



GN Gardening Magazine

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A Gulf Fritillary butterfly collects nectar from the flowers of a blooming *Duranta erecta*.

Photo by Chris Dunaway.

# What's Bugging You? Armillaria aka Ringless Honey Mushrooms

Who said this section had to be about bugs only? What's bugging local gardeners currently seems to be a huge flush of ringless honey mushrooms, *Armillaria tabescens* and *Armillaria mellea*. They look very similar and were once considered to be the same species. Throughout the state there has been a massive flushing of these honey colored mushrooms, often at the base of woody plants, trees, and shrubs. These mushrooms are the fruiting bodies of a root rot fungus which is not great news if you are seeing them in your garden or landscaping. Host plants are widely varied and include everything from pecan trees to figs to camellias and roses. Ringless honey mushrooms can also live in remnant stumps and root systems wherever woody plants were once growing. Cleared lots and old landscaping features can manifest where there is now only a lawn, but right below the soil surface there is wood for it to live on. When landscaping is installed where old forests and woody plants once stood, infections of healthy new plants can easily take place through root contact or through infected soil contact.

Most gardeners tend to notice the mushrooms themselves and not the symptoms of the disease. Ringless honey mushrooms cause similar symptoms when compared to other root rot pathogens such as *Phytophthora*. Infected plants will wilt, even when



Photo by Anna Timmerman

A cluster of Armillaria mushrooms growing from the roots of a tree.

they have adequate soil moisture. Leaves will flag, turn brown, and drop. The plants decline and then die. If the outer bark covering is removed close to the base of the plant or tree, a white fungal growth will be apparent.

Cooler temperatures have a lot of ringless honey mushrooms emerging now at the base of infected plants. Healthy looking plants with these mushrooms present are already infected, though no symptoms may be yet apparent. The bad news is that there is no cure for this disease, only management. Fungicides do not stem the tide that is *Armillaria*.

Start with disease-free plants when establishing a landscape. Take the time to remove old stumps, roots and other woody material from the area. Build the soil up so that it drains and does not retain water for long periods of time. Keep mulch materials away from the trunks or bases of the woody plants in your landscape and water deeply, less frequently to avoid prolonged moisture in contact with the crown or base

# What's Bugging You? Armillaria aka Ringless Honey Mushrooms

of the plants, which will invite fungal pathogens to take hold.

If you see these mushrooms in your yard, avoid planting susceptible host plants. Stick to herbaceous plants versus woody plant material. Improve your drainage before replanting or replacing anything that succumbs. According to the University of Florida, the following trees and shrubs are resistant to armillaria- American holly, bald cypress, bayberry, black cherry, box elder, boxwood, common persimmon, crape myrtle, dahoon holly, hackberry, mission fig, mulberry, pawpaw, Southern magnolia, Southern red maple, sweetgum and sycamore.

The good news is, if you can accurately identify ringless honey mushrooms through expert advice and

a spore print, you can eat them. There have been hundreds of posts on local Facebook groups daily with folks asking if these are edible. Some toxic lookalikes such as jack o' lantern mushroom (*Omphalotus olearius*) also emerge this time of year, so an accurate identification is crucial before consuming these or any other mushroom you are unfamiliar with. The caps are good sauteed but the stems can be woody and tough. Some people have negative reactions to ringless honey mushrooms, so be sure to consume a little bit and wait to see how you feel before adding them to a meal. Always be 100% sure of your wild mushroom identification before consuming them. Consult a local mycologist or foraging expert.

~Anna Timmerman



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Eventually root rot fungi will cause catastrophic failure of a tree as seen in this photo of a magnolia tree that fell in New Orleans City Park during hurricane Zeta.

# November Vegetable Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety
Beets	Detroit Dark Red, Kestrel, Red Ace F1, Ruby Queen
Cabbage	Blue Vantage, Platinum Dynasty, Stonehead, Cheers, Red Dynasty, Emblem, Savoy King
Carrots	Danvers 126, Purple Haze, Thumbelina, Apache, Enterprise, Maverick, Sugar Snax 54
Celery	None Given
Chinese Cabbage	None Given
Collards	Champions, Flash, Georgia Southern, Top Bunch, Vates, Blue Max, Heavi-Crop
Garlic	<b>Creole:</b> Early, Louisiana, White Mexican; <b>Italian:</b> Italian Late, Early Red Italian, Lorz Italian; <b>Large:</b> Elephant
Kale	Siberian, Vates
Kohlrabi	Early Purple Vienna, Early White Vienna, Winner
Leeks	Alora
Lettuce	<b>Head:</b> , Ithica, Great Lakes 118; <b>Leaf-Red:</b> New Red Fire, Red Sails, Red Salad Bowl; <b>Leaf-Green:</b> Nevada, Salad Bowl, Sierra, Tango, Grand Rapids; <b>Romaine:</b> Tall Guzmane Elite, Cimarron Red, Coure, Flashy Trout Back, Green Towers, Paris Island Cos, Sunbelt; <b>Butterhead:</b> Buttercrunch, Esmeralda
Mustard Greens	Florida Broadleaf, Greenwave, Red Giant, Southern Giant Curled, Savannah, Tendergreen
Onions	<b>Red:</b> Red Creole, Southern Belle, Red Hunter; <b>White:</b> Candy, Savannah Sweet; <b>Vidalia:</b> Amelia, Candy Ann, Caramelo, Century, Georgia Boy, Goldeneye, Granax 33, Honeybee, Mata Hari, Miss Megan, Mr. Black, Nirvana, Ohoopie Sweet, Sweet Caroline, Sweet Harvest, Sweet Jasper
Radishes	Cherriette, Champion, White Icicle, April Cross
Shallots	Matador, Prism
Spinach	Bloomsdale Long Standing, Melody, Tye, Unipak 151, Chesapeake Hybrid, Early Hybrid #7,
Swiss Chard	None Given
Turnips	<b>Greens and Root:</b> Just Right, Shogoin, Tokyo Cross; <b>Greens:</b> Alamo, White Lady, Seven Top, Purple Top White Globe, Royal Crown

To find vegetable gardening tips from LSU click [here](#)

or enter the terms **Vegetable + LSU AgCenter** in your internet search engine.

# Look At Me.

## Golden Dewdrops (*Duranta erecta*)

**W**e have this plant as part of the landscape at our church and it's just amazing how many people ask me what it is and how to grow it. With its light green foliage and clusters of blue to violet flowers during the summer and hanging golden pearls of fruit in the fall, this plant attracts a lot of attention.

The origin of *Duranta erecta* (also listed as *Duranta repens*) is not universally agreed upon. Some believe it to be native to Central America and the West Indies and others believe it to be native to the Florida Keys. It is currently found in most of the Sunbelt states and Hawaii. Some common names are golden dewdrops, pigeon berry, and sky flower.

*Duranta erecta* is a small evergreen tree or large shrub with opposite, pale green, 1-3" ovate, serrated leaves each having a long spine on the leaf rachis. Small, showy 6" racemes of tubular flowers, ranging in color from light blue to violet to white, appear in the spring continuing through the summer. It attracts pollinators resulting in long clusters of golden ½" fruits. The fruits are attractive to wildlife but CAUTION – the leaves and fruit contain saponins that are poisonous to humans.

The most commonly planted cultivar is Sapphire Showers. Grown for its summer flowers and ornamental fruit, this selection is more compact than the species, which grows with an arching habit to 25

feet tall and nearly as wide. In late spring and summer, cascading clusters of ¾ inch wide tubular flowers are an intense violet-blue with a white picotee edge along the flared petal tips. Picotee describes flowers whose edge is a different color than the



A honeybee collecting nectar from the flower of *Duranta erecta* 'Sapphire Showers'. Fruit in various stages of can also be seen.

flower's base color. As with the species, the flowers are followed by wonderfully contrasting orange-yellow berries. In our mild climate, Sapphire Showers can be in flower nearly year-round with flowers and fruit appearing at the same time. Sapphire Showers seems to lack the spines found arising from the leaf axils on typical *Duranta erecta* plants. It does best in full sun with frequent deep watering and is hardy to about 20-25 ° F. It can attain a mature size of 15-20' tall and 8-12' wide but is easily controlled with regular pruning.

Fellow GNO Horticulture

Agent, Chris Dunaway, has a Sapphire Showers *Duranta* at his home in New Orleans. He says it is the best wildlife plant in his garden. According to Chris, it attracts a large variety of butterflies, skippers, hummingbirds, moths (including his favorite, the hummingbird moth) along with many varieties of bees and beneficial flies and wasps.

Some other available cultivars are 'Alba' which has white flowers, 'Grandiflora' which has larger flowers, about ¾ inch wide, and 'Variegata' which has variegated leaves.

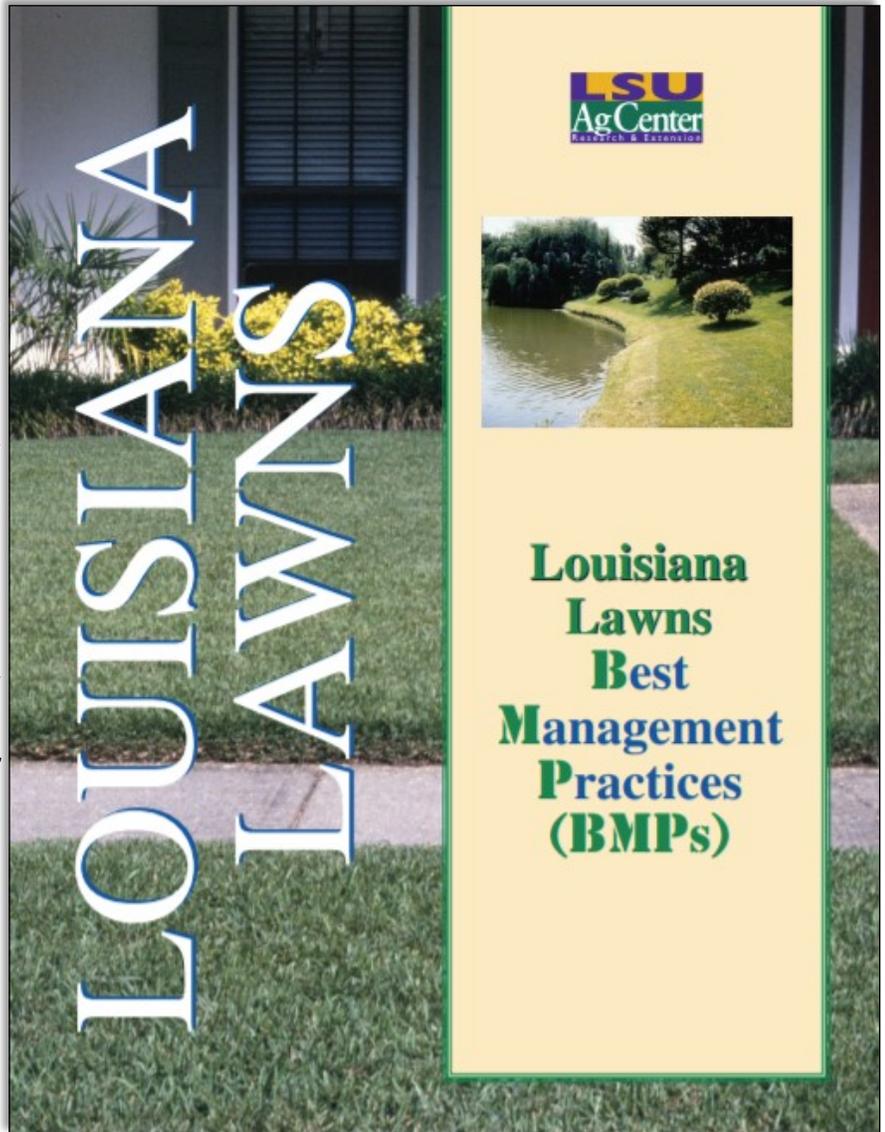
~Dr. Joe Willis

# Louisiana Lawns Part I - Introduction

We spend a lot of time and effort answering distress calls from local homeowners about their lawns. The most common question is, “Why is my grass dying?” The answer is not that simple. There are a lot of steps that go into establishing and maintaining a healthy lawn that most of us are just not doing. Some of these steps include proper soil bed preparation, adjusting soil pH, applying the correct fertilizer at the correct time, weed control, pest control, disease control, detaching, soil aeration and on. Even something as simple as setting the lawn mower to the correct mowing height can make an enormous difference in the health of our turfgrass. Every step is interconnected and necessary. Even if there is clear evidence of disease, weeds or insect pests in the lawn, we must ask if the problem exists because the lawn was already stressed from other conditions. For example, large patch disease thrives when there is thatch buildup and many weeds only infest lawns when there are issues like soil compaction or poor drainage. Many of us pick and choose from one or two of these tasks while ignoring or remaining ignorant of the rest. Others among us have good intentions but fail to do the necessary research and take incorrect measures to overcome problems that they see. The list of human error is extensive and woeful. These erroneous activities do not help improve the lawn, are a big waste of time and money, and may even be harmful to the environment.

The good news is that there is hope. The LSU AgCenter already has a very informative publication on lawn care in the state of Louisiana. The publication is titled Louisiana Lawns Best Management Practices. You may find the publication by searching for the title online or click on the following link to view: <https://>

[www.lsuagcenter.com/~media/system/7/c/8/e/7c8e4b17a12a51839443d9296bd03edc/pub2940louisianalawnsmarch2008.pdf](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/~media/system/7/c/8/e/7c8e4b17a12a51839443d9296bd03edc/pub2940louisianalawnsmarch2008.pdf). In this and following articles I will go through the publication and explain the different sections and a necessary actions to take.



The cover of Louisiana Lawns Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Best management practices (BMPs) are actually defined as practices designed to manage your land and activities to control the release of pollution into nearby waterways. We should be aware that every pesticide, fertilizer, and other amendments applied to your lawn has the potential to be transported to a local lake, bayou or even into the Gulf. It is therefore

# Louisiana Lawns Part I - Introduction

important to take precautions when using these products to ensure that they remain where they were intended. In addition to protecting the environment, the BMP's described in the publication are the culmination of research and demonstrations conducted by the LSU AgCenter and other universities on maintain healthy turfgrass.

We are heading into winter at the time of this article so there is not much that can be done in the way of lawn care. Do not apply "Winterizer" to your lawn. In the remainder of this article I will discuss what to do now and timing your steps for the upcoming year.

On Page 14 of Louisiana Lawns BMP's there are two calendars. One is for the care of cool season grasses and the other is for the care of warm season grasses.

Warm season grasses common in Louisiana are St. Augustine, Bermuda, centipede and zoysia. Since we live in South Louisiana and I don't recommend overseeding with winter rye, we are only going to talk about warm season grasses. See the calendar in table 1. The calendar lists the months across the top of the table with each recommended activity listed along the left

column. As you follow each activity across the row, the table indicates if BMP should be done during each month. For some reason the authors began with

August. I don't know why they started with August. Maybe they started writing it in August. Since the best place to start is when we are, lets look at November. If you find November on the table and follow the column down we see that we should not be fertilizing. Again. Please do not apply winterizer to your lawn. If you look on the table you can see that we should not apply any fertilizer to our lawns until Mid March of next year. There will be much more on fertilizing your lawn in a future article in this series.

Next in line on the table we see that we can add lime to our soil to adjust the pH. Here we can tell that the authors were from a different part of the state from the New Orleans area because they are used to working with acidic soil. In this part of the state, the

BMP	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Fertilization	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liming			Yes									
Mowiiing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Watering	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aerification	Yes	Yes								Yes	Yes	Yes
Dethatch	Yes									Yes	Yes	Yes
Weed Control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Insect Control	Yes	Yes	Yes							Yes	Yes	Yes
Disease Control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Overseeding		Yes	Yes	Yes								
Sodding	Yes	Yes							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Seeding	Yes									Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 1. Care Calendar for Warm-Season Grasses in Louisiana.

soils tend to be very alkaline so we would need to add sulfur to the soil to raise the pH. Before adding lime or sulfur you should take a soil test to determine the current pH. Soil test kits can be found at your local

# Louisiana Lawns Part I - Introduction

extension office or at many local nurseries. You can add these amendments now but you should realize that the time for adjusting the soil pH was back in the preparation phase before the grass was planted. It is difficult to make changes down into the soil profile from adding amendment to the surface without incorporating them into the soil. Adding lime or sulfur to fill soil is a good way to get better contact and reaction between the soil particles and the amendment. I will cover more on that in the upcoming article about core aeration. You may notice that the recommended timing line for liming extends

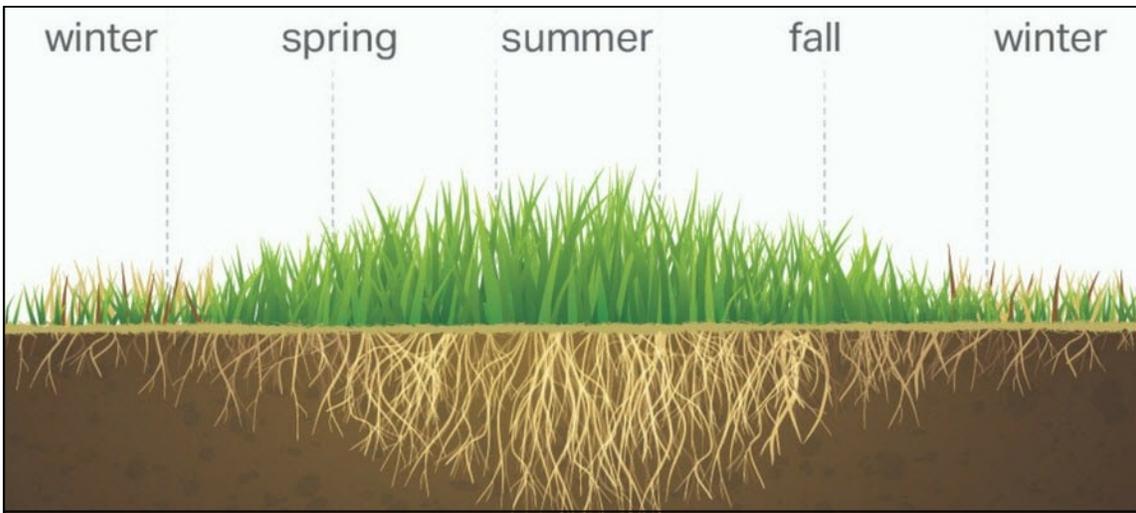


Figure 1 illustrates the seasonal growth habit of warm-season grasses.

from October through May. This does not mean that you add the amendments each month but that they may be applied as necessary during those months.

Mowing is next on the table and we see that we should continue to mow as needed. The schedule for mowing mirrors the warm season growth cycle seen in figure 1. Warm temperatures and sunlight stimulate growth in the spring which culminates over the summer then declines to winter. Mowing the lawn is one of the single most important impacts that you have on your lawn care regimen for good or bad. There is a whole chapter on Mowing the Lawn beginning on page 11 of [Louisiana Lawns BMP's](#) and I will go into more details in another article in this series.

The next BMP in line is watering. Proper watering and water management are very important to good lawn maintenance. We should still be irrigating our lawns as needed in November. Here again there is a whole chapter dedicated to watering the lawn beginning on page 9 of [Louisiana Lawns BMP's](#) and I will be writing more about the topic in another article in this series.

Aerification and dethatching are the next two BMP's in line. These are both important steps that, from what I see, not a lot of us are doing. Good aerification can help drainage and soil compaction and rampant thatch buildup is choking lawns everywhere I look. But since you should not do either over the winter I will go into more detail in another article in this series.

Weed control, insect control and disease control are the next three in line. I can talk about them together since the same rules apply for them

all. Identification is Critical! You must properly identify the weed, insect or disease that you are dealing with so that you choose the correct control measure. Now in November it is getting too cold for the insect pest to grow so we should be pest free until late spring of next year. There are still disease issues that we may run into that should be addressed if they occur. Weed control is a year round issue here and timing is very important. For example, weeds that have been growing all summer in a lawn are very resistant to herbicides while some weeds can only be controlled using pre-emergent herbicides that keep them from ever sprouting. So once again, Identification is Critical. I will be covering more on these topics in another article in this series. Your assignment for now it to go into your lawn and

# Louisiana Lawns Part I - Introduction

identify and take photos of all of the weeds that are currently growing in your lawn. Once you know what you are facing, you can do research on each individual plant to find out how it can best be controlled.

The next three in line are not actually BMP's with regard to environmental pollution but instead are best practices for establishing a lawn. I do not recommend overseeding with ryegrass to my clients in the Southeast Louisiana area so I will not cover that subject. Proper timing of sodding and seeding are important but there is a lot more to preparing an area for a lawn than just throwing down seed or sod. And since the publication does not cover installation, I will skip those topics as well.

That is about all I have to say for now. Look for more articles in this series. For now,

1. Take a soil test.
2. Scout for lawn weeds, identify (we can help) and research. The LSU AgCenter already has very informative publications on the most common adversaries. Apply appropriate treatments as necessary according to label directions and begin planning measures to correct contributing factors like poor drainage and soil compaction.
3. Look up the mowing height for your type of turfgrass on page 5 of Louisiana Lawns BMP's and start mowing at that height now. See table 2 for the mowing height of common Louisiana warm-season grasses.
4. Check the last page of GNO Gardening each month for a list of timely lawncare activities.
5. Look for the next installment in this Louisiana Lawn Care series in the December 2020 issue of GNO Gardening.

Turfgrass Variety	Mowing Height (inches)	
	Min	Max
Hybrid Bermuda	¾	1½
Zoysia	1	2
St. Augustine	2	3
Centipede	1	2

Table 2. Proper mowing height for common warm-season grasses in Louisiana.



When it comes to lawn care, sometimes we say, "If it is green, Mow it." These two lawns contain the same variety of weed plants with very little, if any actual turfgrass. However, the one on the left looks very nice mowed and edged.

# Growing Garlic

Garlic is one of those plants that most home gardeners may grow as a novelty or “just for fun”. After all, garlic is readily available year-round in the grocery store and relatively inexpensive since you do not usually use vast quantities. It is also a very long season crop, taking from 210-300 days to harvest from time of fall planting. So why would you want to seriously consider growing garlic at home? Well, read through this article where we talk about different kinds of garlic and how to grow garlic. Maybe by the end you’ll reconsider putting some garlic in your fall garden.



Want to grow Black Garlic like in this photo? Keep reading to find out how.

There are three main categories that garlic is usually divided into: hardneck garlics (*Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon*), softneck garlics (*Allium sativum* var. *sativum*) and elephant garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum* var. *ampeloprasum*).

Elephant garlic is not really a garlic, it is a relative of leek (*Allium ampeloprasum* var. *porrum*). It has a tall, solid, flowering stalk and broad, flat leaves much like those of the leek, but forms a bulb consisting of very large, garlic-like cloves. Unlike true garlic, it produces fertile flowers and seed under standard growing conditions. The plants that flower produce bulbs consisting of 5-6 large cloves while plants that do not flower produce one large clove. The flavor, while not truly garlic, is closer to garlic than leek and described mostly as a “mild garlic flavor”. Earliest reports of elephant garlic are from 1650 in England. It was brought to Oregon by Eastern Balkan immigrants

where it was rediscovered in 1941 by American nurseryman, James Nicholls. Nicholls used selective breeding to produce the plant we know today as elephant garlic.

True garlic has been grown from bulbs vegetatively for millennia and there’s no agreement on the true progenitor of domesticated garlic. Garlic does not set seed under standard growing conditions. New varieties have not been obtained through genetic hybridization but through selection of supposed spontaneous mutations expressing phenotypic traits of

horticultural interest. However, garlic cultivars grown under diverse environmental conditions exhibit great variability, especially in skin color and yield. Soil potassium levels positively correlate with bulb circumference and yield. Soil sulfur and manganese levels also correlate with bulb sulfur and manganese content. There are over 200 garlic varieties commercially available in the US. Genetic analysis studies at the USDA lab in Colorado showed that many of these varieties are genetically the same. The characteristics that lead to them being separately named varieties was due to environmental growing conditions and not true genetic differences. Their research led to a general breakdown of all extant garlic varieties into nine phenotypic classes: artichoke, Asiatic, creole, marble purple stripe, porcelain, purple stripe, rocambole, turban and silverskin. These nine classes can be placed in one of

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two categories: hardneck or softneck. Asiatic garlic, turban garlic and creole garlic are in a group that the taxonomy people argue should justly be called weakly bolting hardnecks. They are crammed into the hardneck garlic category at present but are candidates for a new class that many would like to call (*Allium sativum* var. *pekinense*) because they all have pliable necks and weak garlic scape production. For now, we'll discuss garlics as hardneck or softneck.

The primary difference between hardneck and softneck garlic is that hardneck varieties produce a hard scape (a leafless flower stalk growing directly from the ground) and softneck does not produce a scape. Agronomically, hardneck garlic varieties are better suited to northern cold climates, they are considered more flavorful with larger easier to peel cloves. However, they have a shorter storage life. The hardneck garlic classes are Asiatic, creole, marble purple stripe, porcelain, purple stripe and rocambole. Though by definition the garlic scape is a flower stalk, it produces sterile flowers if any at all. Often, they will produce bulbils. The scapes themselves are often harvested and used in cooking. They have a milder flavor than the bulbs. They should be cut off as they

form to redirect plant energy to bulb production. The scapes will be drooping, curved or will make 1-3 complete coils depending on the variety. Because of the scape, hardneck garlics are seldom woven into garlic braids. Hardneck garlics require vernalization of 6-12 weeks of 40-50°F temperatures to stimulate



Photo of Savory Grilled Garlic Scapes. Find the recipe at the following link: <https://food52.com/recipes/29016-savory-grilled-garlic-scapes>

sprouting and bulb development. Hardnecks do best in zones 1-5.

The two softneck garlic classes are artichoke and silverskin. Softneck garlics do not produce a scape, are easy to weave into braids and have a longer storage life. They are also better suited to our warm southern climate because their vernalization requirement is less extreme. Softneck garlic is the one most often found in grocery stores. Softnecks do best in zones 5-7 and some varieties in zones 8-9.

The strict requirement for vernalization is a primary reason that hardneck garlics are not generally recommended for southern gardens. However, you can mimic this environmental

vernalization by refrigerating your garlic cloves for 6-8 weeks in milder climates or 10-12 weeks in semi-tropical climates like we have in New Orleans. The bulbs need to stay dry during vernalization and this is best accomplished by placing the bulbs in paper bags with some woodwool. Vernalization of softneck

# Growing Garlic

varieties for 4-5 weeks is also a good idea.

All garlics are grown similarly. They prefer sandy or clay loams with pH range of 6.0 – 7.0 but are adaptable to a wide range of soil types if properly managed. They require cool conditions during the growing season so are planted in the fall. Plant the cloves 1-2” deep, 6-8” apart with the tip pointing upward. They begin bulbing when day length exceeds 13 hours and soil temperature exceeds 60°F.

Garlic grows well in full sun to partial shade. In our area, it does best if grown in a location that receives morning sun and afternoon shade. That’s because, once soil temperatures reach 90-91°F, the plants mature rapidly and bulb growth ceases. The longer it takes for the garlic to mature, the larger the bulbs will be.

Garlic grows well with medium to high amounts of fertilizer. Soil tests are the best way to determine more precisely what nutrients you need to add. As a general recommendation, apply three pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet at planting. Side-dress with ¾ lb. of calcium nitrate per 100 square feet in March when bulbs begin to swell. Recall that sulfur and manganese availability is important for full development of garlic compounds, especially those associated with positive health benefits.

Garlic does not usually have disease or insect problems if grown where the soil is loose with good drainage. Occasionally you may see botrytis, downy mildew, pink root, powdery mildew, purple blotch or white rot. Some pests to watch for are armyworms, cutworms, mites and thrips.

Because garlic is such a long season crop, one trick to

grow garlic while maximizing space utilization is to plant garlic cloves between some of your other cool season crops such as broccoli, cauliflower, collards, lettuce and kale. As these crops mature and are harvested, you can plant a second crop or even start your warm season veggies if the season is right without disturbing your garlics. They will continue to

grow and mature into the spring and early summer until harvest. Using mulch to help keep the soil cool will allow a longer maturation period and will result in larger bulbs.



A photo of an Artichoke garlic variety. Notice how the cloves are layered.

Garlic should be harvested in the summer when the lower leaves begin to yellow and 3-4 lower leaves have turned brown. Brush off all the soil. Cure the bulbs with leaves and roots attached hanging or spread in a single layer for 4-10 weeks in a warm shady well-ventilated area – avoid direct sun and high temperatures. The curing process is essential for long term storage. After curing, cut the bulb from the leaves about 1” above the bulb or weave softneck varieties into a braid; cut off the roots. The garlic bulbs store best in a cool, dry, well-ventilated location – about 50-60°F and 50-60% relative humidity. Garlic cloves also store well frozen but should be used within a day or two after thawing.

Some generalities regarding the different classes:

**Artichoke** - Artichoke garlic is named for the way the cloves are arranged inside the bulb, which looks much like the layered structure of an artichoke.

# Growing Garlic

Artichoke strains are generally the most productive and easy to grow of all garlic varieties. A softneck variety, they have multiple layers of cloves with as many as twenty large plump cloves in a single bulb.

Artichoke strains can be grown successfully in almost any climate. They perhaps contain the greatest diversity in flavor between strains, some are quite spicy and rich while others are the mildest of any strains.

**Asiatic** - Asiatic Garlic, which was developed in the Far East, usually has a hard neck (though, confusingly, they can have a soft neck in warmer climates). They are very early maturing, with a fairly short shelf life in storage, and often have a thick, striped, semi-glossy, parchment-like skin. Their cloves are plump and very firm and a little milder than the familiar garlic.

**Creole** - Creole Garlic was developed in Spain and Southern France and has a rose-tinted parchment, solid red/purple cloves, weak flower stalks and small garlic bulbs that reach about 2 inches long or slightly larger. Creole garlics are, along with silverskin garlics, among the longest lasting garlics in storage. They are one of the easiest eating raw garlics owing to a taste that is full but pleasantly warm rather than hot. They retain a garlicky flavor well



Asian Tempest Asiatic garlic bulbs.



Donostia Red Creole Garlic bulbs.



Marbled Purple Stripe garlic bulbs

when cooked. These garlics were developed in Spain and southern France over the centuries, rather than Italy or elsewhere. They came in with the Spanish Conquistadores in the 1500s, hence the name Creole, which relates to the Caribbean and not specifically to anything Louisiana.

**Marble Purple Stripe** - These tend to have purplish bulb wrappers, but the cloves within are typically more on the brown side. Marble purple stripes vary from medium hot to very hot when raw. Bulbs usually are splattered with purple. Upright plants are 3-5 feet tall. Often the plant's slender stalks hide surprisingly large bulbs. Cloves are extremely smooth, and range in color from deep purple to white.

**Porcelain** - Porcelains have a medium to strong garlicky taste that holds up well in cooking. Their paper covered cloves are large and uniform. Normally bulbs contain 4-7 cloves. Stately plants have narrow upright leaves and are 4-6 feet from base to scape. Porcelains are long storing garlics. Most of these strains have strong heat, both raw and cooked.

**Purple Stripe** - Purple Stripe garlic is an attractive type of hardneck garlic with vivid

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purple stripes or blotches on the wrappers and skins. Depending on temperature, the shade of purple may be vivid or pale. Most purple stripe varieties produce 8 to 12 crescent-shaped cloves per bulb. Purple stripe garlic has a robust spicy flavor.

**Rocamboles** - Rocamboles are renowned for their complex and full flavor, often referred to as "true garlic flavor." These strains are the most well-known and hence, widely grown of the hardneck varieties. Mostly low growing plants with a deep green/blue tint. The scapes are delicious, growing into several tight curls. The clove skins are very loose on Rocamboles cultivars, often not even completely enclosing the clove. This can lead to some discoloration on the cloves which is normal. While the loose clove wrappers make for easy peeling in the kitchen, they also lead to the greatest disadvantage of Rocamboles strains- shorter storage life than other varieties. Bulbs will typically contain 6-11 cloves.

**Silverskin** - Silverskin garlics are the type most often found on supermarket shelves due to their very long storage life. They are a very high yielding softneck variety and do well in a wide range of climates, hot southern, wet maritime, and cold northern climates as well. Bulb wrappers are fine, smooth, and usually all white. Mild flavored, good for braiding and long storage (12 months if well grown and cured).

**Turbans** - The Turbans are delightful garlics that do not taste garlicky. Flavors can range from hot to very mild with a unique vegetable undertone. Turbans mature early. Short plants have wider, floppier leaves than other garlics. Purple striped bulbs contain 7-12 brown cloves.

With proper site selection and vernalization, we can probably grow all the classes of garlic though the softnecks and creoles are definitely easier to grow. A good way to try your hand at garlic gardening is to plant at least one reliable softneck variety and experiment with some of the other classes. Then you're guaranteed of success with at least one of your varieties and you may be quite pleasantly surprised by some others. Remember that research has shown that growing location and conditions can influence garlic bulb appearance and flavor. So what you grow may not exactly match the catalog description but general tendencies will remain. If you find one you really like, by selecting seed cloves from your own production the variety will become very reliably repeatable in your garden.



Silverwhite Silverskin garlic bulbs

You may now know more about garlic than you ever wanted to, but hopefully you're intrigued enough to try your hand at some unique varieties and make garlic more than just a novelty or afterthought in your garden. Or maybe you will try out some of these different garlic varieties in your favorite dishes for a change.

And...since I know some of you have read this far to find out. What about black garlic? Black garlic is the result of a combination of fermentation, dehydration, and low heat used to get the sugars in the garlic to caramelize over a long period of time and turn black. Black garlic, according to some chefs, adds that rich, meaty umami flavor to dishes that might otherwise lack it. So black garlic is not a variety of garlic but a wonderful culinary invention.

~Dr. Joe Willis

# Weed of the Month

## Spanish needles (*Bidens alba*)

A fairly common native wildflower in much of the South, including Louisiana, is *Bidens alba*. It goes by several common names – beggarticks, sticktight, shepherd's needles, and Spanish needles – all of which refer to the bristly barbed seeds of this prolific plant and its unusual method of dissemination. The genus *Bidens* is a member of the aster family (*Asteraceae*). There are around 230 *Bidens* species but only eight or so are found in the US. *Bidens alba* is closely related to *B. pilosa*, and some taxonomists do not differentiate between the two,

grouping both species as *B. pilosa*. The argument for two distinct species is in the flower – *B. alba* has white ray flowers and *B. pilosa* has no ray flowers.

**Identification:** *B. alba* is a summer annual that can reach heights of 3.5' or more. It has light green simple opposite leaves. Leaves are divided into 1 to 5 lobes that are lanceolate in outline and have toothed margins. It has erect, branching stems that are usually around 12" tall.



*Bidens alba* in full bloom and fruit. Photo by Dr. Joe Willis



Clusters of fruit (achenes) waiting for a ride. Note the barbed spines at the end of each fruit.

The compound flowers are borne in branching clusters. Each flower has inner yellow to orange disk flowers with five white outer ray flowers. This prolifically flowering weed/wildflower is a source of nectar for many pollinators.

The fruit is a ¼ - ½" long achene (a small, dry one-seeded fruit that does not open to release the seed) with 2-3 barbed spines at one end that enable it to stick to animals, clothing or machinery for dispersal.

**Control:** Research with labelled pre-emergent herbicides indicate a lack of good control with any currently available. Control ranges from 50-75%. Use of pre-emergents is not recommended. Proper mulching has shown good results in preventing seed germination.

Post-emergent control using broad spectrum herbicides like glyphosate and glufosinate is very effective. Broadleaf systemic herbicides like 2,4-D and dicamba are also effective.

~Dr. Joe Willis and Dr. Ronald Strahan

## Lafreniere Park Fine Art Photography Coffee Table Book by Eugene L Brill

The summer of 2020 will have varied meanings for people around the world. For Eugene L. Brill, a nature photojournalist and nonfiction author, it meant inspirational walks around New Orleans' Lafreniere Park. In his newly-released coffee table book, "**Summer of 2020: Walks at Lafreniere Park**," Eugene shares the history and photography of this natural oasis which includes a staggering number of bird species.

The book includes a brief history of New Orleans (including the history of the first settlers, Native Americans, Pirates on the Mississippi, the Flood of 1927, Hurricane Katrina and the Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone). It also highlights the park's rich history and shares images of its many birds and other wildlife. The author tells the story of Attorney General Lafreniere, explains the park's initial concept in 1975 and documents what it's like today through its more than 50 plus wildlife photos.

*"The bird life in Lafreniere Park is unsuspectingly spectacular," Eugene Brill says. "Usually when there's a 'Bird Sanctuary' sign you may expect to see a few birds. However, the pure multitude of birds in this park is mindboggling. They live and thrive in perfect harmony with their human neighbors. My desire is to give people a sense, through my photographs, of what it's like to spend time among the birds of Lafreniere Park."*

The foreword is written by Andrew Ward, Ph.D., chairman and co-founder HIV Awareness "iKnow" Music Project—East Africa. *"There's an intimacy to Brill's work; one has the sense of peeking into someone else's private family photo album," Andrew says.*

Eugene shares that he hopes his passion for



photography, the environment, nature and wildlife are evident throughout the book.

*"Feeding my curiosity for history and my interest in photography, I further developed my love of the natural world that has since become the primary focus of my life. My goal is to use photography to bring history to life," Eugene says.*

"**Summer of 2020: Walks at Lafreniere Park**" is available for purchase here: <https://www.eugenebrill.me/books>

This photo book is available as Hardcover with linen cover with full-color dust jacket and flaps (from Amazon or an independent book seller); flexible Softcover with high-gloss laminated cover; an instant PDF download, viewable on any device; or in an eBook format, available for Amazon Kindle Fire®, Apple iOS devices, and macOS computers.

Several photography collections, including framed prints on canvas, metal and acrylic, in addition to 12-month calendars featuring several photography sets from around the world, can be found at <https://www.eugenebrill.me>

# In the Kitchen with Austin

## Candied Citrus Peel

Pretty soon that citrus tree you have planted in the back yard will be producing so much fruit you won't be able to eat them fast enough. This recipe helps with that dilemma. It is a two-for-one! Not only will you have delightful snacks, but you'll also have a wonderful citrus infused syrup that can be used anytime you want to sweeten something.

### Ingredients:

Any variety of fresh citrus available	4 cups water
4 cups granulated sugar	2 cups super-fine sugar

### Directions:

Using a knife, make three or four slits at the top to the bottom of each fruit. Remove the peel and slice each piece into ¼ inch strips.

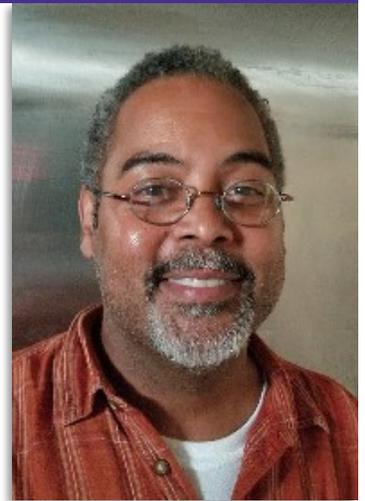
Place the strips in a pot and cover with water. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for two minutes or so. Drain and rinse the strips. Repeat this process two more times.

In another pot, combine the 4 cups of granulated sugar and 4 cups water. Bring to a gentle boil stirring to dissolve the sugar. Simmer for six minutes or so before adding the citrus strips.

Cook strips for 30 to 40 minutes. They will be translucent when ready to be removed.

Remove the strips and save the syrup in your refrigerator. Toss the strips in super-fine sugar and place on a wire rack to dry for 6 to 8 hours.

*Bon Manger!*



## Coming Events

### Pelican Greenhouse Plant Sales

Visit the Pelican Greenhouse for a large selection of plants for sale. Many of plants are propagated from cuttings, seeds, and divisions from plants already growing in the Botanical Garden

Happening **every weekend**. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 8am to NOON

**Location:** Pelican Greenhouse (not inside the Botanical Garden): 2 Celebration Drive.

Visit [NewOrleansCityPark.com](http://NewOrleansCityPark.com) for Park map



# Local Independent Garden Centers

Orleans	Address	Contact
Urban Roots	2375 Tchoupitoulas St., New Orleans	(504) 522-4949
The Plant Gallery	9401 Airline Hwy., New Orleans	(504) 488-8887
Harold's Plants	1135 Press St., New Orleans	(504) 947-7554
We Bite Rare and Unusual Plants	1225 Mandeville St., New Orleans	(504) 380-4628
Hot Plants	1715 Feliciana St., New Orleans	www.hotplantsnursery.com
Delta Floral Native Plants	2710 Touro St., New Orleans (Weekends)	(504) 224-8682
Pelican Greenhouse Sales	2 Celebration Dr., New Orleans	(504) 483-9437
Grow Wiser Garden Supply	2109 Decatur St., New Orleans	(504) 644-4713
Jefferson Feed Mid-City	309 N. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans	(504) 488-8118
Jefferson Feed Uptown	6047 Magazine St., New Orleans	(504) 218-4220
Jefferson		
Perino's Garden Center	3100 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie	(504) 834-7888
Rose Garden Center	4005 Westbank Expressway, Marrero	(504) 341-5664
Rose Garden Center	5420 Lapalco Blvd., Marrero	(504) 347-8777
Banting's Nursery	3425 River Rd., Bridge City	(504) 436-4343
Jefferson Feed	4421 Jefferson Hwy., Jefferson	(504) 733-8572
Nine Mile Point Plant Nursery	2141 River Rd., Westwego	(504) 436-4915
Palm Garden Depot	351 Hickory Ave., Harahan	(504) 305-6170
Double M Feed Harahan	8400 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan	(504) 738-5007
Double M Feed Metairie	3212 W. Esplanade Ave., Metairie	(504) 835-9800
Double M Feed Terrytown	543 Holmes Blvd., Terrytown	(504) 361-4405
Sunrise Trading Co. Inc.	42 3rd St., Kenner	(504) 469-0077
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie	(504) 887-4336
Creative Gardens & Landscape	2309 Manhattan Blvd., Harvey	(504) 367-9099
Plaquemines		
Southern Gateway Garden Center	107 Timber Ridge St., Belle Chasse	(504) 393-9300
St. Charles		
Plant & Palm Tropical Outlet	10018 River Rd., St. Rose	(504) 468-7256
Martin's Nursery & Landscape	320 3rd St., Luling	(985) 785-6165
St. Bernard		
Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette	(504) 682-9911
Soil Vendors		
Schmelly's Dirt Farm (Compost Only)	<a href="https://www.schmellys.com/compost-sales/">https://www.schmellys.com/compost-sales/</a>	
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie	(504) 887-4336
Reliable Soil	725 Reverand Richard Wilson Dr., Kenner	(504) 467-1078
Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette	(504) 682-9911
Rock n' Soil NOLA	9119 Airline Hwy., New Orleans	(504) 488-0908

We recommend that you call before visiting to enquire about operating hours or special instructions.

# November Checklist/Garden Tips

Now is a good time to divide and transplant most hardy perennials. Do not divide perennials in active growth now, such as Louisiana irises, acanthus, Easter lilies, calla lilies and lycoris.

Cut back chrysanthemums after they finish flowering to remove the old faded flowers. Sometimes the plants will set a new crop of flower buds and produce more flowers during the winter if weather is mild.

Dormant amaryllis bulbs become available in the fall, but they should not be planted into the garden now. Plant amaryllis bulbs into pots using a well drained potting soil with the neck above the soil surface. The pot should be large enough that there is a one inch clearance between the pot rim and the bulb. Place the pot in a sunny window and keep the soil evenly moist. When the flower stalk begins to emerge rotate the pot one-half turn every few days so it will grow straight. Flowering generally occurs in December or early January. Sometime . After the flowers have faded cut the stalk at the point where it emerges from the bulb, but do not cut any foliage. Keep the plant inside and continue to provide plenty of light or the leaves will be weak. Water regularly when the soil begins to feel dry. Plant bulbs into the garden in April, where they will get into the normal cycle of blooming in April each year.

Don't forget to hose off and check outdoor container tropicals carefully for pests and critters before moving them inside for the winter.

Paperwhite narcissus (and other Tazetta narcissus such as Soleil d'Or) may be planted in pots this month and are easily grown for winter bloom indoors.

Don't worry about those yellowing and dropping leaves on broad leaved evergreens such as gardenia, citrus, magnolias, azaleas, cherry laurel, hollies and others. Many of these plants shed their older leaves in the fall, and will often lose some more this spring.

Harvest broccoli when the largest buds in the head are the size of the head of a kitchen match. Do not focus on the size of the head itself as that is not an indication of when the broccoli is ready to harvest. If you begin to see yellow flowers you waited too long.

Make sure you mulch new beds of cool season bedding plants as soon as they are planted to control weeds. It's also helpful to water them in with a soluble fertilizer to get them off to a good start. Repeat the application every 7 to 10 days until the plants begin to grow well.

Cut garden mums back to remove the old flowers after the blooms fade. Left in place and given good care, they will bloom for you again next fall and in years to come.

Finish planting spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, Dutch irises, narcissus, lilies, etc this month.

Harvest sweet potatoes before a frost browns the leaves. Freshly harvested sweet potatoes will not bake properly until they are cured. To cure them, keep them in a warm location with high humidity for a couple of weeks.

As the leaves fall, maintain a balance of on-site composting vs. smothering the lawn in leaf mulch. As a way to return organic material back to the soil and reclaim the nutrients locked away in the leaves we do recommend in situ composting. Use a lawnmower to shred the leaves in place to reduce the volume and accelerate decomposition.

Do not let the leaves build up to a depth that will completely block the sunlight from the underlying turf. Wet leaves can quickly create a mat covering that can severely damage the turfgrass.

Do not through away the leaves. Your soil desperately needs the organic material. Most lawns are horribly compacted. The best solution is to make your own compost from the leaves and spread it out over the lawn after having it aerated in the spring. You can also bag the leaves and add them back slowly to the lawn each time that you mow.

# November Checklist/Garden Tips

Tulips and hyacinths go into paper or net bags in the lower drawers of your refrigerator by the end of November. This is necessary because our winters are not cold enough long enough to satisfy the chilling requirements of the bulbs. Without this cold treatment, the bulbs will not bloom properly. Do not place apples, pears or other fruit into the same drawer with the bulbs. Ripening fruit give off ethylene gas which can cause the bulbs to bloom abnormally (too short, blasted buds). Plant in late December or early January.

Lettuces, especially the leaf and semi-heading varieties are very productive in the cool season garden. Fall is the best time to plant lettuces as they mature during progressively cooler temperatures. Problems with bitterness that often affect spring grown lettuce do not occur in the fall. Keep lettuce growing vigorously with regular watering and occasional side dressing with a nitrogen containing fertilizer such as ammonium sulfate or blood meal.

November is an active month for planting beds of annuals. Plant heights should be considered when selecting and placing bedding plants into the landscape. Low growing flowers, which include sweet alyssum, lobelia, pansy, Johnny-jump-up, viola, ageratum and dwarf stock, generally grow to about 6 to 8 inches and should be planted in the front of beds. Medium height plants that will reach 8 to 15 inches include dwarf snapdragons, candytuft, calendula, annual phlox, blue bonnet, dianthus, sweet William, ornamental kale and cabbage, nasturtium and California poppy. Cool season bedding plants that will grow 15 inches or taller include Iceland poppy, Shirley poppy, peony-flowered poppy, stock, snapdragons, statice, larkspur and sweet peas.

Mums are still available at local nurseries. Buy plants with few open flowers and mostly buds. The plant will be attractive longer. Do not buy mums if all the flowers are fully open, especially if some of them have begun to fade, as the display will be short-lived. Plant in a sun to part sun location and keep well watered. When all of the flowers have faded cut the plant back about a third. Sometimes we get a few more flowers.

Don't overlook the ornamental qualities of many of the cool season vegetables and herbs. Curley parsley makes a great edging plant for flower beds. Curley leaf mustard and red leaf mustard are outstanding mixed with cool season bedding plants. Bronze fennel is used as often in flower beds and perennial borders as it is in the herb and vegetable garden. Bright Lights Swiss chard, Bull's Blood beets, Red Bor kale and many leaf lettuces have colorful foliage. Watch your use of pesticides on vegetables in ornamental beds if you intend to harvest them.



A cypress tree ready to drop its leaves



Cypress tree leaves remain fluffy when stacked and resist compression.



Notice the structure of the needle-like leaves of a cypress tree.

This is the season for free mulch. Fall leaves from all types of trees make excellent mulch. Use a bagging lawn mower to shred hardwood leaves before using. Save them in lawn trash bags until needed.

Cypress leaves are one of my favorite mulches and the reddish color is very attractive in a garden.

# Lawn Care Do's & Don't's

## Do's:

1. You may apply selective herbicides to eliminate broad leaf weeds in the lawn.
2. Cool damp weather is ideal for the appearance of Large Patch Disease in your lawn.  
[Click here to find information about large patch disease from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
3. Irrigate as necessary to moisten the soil to a depth of 4-6 inches. The best time to water is in the morning.
4. Set your mower to the correct height for your turfgrass type.
5. Mulch fall leaves and let them decompose in place if possible or collect them with a bagging mower and add them to your compost pile or use them as mulch in your gardens.
6. Take a soil test. Test kits are available in our offices in the Botanical Gardens, the Yenni Building, and New Orleans City Hall as well as local garden centers. Follow this link to see Dr. Joe demonstrate how to take a soil sample: <https://www.facebook.com/1030624690304124/videos/1452161988150390/>



This photo from a local homeowner shows the classic presentation of large patch disease. As the fungal growth spreads outward, the center will often begin re-growing

## Don't's

1. Do not spread fill over the lawn until it is actively growing again in the spring.
2. Do not apply fertilizer to the lawn again until April of next year.
3. Do not apply phosphorous winterizer to the lawn without taking a soil sample first. We have ample amounts of phosphorous in our soil already.
4. Do not attempt to install a new lawn until spring.
5. Do not cut more than 1/3 of the height of lawn grass at a single time.
6. Do not aerate the lawn.
7. Do not dethatch the lawn.

**Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help**

**E-mail us at: [GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu)**



**Follow us on Facebook at [GNOGardening](#)**

**For more information visit [LSUAgCenter.com](http://LSUAgCenter.com)**

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