

GARDENING TIPS FOR APRIL

Revised 12/19

Annuals & Perennials

- Remove faded blooms on spring bulbs. Allow foliage to die back.
- Hand weed groundcover areas. Apply a preemergence formulated for the planting.
- Renew and/or add mulch.
- Transplant and/or divide hostas when they begin to emerge.
- Divide and/or repot patio and house plants. Fertilize as required.
- Fertilize spring and summer bulbs.
- Plant summer bulbs and annuals after last freeze, usually about April 20.
- Plant hanging baskets.
- Look for signs of slugs on hostas. Treat with bait as required.
- For shade definitions, see <http://www.walterreeves.com/gardening-q-and-a/shade-defining-levels-of/>

Fruits

- Fertilize blackberries and raspberries if not done in March.
- Maintain spray program for apples, peaches, plums.
- Mulch around trees. Do not mulch against trunk.
- Remove sucker sprouts from lower trunk.

Trees and Shrubs

Boxwood Blight has been found in Georgia.

This disease is very destructive and spreads rapidly. Read

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/pests/plant_pests/shrubs/hgic2052.html

- Fertilize azaleas, camellias, rhododendron after bloom.
- Fertilize other shrubs and trees when they leaf out.
- Plant new shrubs or transplant existing shrubs.
- Prune spring flowering trees and shrubs after they bloom.
- Prune climbing roses soon after first bloom. Remove weak & diseased canes. Cut other canes back by one-third. Train to trellis.
- Prune boxwoods by thinning. For pruning instructions, see <http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.cfm?number=B961>
- Remove suckers from base of cherry, dogwood and crabapple trees.
- Prune or cut down trees or shrubs attacked by ambrosia beetles.
- Twist off faded flowers of rhododendron after bloom. New sprouts that appear will double next year's blooms.
- Diagnosis of plant problems is required in order to take corrective action.
 - Read :Diagnosing Plant Problems: [diagnosing problems combined.doc](#)
- Check for various pests and diseases and spray if required:
 - Arbor vitae: Needle blight.
 - Azaleas: Petal blight, lace bug, leaf gall, leafminer, flatid planthopper, Southern red mite, bark scale, stem borer. Prune out galls.
 - Boxwood: Boxwood psyllid, flatid planthopper, leaf miner, armored scale, blight.
 - Camellia: Tea Scale, Southern red mites, leaf gall, canker.
 - Crabapple: Scab, fire blight.
 - Crape myrtle: Aphids, Ambrosia beetles.
 - Dogwood: Dogwood borer, Dogwood club gall midge, twig borer, spot anthracnose.
 - Gardenia: Whitefly, armored scale. Prune out galls.
 - Holly: Black root rot, leafminers, armored scale, Southern red mite, caterpillars.
 - Hydrangea: Bacterial leaf spot.
 - Indian Hawthorn: Leaf spot.
 - Junipers: Needle blight, rust, spider mites, bagworms, armored scale.
 - Leyland Cypress: Cankers, needle blight.
 - Maples: Aphids and borers.
 - Photinia: Leaf spot.

- **Rhododendron:** Petal blight, lace bug, leaf gall, leafminer, flatid planthopper, Southern red mite, bark scale, stem borer.
- **Roses:** See rose maintenance guide
<http://extension.uga.edu/content/dam/extension-county-offices/cobb-county/anr/Rose%20Maintenance%20Guide%20and%20Schedule.pdf>
- Perform a tree survey. Form available at
http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/management/trees-storm-safety/HomeownersRole_000.pdf
- Read “Planting and Taking Care of Trees During a Drought” <http://www.gatrees.org/community-forests/management/tree-care/drought/index.cfm>
- Have soil tested. Apply lime and fertilizer as recommended.

The Georgia Forestry Commission’s on line service—“**Ask the Arborist**”. Complete a form and a certified arborist will answer questions and evaluate conditions.

<http://www.gatrees.org/community-forests/ask-the-arborist/index.cfm>

Turf

- Fertilize fescue.
- Fertilize Bermuda and Zoysia after 50% greenup.
- Fertilize centipede after nighttime temperatures are in the 60-degree range.
- Dethatch Bermuda, Centipede, and Zoysia.
- Check for white grubs and green june beetles.
- Apply post-emergent herbicides as required.
- Apply pre-emergence for late summer weeds.
- Check for diseases: dollar spot, brown patch, fairy ring, leaf spot, slime molds, pythium, spring dead spot, and take-all root rot. For detailed information on turf care and diseases go to: www.GeorgiaTurf.com
- Sharpen mower blades and service equipment. Torn rather than cut grass blades are more susceptible to disease.

Vegetables

Most seed and transplants prefer soil temperatures of at least 65 degrees for good germination and growth. For local soil temperatures: <http://www.georgiaweather.net/>

- Sow outdoors after last frost: beans, beets, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, herbs, kohlrabi, okra, peppers, pumpkins, radishes, southern peas, summer squash, tomatoes, turnips, swiss chard, winter squash. Mulch tomatoes to prevent early blight fungus from splashing from the soil onto the leaves.
- Plant basil, cilantro, chives, oregano, sage and thyme.
- Transplant: cucumbers, eggplant, lettuce, melons, okra, peppers, squash, tomatoes.
- Make a second planting of snap beans, corn and squash 2-3 weeks after first planting.
- Make a third planting of lima beans and corn 3-4 weeks after first planting.
- Plant cantaloupe and watermelon.
- Mulch between rows to retain moisture, control soil temperature and diseases.
- Cultivate to control weeds and grass, to break crusty soil and provide aeration.
- For detailed information, see “Home Gardening”:
<http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.cfm?number=B577>

Water On March 8, 2018, The Director of Georgia Environmental Protection Division lifted the Drought Level 1 declaration. Outdoor irrigation is permitted 7 days a week before 10AM and after 4PM.

Cobb County’s Water Efficiency Program offers information on rebates, leak credits, and Water Smarts
<https://www.cobbcounty.org/water/efficiency>

- Read “Best Management Practices for Landscape Water Conservation “
<http://caes2.caes.uga.edu/commodities/turfgrass/georgiaturf/Water/Articles/B1329.pdf>
- Information for planting in drought conditions:
<http://www.walterreeves.com/landscaping/drought-planting-during>
- Water slowly and deeply. Deep watering encourages root growth.
- Use drip irrigation or soaker hoses. They use 50% less water than sprinklers.

- Check your irrigation system. (1) Is the timer set correctly? (2) Are all the nozzles working? (3) Are all the nozzles the same type? There is a significant variance in water applied between rotary sprinklers and spray heads.
- Check outdoor faucets, sprinklers and hoses for leaks. Replace washers as required.
- Select plants that are drought tolerant and have low water needs. Group plants with similar water requirements in the same zone. For a listing see
<http://www.ecoterrallandscape.com/cgi-bin/ViewTopic.pl?Topic=00-061506dt>
- Use a rain barrel. <http://www.walterreeves.com/landscaping/rain-barrel-homemade-3/>
- Save water and use it wisely. Don't water the lawn on windy days. Water plants, if required, applying one inch of water per week. **Observe current Georgia watering restrictions.**

Check with your **local** water system to determine if they have more restrictive regulations.

Fire

Burning is permitted until April 30, as long as weather conditions permit. Fire ban begins May 1 until Sept. 30.

See <https://www.cobbcounty.org/public-safety/fire/fire-marshall/outdoor-burning>

Environment

- Non-native invasive plants are a problem in Georgia and the Southeast. It is not only kudzu, Chinese privet, and golden bamboo. Become aware of these exotic pest plants and what you can do to inhibit them. Go to
 - <http://www.gaepcc.org> Click on plant list
 - http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/fia/manual/Nonnative_Invasive_Plants_of_Southern_Forests.pdf
- Protect the environment, watersheds and sewer system by the proper disposal of grease, hazardous household products and pesticides.
- Dispose of pesticides correctly. <http://www.walterreeves.com/tools-and-chemicals/pesticides-disposing>

Emergency Guide What to do if a major incident affected our community.

Plan ahead. Be informed,

The Citizen's Action Guide provides information. www.cobbcounty.org/ema

Other

- Watch for fire ant mounds.
- Spray new growth of unwanted kudzu, ivy and bamboo.
- Read pesticide labels carefully. Wear protective eyewear and gloves.
- Check expiration dates on pesticides. Dispose of outdated pesticides in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Read "Pesticides – Disposing"
www.walterreeves.com/tools-and-chemicals/pesticides-disposing/
- Do not work in garden when foliage is wet to avoid spreading diseases from one plant to another.
- Shake out your gloves before putting them on. Check for spiders, caterpillars or other creatures.
- **The key to reducing problems with soil insects in the garden is to keep the site clean.** Frequent cultivation will help reduce grubs, nematodes and weeds.
- Build mason bee houses. The mason bee is a non-aggressive pollinator. See "Housing for Pollinators:
<http://www.walterreeves.com/insects-and-animals/pollinators-housing-for/>
- Observe this year's microclimates and make notes for next year's garden. Read:
www.ugaurbanag.com/content/microclimate
Consider xeriscape or rain garden techniques.
Shape and edge beds. Build raised beds. Service your equipment,
- A list of UGA Publications:-ornamentals, trees & shrubs, vegetables, turf - <http://www.walterreeves.com/?s=uga+publications>
- Inspect house plants for pests and disease. Report if required.
- Soil test instructions: https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20896_5.PDF
- Bring 2 cups of the dry combined soil to your Extension Office. Cost is \$9.00 per sample, payable by cash, check or credit card.
- Specific instructions on fertilizing, pest and disease control and pruning are available from the Extension Office. Call us at 770 528-4070.

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