

Gardeners Stir With First Touch of Spring

Lawns Need Tending Now

Even though most of our garden plants have not yet aroused from their winter's sleep (with a few exceptions), lawn grasses are beginning their period of activity.

This, attention to lawn grass requirements now will result in better lawns later on, with turf more able to withstand the wear it may be subjected to and to withstand, more easily, the possible extremes of weather that, while not usually existent in this locality, still must be reckoned with as a possibility.

Every lawn requires food and an early spring meal is, generally, amply rewarding with a healthy, green, new growth, and development of strong new roots.

Just as soon as the home owner can work the lawn in the spring, he should do it. Spring working established lawns includes raking to remove any debris left over the winter or deposited there because of winds, etc. A good raking early in the season will remove twigs, leaves, clods, or even rocks, tossed there by passing automobiles. Any mossy areas should be raked thoroughly. Bare spots, the result of winter traffic when the soil is soft, must be loosened by raking. Re-seeding these areas will restore them to the standard set by the rest of your lawn.

FERTILIZE

If your lawn was newly planted last fall, an early spring fertilizing program is most important. Frost may have discolored the new grasses but new spring growth will soon remove that objectionable condition.

A slow acting general fertilizer is best for spring use, and, preferably, of the organic kind. A well-screened, decomposed compost mixed with a weed-free manure, is most desirable as it continues to furnish nourishment to the lawn grasses for quite some time as it continues to decompose. In the absence of available weed-free manures, a substitute of dried, pulverized manures, or guano, is available at your dealer's. This, mixed with screened compost, or peatmoss, and broadcast over the lawn will provide immediate and continued nourishment.

Because our soil is naturally of acid reaction in the Willamette Valley, the use of lime is often important. In the absence of a soil analysis of your lawn, the application of 25 to 50 pounds of agricultural lime per 1,000 square feet of lawn will do no harm and may prove extremely beneficial.

GET WEEDS

Weeds do not wait for warm weather to start growing and should be eliminated as soon as possible.

Frequent fertilizing of lawns will keep the lawn grasses growing steadily, so, do not put your lawn on a starvation diet of one meal a year!

After applying the slow-acting organic fertilizer described above, an application of 25 pounds per 1,000 square feet of lawn of a complete balanced commercial fertilizer is advisable, with similar dosage during the summer. From 3 to 5 pounds of ammonium sulphate may be applied to each 1,000 square feet of lawn every 6 or 8 weeks. There is little danger of "burning" the lawn grasses with fertilizers if you water immediately after spreading the fertilizer. That should be a cardinal rule when applying any fertilizer for any plant, as the roots can consume this food only when it is in liquid form.

A mowing of the lawn in early spring may have a stimulating effect upon grass growth. Of course, do not attempt to mow when the soil is soft.



FUN IN THE SUN—Balmy bright weather the first part of last week produced action in yards and garden throughout the Emerald Empire. A typical scene was this with Mrs. Allen Lamb, working in the yard of her new home at 145 E. 37th Ave. with son Mike, 2, to lend a hand.

Rhododendrons Grow Best When Planting Care Used

Rhododendrons are the showiest of all evergreen shrubs. While their large dark-green, shiny, leathery leaves are striking, it is their giant flower clusters that make them the popular plant they have been since they were first brought to us from the Allegheny and Himalayan mountains.

Rhododendron varieties are so numerous that the named hybrids run into the hundreds—over 2,000 of them having been listed. However, relatively few are available to the home gardener.

Rhododendrons cannot be grown everywhere—either soil conditions are wrong, the summers too hot or winters are too cold.

LIKE ACID SOIL

Rhododendrons should be given acid soil conditions. Their roots should be kept cool and moist and surrounded with plenty of rich humus.

Despite the advice given by experienced gardeners, growers and garden writers, the average home gardener fails to provide the right soil and wonders why his rhododendrons fail to live up to their reputations.

Other causes of failure include too deep planting, lack of drainage, crowding in among other plants, lack of sunlight, and failure to protect the plants from borers, lace-bug and red-spider mite. But most failures are due to improper soil and too deep planting.

General maintenance is easy, for once established in good soil, with the correct mulch and water, rhododendrons pretty much take care of themselves.

NEED SPACE

When a plant grows beyond its allotted space, the wise gardener digs it up and transplants it to a new location where the rhododendron can grow as Mother Nature intended.

Dr. Donald Wyman, director of



SHOWY—Rhododendron blossom colors range from white through pink and dark purple.

Harvard's famous Arnold Arboretum, says that "The best way to keep rhododendrons free of insect and disease troubles is to provide good growing conditions at the time they are planted."

GARDEN CHECKLIST

WHAT TO DO IN MARCH

- 1—Complete pruning and spraying of fruit trees and bushes this month.
- 2—Fertilize trees and shrubs with a complete fertilizer.
- 3—Plant sweet peas and garden peas as soon as ground can be worked.
- 4—Sow annual flower seeds, such as alyssum, clarkia, candytuft, snapdragon, pansy and bachelor buttons by broadcasting seed where they are to grow.
- 5—Tender annuals should be started in a coldframe this month.
- 6—Plant roses.
- 7—Summer blooming bulbs should be started now.
- 8—Check garden equipment, repair, sharpen or replace.
- 9—Top-dress lawns with well rotted compost or a mixture of equal parts coarse sand, weed-free manure and loam.



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Enjoy Season's Blossoms Earlier—Bring Indoors

By MARK M. TAYLOR

The few days of balmy weather recently experienced, reminded us only too well that spring is "just around the corner" and that our countryside and our gardens soon will awake from their restive sleep and once more clothe themselves in the gorgeous colors of another spring.

Such a time is not far off. Already early varieties of camellias are blossoming as are a number of other well known garden shrubs. Occasionally one finds a particularly precocious bush putting forth blossoms at an unusually early date, because of favorable location—subject to longer periods of sunlight and protected from chilling winds.

Nevertheless there is no reason why anyone having some spring flowering shrubs in his garden should not, even now, have some of those choice blossoms for indoor use. Forsythia, daphne, flowering quince, most of the flowering fruit trees, early spirea and flowering almond, all may be forced into bloom indoors, to bring spring into your home just that much earlier.

Simply cut some branches with plump flower buds; immerse the branches in water (immerse—to stand in water is not sufficient) for the better part of a day; then, place the branches in vases of water in a cool room but in the sunlight for at least 24 hours; then move into a warmer room. The last move will bring them into bloom and you will have gained an advantage on the calendar by several days.

The water to be used for soaking, or in vases, should always be cool—never cold or hot.

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