

LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER TIPS

Plant Tips

September is a great month with cooler weather and a time to enjoy chrysanthemums, asters, autumn clematis, and autumn crocuses. It is also a time to plant spring flowering bulbs. Mix some bulb fertilizer at the bottom of the hole where you are planting your bulbs. Never put fertilizer directly on the bulb. When buying daffodil bulbs (deer, chipmunks, rabbits and squirrels don't like to eat them) look for those listed as "DN" in the description. This stands for double –nose and tells how many bulbs are attached. A "DN11" has two flower-sized bulbs which will quickly grow into clumps of flowers.

Daylilies and hostas that have grown in the same spot for five years should be dug up, divided, and replanted into fresh soil. When rainfall is limited, water perennials, shrubs, trees, and container plants so that the soil gets 1 inch of water a week. It is best to water early in the morning, and give plants a good, slow soaking rather than sprinkling plants daily.

Do not fertilize outdoor roses until next spring. Clean up dropped leaves, flower petals, and prune damaged stems on perennials and roses. Continue to weed flower beds.

September is a good month to plant a new tree. Check the varieties listed on the Approved Plant List (found in the Lodge book), and fill out a Landscape Request form for approval before purchasing any plant.

Chipmunks are entertaining and voracious eaters of bird seeds, fruit, vegetables, seedlings, flower bulbs (crocuses and tulips are favorites), and flowers. One chipmunk can store up to 30 cups of food for the winter. To keep them out of your yard, plant bulbs deep. Chipmunks avoid daffodils. To keep chipmunks and also rabbits away from your plants, sprinkle plants with cayenne pepper. You'll have to re-apply it after a rain.

Garden Tips

By September you want fruit formation to halt on tomato plants by cutting off the tops of the plants. This will allow each plant to concentrate its energy to the already formed tomatoes, which may still ripen on the plant. Clean out corn, pepper, and eggplant stems that have finished producing. New broccoli and cabbage plants planted in August may need some mulch. Parsnip and carrots can be left in the ground until after the first frost and will taste sweeter after a frost. Brussels sprouts taste the sweetest after a stiff frost. To increase the size of the sprouts, pinch off the tops of the plants to encourage them to go into sprout production. Kale and collard greens also taste better after having gone through a frost. There is still time to plant spinach, lettuce and radishes – all are cool weather crops. A late season crop of bush peas will still mature if planted in September. Lettuce and onions will continue to grow into November, past the first frost. Plant garlic for next year. Be sure to add some sand to the soil where garlic is planted.