch. Generally, you need to thatch at least once every 3 years. Also, now is a good time to core aerate your lawn. It should be done annually and best done during spring green up.

General Gardening Tips for this month:

- **BEES:** You haven’t heard? Seems that every one is looking for a freebie, only beekeepers get them ... free bees (get it...). Bees are a-swarming. Swarms have already been rescued by local beekeepers. Peak time will be April. If you see a swarm, don’t panic, don’t spray, (even with water hose), call your local extension office, or local beekeeper if you know one. Many local beekeepers in the area will remove fresh swarms **without** charge. Timely calls and a quick response is essential in collecting these wild bees. They can be ‘recycled’ but

only if the beekeeper can put them in a box. Visit <http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/> (Tidewater Beekeepers Association) for more information.

- **TERMITES:** We seem to be seeing swarms of termites this year. So be vigilant. Termites are small (up to ¼ inch), pale-colored insects. They live in colonies. The workers and soldiers do not have wings, but the fertile males and females do have long, thin wings. Termite damage is usually first seen at or near the ground. However, damage can occur far above ground if the infestation has remained undetected for a long period. Termite-damaged wood has no sawdust associated with it; but, the wood does contain mud tubes and the galleries are lined with soil. Termite damage is sometimes located in wood adjacent to heaters or fireplaces. Perhaps, the soil in these areas remains at higher temperatures during the winter, or the drainage around fireplaces is poor and the soil remains moist for long periods. A mature queen can lay thousands of eggs each year. Eggs are tended by worker termites. The nymph hatches directly from the egg. Attendants feed nymphs regurgitated food for the first two weeks, enabling them to grow. They will become workers, soldiers, reproductives, or supplementary reproductives. Termites actually eat wood and can cause physical damage. Termites often attack wood that is touching or close to soil. Control of subterranean termites is best left in the hands of a professional pest control operator. The application of termiticides in and around the home, around pipes, wells and heating ducts- requires experience and the proper tools. There are other chemicals available for the prevention and control of termites. Interesting fact: The queen can live for up to 10 years.
- **BULB PLANTS:** Have you wondered what to do with those wonderful daffodils and tulips after the blooms have browned out? Well all plants grow to reproduce. Once a plant loses its flower luster, the plant will put its energy into seed production. Dead-head (cut off) the spent flower and the plant will put its energy into bulb production rather than seed production, so next year you'll have more or bigger flowers. After dead-heading the flower, do not cut the plant to ground level for at least six to eight weeks (the plant will brown out).
 - Observe your daffodil and other spring bulbs while in bloom this spring to be sure they have not been shaded by the new growth of other tree or shrub plantings. If they have, you may need to move your bulbs to a new sunny location.
 - Fertilize bulbs in late autumn with a low nitrogen and high phosphorus bulb fertilizer.
 - Label the clumps of daffodils that are too crowded, as overcrowding inhibits blooming. Dig up and separate in July.
- **DIVIDING PERENNIALS:** Many popular perennials can be divided now including: phlox, fall asters, shasta daisies, baby's breath, hostas, lilies, liriope, etc. Set up a plant exchange with friends and neighbors to share the excess. Lift, divide, and replant as soon as new shoots appear. Each rooted shoot or clump will develop into a fine plant and should bloom this year.
- **PROPAGATING MANY SHRUBS:**
 - **Simple Layering:** An easy way to propagate many shrubs such as Forsythia, Camellias, Azaleas, and Caroline Jasmine is to simply partly bury a lower branch with one node under the soil. Bend and hold it down with a small rock. Leave the end 6 to 12 inches of the branch exposed. Do not cut the branch from the parent shrub. You can 'wound' the lower side of the buried branch to help new roots form. In 2 to 12 months or so, you can dig out the buried branch and you will see roots at the node. Wait until fall for a bigger root ball. Cut the branch and plant your new shrub. With Caroline Jasmine and other climbers you can create multiple new shrubs from one branch by burying one long vine every foot or so.

- **Air Layering:** Many plants such as camellias, roses and many cane type plants are easy to propagate by air layering. With a sharp clean knife, gently remove about 1 inch of bark just below a node. Surround the wound with wet unmilled sphagnum moss. Wrap plastic or foil around the moss and tie in place (top and bottom). When the roots are visible, cut the plant below the root ball and plant. If you air layer in April, you can cut and plant your new cutting in late August or September.
- **Camellias:** A common problem with camellias is that they get planted in the wrong location. Most camellias prefer shade. Camellias are not easy to transplant. They are very sensitive to transplant shock. Some will tolerate full sun but will never reach their full potential. If you have camellias that you like and want more, simply air layer as noted above. If you have a camellia and it is not doing well, then you may want to air layer it this year (February - April) and in September plant your new plant in the proper or new location. Once you see the air layer plant is established, then you may want to try to move the original plant in fall or early spring. This way if your transplant does not make it your new plant will be there for your enjoyment.
- **ROSES:** In March you should have trimmed and applied your 1st fertilizer to your roses (do not trim spring climbing roses until after they bloom). Your 1st fertilization should be a high nitrogen fertilizer to promote new growth. For all future fertilizations use a rose specific fertilizer. You can fertilize roses every 2 weeks but every 4 to 6 weeks with a good rose fertilizer will ensure a good bloom year. Roses love fish emulsions and other organic feeds too. Use these every other time you fertilize. Many stocks will have multiple buds soon. To get larger blooms, pinch off all but one or two buds on each stock.
- Mites, mealybugs, and root rot pathogens can be problems for dieffenbachia grown indoors. Control with pesticides labeled for home use on dieffenbachia or foliage plants. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label.
- If you want to plant an Easter lily outside, don't plant it near other lilies. Easter lilies may carry a virus that can infect other lilies. They will naturally bloom next year in early summer. To have them bloom at Easter they must be forced in a greenhouse or other controlled environment.
- Morning glories must be grown in a well-drained soil in a warm, sunny location. Rich soil and excessive fertilization yields vigorous vines with few flowers. Start seeds indoors in 4-inch pots for transplanting outdoors two or three weeks after the average last frost date, or sow seeds directly at this time (after the last frost). Soaking seeds in water overnight will speed germination.
- When you are out shopping for annual flowers for your garden, look for plants with lots of unopened buds. Plants that bloom in the pack are often root bound and may be stunted for several weeks after being transplanted. Plants not yet in bloom will actually bloom sooner, be better established, and grow faster.
- Consider planting flowers that can be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, Chinese lantern, celosia, and globe amaranth.
- For hot-weather color, select one of the following: gloriosa daisy, Madagascar periwinkle, ornamental peppers, Mexican zinnia, or amaranthus 'Joseph's Coat'. Plant after all danger of frost is past and plan for color until winter arrives.
- To determine if soil is ready to work, squeeze a handful into a tight ball, then, break the ball apart with your fingers. If the ball of soil readily crumbles in your fingers, the soil is ready to be worked. If the soil stays balled, however, it is still too wet to work. Use this test in another week to determine if the soil is ready to be worked.

- Keep a calendar close to the door going to the garden. Use it to track when and what you plant, fertilize, apply pesticides to, and harvest. Also, note the weather. You'll refer back to these notes each year.
- **BIRDS:** When adding plants consider our fine feathered friends. Look for plants that do double duty. Consider blueberry, bayberry, or sumac as a hedge that will give shelter and food to many birds instead of photinia or forthyias, which do little for birds. Add Cosmos (*Cosmos spp.*), bachelor's button (*Centaurea cyanus*), sunflowers, and zinnias to your annual beds to satisfy goldfinches and sparrows seed needs.
- Birds are a wonderful and natural way to rid your garden of many unwanted pests. Maintaining a good source of food for birds will attract them to your yard. If you see a pest problem (aphids, whitefly, etc) stop refilling your bird feeders for a day or so and watch them clean your plants. Birds consume hundreds of insects each day, and wise gardeners encourage them to take up residence in orchards and gardens by installing bird houses, feeders, and water sources.
- Don't add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the tree become established and may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading into the surrounding soil. Do dig a wider (but not deeper) planting hole, but fill it with the original soil that was removed from it.
- If you have spring-blooming Camellia, *Camellia japonica*, be sure to remove the spent flower blossoms from underneath the plant. These blossoms can encourage the fungus that causes petal blight in Camellia. Sanitation underneath plants is a good practice in the garden and helps to reduce disease and insect problems on several plants.

Herb Gardening Tips for this month:

- Looking for herbs to grow here's a quick list from *Best Plants for Hampton Roads: A Landscape & Garden Companion*.
 - Herbs for containers: basil, chives, scented geranium, lemon verbena, marjoram, mint, parsley, rosemary, sage, and thyme,
 - Herbs for Hot & Dry sites: scented geranium, lemon balm, marjoram, mint, oregano, rosemary, and sage.
 - Herbs for light shade: bay, chives, coriander/cilantro, fennel, lemon balm, lovage, mint, parsley, tarragon and thyme.
 - Herbs that are easy to grow: basil, chives, lemon balm, mint, oregano, parsley, and thyme.
 - Herbs that are invasive: garlic, chives, marjoram, mint, oregano, and thyme.
- Now is also the time to divide mint, chive, tarragon, and creeping thyme.
- Plant chervil, coriander, dill, rosemary, and summer savory outside after the last spring frost date for your area (April 20th for the Hampton Roads area).
- If you harvest mint frequently, growth will be more vigorous. Be sure to grow it in a container to keep it from taking over your garden.
- Bronze-leaved fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* 'Atropurpureum', an anise-scented herb that grows to 4 feet tall, looks great in the perennial border with tall, red- or white-flowered phlox or tall, silver-leaved perennials, including artemisia. Be careful as fennel may be invasive.
- For a handsome addition to your herb collection, try lovage *Levisticum officinale*, a hardy perennial with a sharp, but sweet, celery flavor. Leaves can be used sparingly in soups and salads stems can be blanched or eaten raw and seeds can be added to candies, bread, and cakes.

- Start herb seeds indoors in moist medium. Place in bright, indirect light and move to a sunny window when germination begins. When the seedlings are 2 to 3 inches tall, transplant into peat pots for the garden or into clay pots for use on your terrace or balcony. Some herbs easily grown for transplanting include chives, sage, sweet marjoram, basil, summer savory, and parsley.

Interior Gardening tips for this month:

- When growing houseplants in water, occasionally change the water completely (rather than just adding more) to keep mineral salts or algae from building up in the water.
- You should leach your house plant pots once every 6 months. Some plants such as Spider Plants should be leached between each fertilization.
- Don't overpot African violets. They bloom better in small pots.
- Now is a good time to start a cactus garden. Cacti may be started from seeds or from cuttings. Sow seeds in trays filled with a mixture of half sand and half potting soil. Cover with glass or plastic film to retain humidity while seeds germinate. Take cuttings using a sharp knife. Set cuttings aside for one day to form a callus before placing them in the sand/soil media. Once rooted, transfer seedlings or cuttings to shallow containers filled with a quick-draining media.
- Don't be too anxious to move your house plants outdoors. Even a good chill can knock the leaves off of tender plants.

Fruits and Vegetable Gardening Tips for this month:

- "Don't cultivate your garden." This may sound like very poor advice, but the truth is -- cultivating and deep hoeing cause considerable damage to the shallow roots of flowers and vegetables. Also, every time you cultivate, you stir the soil and bring weed seeds to the surface where they can germinate. A 2-inch layer of mulch will stop annual weeds, otherwise, cut off weeds at the surface of the soil with a sharp scuffle hoe, so in a week or 10 days, you won't have another batch to destroy. If you do not have a scuffle hoe, pull the weeds by hand. If you start early in the season and keep them pulled regularly, it is not too big a job in a small- to medium-sized garden.
- Delay organic mulching to allow soil to warm deeply, but act before weeds become established.
- When planning your vegetable garden, consider that leafy vegetables need at least six hours of sunlight to develop properly. Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplant, and peppers need 10 hours of full sun.
- Erect trellises now for beans and cucumbers, if you are going to train them on trellises later in the season. Buy or re-furbish last year's tomato cages.
- Root crops must be thinned, no matter how ruthless this practice seems. Thin carrots, beets, parsnips, and onions so you can get three fingers between individual plants.
- Many carrots are available, from round and blunt forms to the long, tapering types. The half-long varieties, such as Nantes or Danvers and their hybrids, are best for most home gardens. Blunt types such as Chantenay are best for heavy, compact soils. Long, pointed varieties, such as Emperor, are not recommended for home gardens unless the soil is very deep and loose. Soil compaction will cause forked, irregular roots, as will the use of fresh manure.
- Plastic jugs make inexpensive and easy-to-use "hot caps" for your vegetable seedlings. Remove the bottom inch of a plastic jug so that the sides are straight. Then cut around the jug below the handle, leaving a half-inch uncut piece under the handle as a hinge. Place the

jug over a seedling, pushing it deep into the soil with the handle toward the prevailing wind. This reduces the chance of it blowing open. The jug serves as a "hot cap" to guard against frost, a translucent shield to prevent sun-scald and a wind barrier. When the plant is well established, the top can be folded back during the day and flipped into place when needed at night. When all danger of frost is past, cut off the top at the hinge, leaving the bottom to provide a reservoir for watering.

- If your garden space is limited, grow vegetables that are especially delicious and nutritious when home grown, such as tomatoes and green, leafy vegetables. Also, select those that bear for a long time, such as broccoli. Cucumbers and melons do well on a fence, if slings support the fruit. And don't grow it, if your family won't eat it!
- Vegetables do not need their own garden. You can plant your vegetables with your flowers. Vegetables provide wonderful plant textures, and leaf and flower colors. There are many vegetable type plants (such as ornamental peppers) that you can use the fruit for long lasting the vibrant colors in your gardens (and if you get hungry ... have something to add to a salad).
- In case you get a plentiful harvest or have more vegetables than you and your family can eat ... don't worry. Most cities support "Plant-A-Row" for the hungry. Contact your local extension office for local collection sites and dates.

Master Gardener/Cooperative Extension Programs:

<http://cmgv.org> (Chesapeake MG Programs)

<http://www.vbmg.org> (Virginia Beach MG Programs)

<http://www.nmgv.org> (Norfolk MG Program)

<http://jccwmg.org/> (James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners)

<http://www.yorkcounty.gov/vce> (York County MG Programs)

www.ext.vt.edu/resources (Virginia Tech Gardening Information)

Other Horticulture sites of interest:

<http://www.virginiazoo.org/horticulture/> (Virginia Zoo Horticulture)

<http://norfolkbotanicalgarden.org> (Norfolk Botanical Garden)

<http://www.fredheutte.org/> (Fred Heutte Center Information)

<http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/> (Tidewater Beekeepers Association)

<http://www.butterflysocietyofva.org/> (Butterfly Society of Virginia)

<http://www.tcc.edu/academics/divisions/academicC/horticulture/index.htm> (Tidewater Community College School of Horticulture)

APRIL PRUNING CALENDAR: Changes from previous month underlined. The below pruning calendar applies to all of Virginia and was compiled by Virginia Tech. Shrubs and trees have 'Best time to Prune' months, 'Do not Prune' months, or timing is not critical months. Those plants listed below are the "best time to prune" or 'do not prune'. If a tree or shrub is not listed, then timing is not critical this month. The best time to prune is based upon optimizing flowers or fruits and reducing summer/winter stresses. Deadheading or removing spent flowers on flowering shrubs is OK all growing season, for plants such as Rose, Crepe Myrtle, Butterfly bushes, etc. Pruning to remove diseased or dead branches is necessary when you see them. Contact your local extension agent if you need more detailed information about any specific plant. REMEMBER to keep your pruning equipment sharp. Make sure you clean them each time you prune with 9 parts water to 1 part bleach solution or the same ratio water to antiseptic mouthwash to prevent the spread of plant disease.

When the weather is hot and dry, try to avoid pruning your plants. If you do, the plant will require extra water. Wait for cooler days if at all possible.

(NOTE: For those of you who live in the more temperate (Hampton Roads) or coastal areas of VA or NC you may want to hold pruning of any Shrubs and Trees marked with an * until January or February as these plants produce flowers on new seasons growth. Coastal areas tend to get some sustained warm days in winter and the plants can be 'tricked' into thinking spring is here only do be hit with a frost and kill some of the new flower buds.)

Shrubs: Bayberry, Boxwood, Camellia japonica (spring bloomer) (after they finish blooming), Camellia sansanqua (fall bloomers), Cherrylaurel, Daphne, Eleagnus (thorny), Euonymus (evergreen), Forsythia, Jasmine (winter), Mugo Pine, Pittosporum, Privet (Ligustrum), Quince, Serviceberry, Pussy Willow, and Witch hazel.

Do Not Prune: Abelia, Flowering Almond, Aucuba, Azalea, Barberry, Beautyberry, Beautybush, Broom (Cytisus), Butterfly Bush, Chastetree, Clethra, Cotoneaster, Crape Myrtle, Deutzia, Redtwig Dogwood, Euonymus (deciduous), Fothergilla, Gardenia, Harry Lauder (Walking Stick), Hibiscus (incl: Rose of Sharon & Althea), Holly (deciduous/evergreen), Honeysuckle, Hydrangea (Spring Blooming), Hydrangea (summer/late blooming), Hypericum (St. Johnswort), Indian Hawthorne, Kerria, Leucothoe, Lilac, Mahonia (Oregon Grapeholly), Mockorange, Mountain Laurel, Nandina, Pearlbush, Pieris, Potentilla, Pyracantha, Rhododendron, Rose, Smoke Tree, Spirea (Spring/Summer Blooming), Sumac, Sweetshrub, Viburnum, and Weigela.

Evergreen Trees: Hemlock, and Pine. (Seldom need pruning. Most evergreen trees are pruned during the winter months.)

Do Not Prune: Holly, Southern Magnolia, and Live Oak.

Deciduous Trees: None.

Do Not Prune: (except to correct damage): Birch, Buckeye, Flowering Cherry, Crabapple, Crepe Myrtle, Dogwood, Elm, Fringe Tree, Goldenrain Tree, Hawthorn, Horsechestnut, Linden, Magnolia, Maple, Oak, Flowering (Peach, Pear or Plum), Poplar, Redbud, Serviceberry, Sophora, Sourwood, or Willow.

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If you have any questions, you can call or visit your Virginia Cooperative Extension listed below:

Virginia (area code 757):

Chesapeake	382-6348	Eastern Shore:	414-0731	Hampton:	727-1401
Isle of Wight:	365-6261	James City:	564-2170	Newport News:	591-4838
Norfolk:	683-2816	Portsmouth:	393-5314	Suffolk:	923-2050
Virginia Beach:	427-4769	York County:	890-4940		

North Carolina (area code 252):

Currituck:	232-2262	Dare:	473-4290	Pasquotank:	338-3954
Chowan-Gates-Perquimans:	482-6585				

This newsletter is authored by Jim Lachowicz, a Chesapeake Master Gardener and edited by Lynnette J. Swanson, City of Norfolk Horticulture Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension.

***“We hope you find this gardening newsletter helpful.”
Happy Gardening !!!***