

October 2023 Newsletter

October Greetings ...

October is the run-up to November and Thanksgiving. Here's an idea to help you embrace the season and prepare a special treat for your Thanksgiving celebration. For, when we document life's simple joys, we can look back and see the richness woven throughout our days. They are the little things that make life worth living - moments that make us laugh, pause in wonder, and really see each other. If you'd like to nurture new gratitude in your everyday, it simply takes a willingness to be present and a few minutes to write it all down.

Find a large jar, place it in plain sight, and keep strips of paper close by. Encourage family and friends to add their one good thing and pick a special occasion (like Thanksgiving) to read them all aloud. You may be surprised at the beauty that greets you.

In the act of collecting and remembering, we see magic hidden in the ordinary. The moments, big and small, we don't want to forget ...

Autumn is about big existential themes: change, transformation, decline, hibernation, mortality, and the promise of rebirth in spring — all wrapped up in a climax of some of the most vivid colors, scents, and flavors of the calendar.

Enjoy Fall!

OCTOBER MEETING:

Date: October 11, 2023

Time: 9:30 AM - Set-up

10:00 AM - Business Meeting

10:30 AM - Social Time (Snacks and Coffee)

11:00 AM - Speaker with time for questions and answers

12:15 - 12:45 PM - Clean-up

Location: Our Savior Lutheran Church

745 Front Street South

Issaquah, WA

October Program: "Harvest Floral Arrangement" - Amanda, one of the designers at Countryside Floral will create fall arrangements showing us tips and tricks for successful designs.

Snack Committee:

Hostess: Joan Fields

Committee: Dianne, Joanne, Lois and Nancy

***** If you are a coffee or tea drinker please remember the **BRING YOUR OWN CUP**

Vaccination Requirement is Lifted:

After some discussion it was decided that we will lift the COVID vaccination requirement for now. As businesses and even healthcare facilities have stopped making masking and vaccinations a requirement for entry we felt that it would be challenging to enforce.

Obviously, if anyone is feeling unwell they should stay home and not attend the IGC meeting ...

EXCITING NEWS:

We are excited to welcome Nancy Gunderson as a new members. If you haven't already met Nancy please make it a priority. Welcome Nancy!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (GMM) SUMMARY:

A GMM was held on September 18 at the Brightwater Center in Woodinville.

Attendance was good and they speakers were over the top. The horticultural speaker was Scott Pringle of Paradise Lake Nursery and he talked about Hydrangeas sharing interesting information about the wide variety he has at his nursery. There was also an interesting question and answer period with lots of good information. At the end of his talk there was a drawing for two hydrangea door prizes one of which was won by our own Wendi Prekeges! Fortunately she has a place in her fenced yard where the plant will hopefully thrive.

Following Scott's talk was a brief business meeting and lunch. The Hilltoppers Garden Club did a superb job with the lunch and even provided homemade desserts.

The afternoon presentation was by Shirley Hill who demonstrated and talked about the art of Ikibana. She holds the ranking of Riji, the highest diploma of the Sogetsu School, Tokyo, Japan. Her demonstration was full of helpful hints to keep flower arrangements secure such as rubber banding cut ends of flowers to the bottom of a flower stem to make it more secure in the frog in the bottom of the vase. She made it all seem fun by adding bits of humor to her talk ...

SAVE THE DATES:

October 20, 2023 - Bellevue Botanical Garden work day

Time: 9:30 - 11:00AM

For those that haven't done this before it's a fun time working in a designated area (chosen by BBG staff) along with staff. The staff are friendly, helpful, knowledgeable and grateful for the help we provide. GOOD FUN! Sign-up with June Ann ...

EDUCATIONAL CORNER

Eight Fall Gardening Mistakes That Have a Long-Term Impact on Your Yard

Here's what you need to know as you make your fall lawn and garden cleanup list.

The air is crisp, you've given away all the tomatoes, and summer's weeds seem like a fading memory. It's time to put your yard to bed for the winter. And while it's easy to do what you've always done (and maybe what your parents did, too), some long-established [fall yard clean-up tasks](#) could use a tweak or two. We asked experts to share the most common fall gardening mistakes—and what we should be doing instead.

Meet Our Expert

Aaron Steil, horticulturalist with Iowa State University Extension

Lynsey Nielson, horticulturalist with Red Butte Garden

1. Clear-Cutting the Perennial Bed

It's tempting to pull out the dead [perennial flower](#) and plant material and create a nice, tidy-looking landscape going into winter. But there are a lot of good reasons to leave it in place, says Aaron Steil, a horticulturalist with Iowa State University Extension.

For starters, leftover stems, leaves, and grasses add a layer of protection to help the underlying plants survive winter. Stems also tend to collect and hold leaves from nearby trees, adding more to that winter blanket.

Perennial plant material also provides winter cover for beneficial insects. "A lot of our native bees are cavity-nesting bees, so they need hollow reeds like the ones in grasses and perennials to nest in," says Lynsey Nielson, a horticulturalist with Red Butte Garden in Salt Lake City.

2. Leaving Plant Debris in the Vegetable Garden

Unlike perennial gardens, [vegetable gardens](#) tend to have issues with insect pests and diseases. And both can survive the winter in plant debris. "Getting your vegetable garden all cleaned up is really beneficial, so there isn't a spot for those things to overwinter in the plant debris and

potentially impact our plants next year," Steil says. Another way to help is rotating crops to new places in spring.

3. Pruning in Fall

After a whole summer of thriving, your plants and trees probably look like they could use a haircut. But fall is one of the worst times to get out the pruning shears.

Blooming, lilacs, forsythias, viburnums, hydrangeas, and other woody plants have already set buds for the following year. That means any pruning you do now will remove buds for next spring's flowers or fruits. Other plants, including fruit trees and roses, will push out new growth quickly after you prune them. "And that will open it up to cold injury once you get snowpack or frost," Nielson says.

Larger trees have preferred seasons for pruning as well, so do a bit of homework on your trees or better yet, call in a certified arborist before jumping in.

4. Failing to Protect Trees From Wildlife

From fall to late winter, bucks rub their antlers on the trunks of young trees, first to remove the velvet that has been growing there all summer, later to mark their territory during the breeding season, and finally, to shed the antlers. All that rubbing can easily girdle a tree, robbing it

of the layers that carry food from roots to leaves.

"They can absolutely destroy a young tree in just one night," Steil says. "It's devastating to find, because usually it's a tree you just planted." His advice: Pound three or four posts in the ground around the tree, no more than 18 inches apart, to keep deer from getting their antlers in close enough for a good rub.

You can also add chicken wire or wrap the trunk with plastic tubing to keep hungry rabbits from nibbling away your young tree's bark. Just make sure it's tall enough to deter them when there's snow on the ground, he says.

5. Leaving Full-Size Leaves on the Lawn

On garden beds and around the base of trees, fall leaves enrich soil, hold moisture, and insulate roots. They also provide cover for overwintering bumblebees as well as eggs and larva from good insects like fireflies, pest-munching beetles, butterflies, and Luna moths, keeping them in your environment for next year and providing food for birds.

But turfgrass is not a good place to leave your leaves. "Whether you're looking to have a golf-course-fairway of a lawn or you're OK with some of the quote-unquote weeds, like clover and dandelion, all of that could potentially be

smothered if you leave that layer of leaves on the lawn over the winter," Steil says.

That will leave bare spots, which crabgrass, foxtail, purslane, spurge, and other weeds will be more than happy to fill in. "And even if you're trying to be more friendly to pollinators by encouraging flowering plants in your lawn, like clover, those plants—like foxtail and purslane—don't have flowers that are beneficial for pollinators," Steil says.

Instead, [rake leaves](#) and move them to garden beds or a compost pile. If the leaf layer isn't thick, you can also mow over it a time or two. You'll know the pieces are small enough when you can see the grass, Steil says, and the mulched leaves will break down and add more organic matter to the soil.

6. Dividing Perennials Too Soon or Too Late

Some [perennials](#)—including hostas, daylilies, Oriental poppies, phlox, and purple coneflowers—form clumps as they grow. Eventually, the overcrowding slows their blooming and can even cause some in the middle to die.

Dividing is a simple matter of digging up each clump, carefully separating the roots, and replanting the crowns. But hitting the right weather window—after summer's heat

has passed but early enough to allow new plants to establish before winter—is important to their success.

"A good rule of thumb is to give yourself at least six weeks before frost," Nielson says, adding that a layer of mulch will also help protect the newly established roots during winter, so you'll have happy campers next spring.

7. Letting Cool-Season Weeds Go

By the end of the gardening season, we're tired. It's tempting to believe that winter will finish off the new weeds sprouting in our garden beds and landscapes. But don't give in.

"There are a lot of cool-season weeds that come out at the end of the season," Nielson says. "They only have a small window, so they can go from seed to plant to flowering to seed again in a very, very short period of time."

In other words, even if winter's cold kills off the weeds you see now, their offspring will be around next year and beyond. It's worth your time and effort to remove them.

8. Being Too Hard on Yourself

Worried that you got one of these items wrong? It's OK. Part of the joy of gardening is learning, and there's plenty of room for the lessons of our mistakes.

"Gardens are dynamic," Neilson says. "And just because you fail once doesn't mean that you don't have a green thumb. Just need to keep trying. That's gardening."