



September 2009
Volume 1, Issue 9

Petite Gardenscapes

Sensible designs for the weekend gardener
Pat Baganz, sole proprietor

Special Interest Articles:

- End of Summer Goodies
- Edging a Bed
- Using Native Plants in your garden

Timely Tip:

To prune or not to prune
hydrangeas, go to
www.sugarcreekgardens.com
-click on Gardening Guides,
click on Heavenly Hydrangeas

Monthly
features

>Plant disorder of the month

>Bulb of the month

>Timely Tip

Questions or comment? Contact Pat at pbaganz@voyager.net or at 262-353-6555

End of Summer Blues

Although summer officially ends September 22nd, many of us feel that we're done as the kids trickle back to school. And I confess to being bored with my garden by then, which is pure heresy for a garden designer, of course. Looking at the mess of un-weeded beds, today, prompted me to get cleaning, and I rediscovered some of the fun in gardening as I looked at the fall plants about to put on a show. So, put the garden to bed?? Not yet! Here are some Nearly End of Summer Tasks for your To-do list that will get you set up for Spring:

- Take pictures of your garden beds and borders: You'll have a pictorial inventory of your plants for next spring. And a tip from professionals: don't take the pics at mid-day. You'll get sharper pics, and prettier

ones if you take them early in the morning, later in the afternoon, or on cloudy days.

- Shop what my friend Nancy calls the "Dead Plant Sales". At the end of the season, nurseries want their stock to go home with you-not into storage with them. See bargain offerings at right
- While at the nurseries, buy trees and shrubs- prices are often 25-50% off (they don't want to store *them* either)
- Hire tree services- they usually have more free time in fall before they start plowing snow.
- Order spring blooming bulbs to plant October-November.
- Put in grass seed now- in fact you

can plant grass until December, if we enjoy an Indian Summer(Don't forget to buy a hose timer to keep that seed moist.)

Local "Dead Plant" Sales:

Minors Garden Center
7777 N. 76th Street,
Milwaukee
Parking Lot Sale 50% off
Perennials, Shrubs, and
Trees -Going on now!

Johnson's Garden Center,
Hwy. 60, Cedarburg
Redeem your BreezeBucks
for 50% off plant material.
Hydrangea paniculata and
vines 30-50% off

Franzee Nursery
Hwy W, Saukville
35-50% off Shrubs and
Trees
Labor Day until freeze



Getting Edgy with your beds and borders

To put the finishing touch to your garden beds and borders, choose an edging method.

Why? One good reason is to keep lawn grass and weeds from (excuse the pun) “edging” their way into your beautiful gardenscape. You’ll always have some weeds to contend with but pulling the roots of grass from the roots of your plants is just a plain ugly job. A good edging material will cut down on that kind of work.

A second reason is aesthetics. A clean edge gives a finished look to your garden.

So, what’s the best edging? That’s a personal choice, but I’ll offer three possibilities to start. And, by the way, I use all three in my gardens, for different applications.



Cobra Edging- this is fairly inexpensive plastic drop-in edging that’s 4 ¾ inches deep. It doesn’t require

hammering in stakes, and it’s remained in the ground without heaving for six years so far. It leaves a nice neat edge, and again, prevents grass from creeping in. If you have a large border, renting a trencher from the rental store makes your life much easier, as it digs the trench for you to drop in the Cobra. Relative price: \$\$

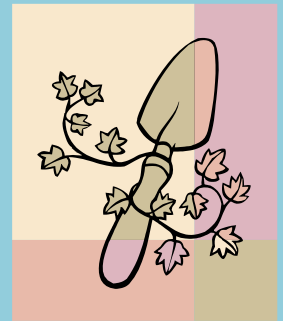


Brick edging- Pavers (bricks without holes) are laid end to end, tops level with the sod, which allows the lawn mower to run over the bricks for a smooth lawn trim. It’s more formal than plastic edging, and if you like the rustic look, moss will obligingly grow on the bricks for you. I set the bricks on coarse sand, which also helps to keep the grass out, and every three years or so, I pry the bricks up to keep them

level. It’s a really quick job-about 2 bricks per minute, so it’s not too daunting a task. Relative price: \$\$\$



V-trench- this one, Elizabeth O. says, looks most expensive, because it appears that you retain a gardener to do the work for you. Hah! I wish. However, it doesn’t take long to take one of those square spades, and dig on a 45 degree angle AWAY from the garden, which (in theory) keeps the grass stolons or rhizomes from leaping into your garden bed or border. Want an easier way? Rent the Bedscaper (Drews True Value in Port Washington -\$35 bucks for 4 hours) and whip all those borders out in a morning. Relative price: \$, with or without the rental.



Got a tip to share?

I enjoy hearing from you with questions, suggestions and ideas- here’s your chance to share YOUR garden tips with everyone in the gardening group- just as they do in Fine Gardening and Horticulture magazines. Can’t offer our tipsters big bucks, but here’s your chance to get your name in print.



Going Native

By Elizabeth O'Connell,



Trillium grandiflorum, one of the native spring flowers, are now available for purchase through many catalogs.

ncnatural.com

"Add just a few to your Garden, and you and the environment will both benefit."

*Elizabeth O'Connell,
monthly contributor and
Ozaukee Gardener
columnist for the
Ozaukee Press*



Arrowwood Viburnum 'Chicago Lustre'
school.discoveryeducation.com

Any long distance drive will reveal one of the main reasons for adding native plants to your garden. Take a good look at neighborhood yards and then jump in the car and take a trip. Odds are you'll find the same plants you left at home. Drive another five hours or another two days and the same thing is probably true. The plants may be blooming a few weeks ahead or behind the ones in your garden but they're exactly the same plants. The desire for long blooming, easy care perennials has homogenized the U.S. landscape. Everywhere Rudbeckia 'Goldsturm' and Salvia 'Maynight' are planted next to pink carpet roses.

If you plant natives, however, the original character of the locale and climate are retained. Native gardens in Milwaukee, Memphis and Midland, Texas will each have a distinctive look. The plants will also be well suited to the climate and needs of the local wildlife.

Over thousands of years, native plants have adapted to area climate conditions. This result?

Native gardens use less water, less pesticide and need less maintenance. Established natives also will withstand blasts of broiling summer heat, drought, spring floods and gusts of Arctic air without the coddling many popular perennials require.

As time goes on, more and more native plants find their way to my yard. They grace the garden from the first white blossoms of the spring trilliums and pagoda dogwoods to the brilliant autumn colors of the sugar maples and arrowwood viburnums. They're carefree, attract the local birds and critters, and create a sense of place no carpet rose can provide.

Every region has gorgeous native plants. Local botanic gardens and wildlife centers can introduce you to plants indigenous to your area. Add just a few to your garden and you and the environment will both benefit.

Native Plants by state

To find native plants of Wisconsin:

http://www.johnsonsnurseries.com/Native_Plants_of_Wisconsin.aspx You can download a pdf with pictures of the plants

For our friends in Colorado:

www.denverplants.com/perennials/html/native_invasive.htm

For our California readers:

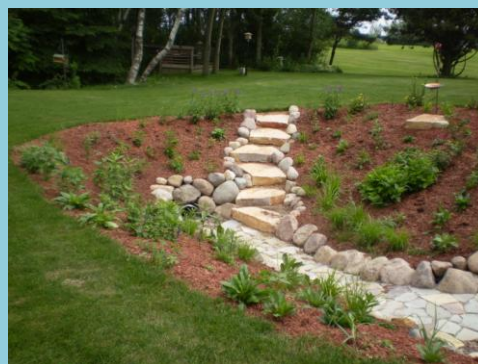
www.cnps.org/

Catalog with natives:

Prairie Nursery (Seeds and Plants) –Westfield , WI
www.prairienursery.com



Before and After



Maureen Greene applied for and won the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewage District grant to build a rain garden in her formerly ugly ravine at her Lake Michigan home. East Town Landscape Service cleared the debris and installed the stone steps and pathway, while I helped choose the rain garden plants and installed them (along with the Greene family and daughter Catherine and granddaughter Sylvia). M Magazine featured Maureen's rain garden in the August edition, titled 'Serenity Now' and indeed it is a lovely spot.

Plant Disorder of the Month

Rose Blackspot is a fungal disease that can cause the death of the rose if it attacks the plant year after year. The fungus spends the winter on lesions on the stem, dormant buds, fallen leaves or mulch.

Symptoms: Purplish-black spots on the leaves form and often merge together before the leaves yellow and fall. The spots can show up on the stem, also.

All types of roses can be affected by Blackspot.

Prevention: Rake and burn infected leaves.

Rose Blackspot



Gardenseeker.com

Sulphur powder will not kill blackspot spores, but will keep a new generation from forming.

Control: Spray with a fungicide such as Spectracide Immunox Multi-purpose Fungicide Concentrate or Spectrum 610 immediately after spring pruning. Buy resistant varieties such as **Knockout or Home Run**

"What's Wrong With My Plant?" -Steven Bradley

BULB OF THE MONTH

Colchicum byzantinum is the botanical name for Autumn Crocus, which puts out up to 20, 5-6 inch tall flowers in autumn. I have planted them in September and had them bloom the next month! Easy to grow in full sun to part shade, medium water needs. Naturalize with spring bulbs or interplant in groundcover. Plant 4-6 inches deep. Not many pests, but slugs may bother the flowers.

Cultivars:

'Alboplenum'-large white spectacular double flowers, several to each bulb. Best put against a dark background.

'Album'-small white flowers, and lots of them. Very easy to grow
'Pleniforum' or 'Roseum Plenum'-rosy double flowers. Very late blooming.

Picture courtesy of mun.ca