

The Magnolia Chronicle

The newsletter for Pulaski County Master Gardeners

U of A

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

RESEARCH & EXTENSION

University of Arkansas System



Poison ivy in the fall

Sept/Oct 2018

Presidents Corner

POISON IVY

By Joellen Beard

Leaflets of three, let it be! Hairy vine, no friend of mine! Berries of white, run in fright!

My first recollection of poison ivy was when I was five years old. I had both poison ivy and chicken pox at the same time. It is a vivid memory. I am one of the 85% of the population that reacts to the toxic urushiol oil in every part of the poison ivy plant which is not an ivy. The 15% of people that do not react will begin to react the more they are exposed! So, those of you not reacting, beware! Poison ivy's Latin name is *Toxicodendron radicans* (notice the "toxic") and is related to the wonderful, delicious cashew!

The American Academy of Dermatology reports that reactions increase with age and repeated exposure. Urushiol oil can remain active on everything from five to ten years including your garden tools, clothing, and its dead plant parts! Your pets can carry the oil to you! The oil is strongest, of course, in the spring and summer! According to the information on Zanfel, a poison ivy relief wash, sold at both Walmart and CVS for \$40 an

ounce, the stems and roots contain enough urushiol to infect 10,000 people. This is not good news. Poison ivy rash does not spread and is not contagious. Reactions occur from 12-72 hours and sometimes the reaction takes as long as two weeks to appear! It is the oil urushiol on skin that causes the reaction. AAD says, if the oil is washed off with cool water and soap (try Dawn) within 10 to 30 minutes the victim is less likely to be stricken with the awful rash. Cool water does not open the pores in skin to let in the oil. This terrible contact dermatitis drags on misery for as long as three weeks. The worst reactions to poison ivy I have endured were from pulling its roots, they are hairy, and from the stems other parts, in hardwood mulch. Never burn poison ivy as the smoke, when inhaled, can cause a very serious internal reaction. Goats, birds, and deer love to eat it, but you cannot get poison ivy from drinking goat's milk, meat or cheese, or from eating venison or poultry. When we moved into our house 31 years ago, we had a ground cover of poison ivy! It is a beautiful bush or vine, especially in the fall, with itching in every leaf. I have dedicated many hours, constant vigilance, and endured much agony over the removal of it. There are many ways to kill mature poison ivy but the most effective according to Clemson University Cooperative Extension, is using a glyphosate, like Roundup. Cut the stem and then paint the cut. You may have to do this several times. There are other concoctions containing bleach, vinegar, or salt, but whatever you use be mindful of the plants around the poison ivy. It can hide under your favorites. If you have small poison ivy plants, continually cutting them back will eventually kill them as the hairy root system needs the leaves to sustain it, but remember to wash your tools with soapy water, and wash your gloves, shoes, clothes, and pets!



Central Arkansas Iris Society Annual Rhizome Sale



**Date: Saturday
Sept 29, 2018**

Where: Grace Lutheran Fellowship Hall

Kavanaugh @ Hillcrest – next to Mt. St. Mary's

Open: 8:00 AM 'til sold out!

Latest awarded iris introductions at bargain prices.

*Historics, Daylilies, perennials, too! **For further***

information visit us at:

www.CentralArkansasIris.org

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER CHECKLISTS

by Carol Randle

SEPTEMBER CHECKLIST

Janet said that August started out bone dry, but by mid-month we were floating. Some counties got more than 10 inches of rain in a day or two. We don't know what fall and winter will be like, but we are heading into fall in better shape than expected. Pay attention to the weather and be prepared to water as needed. Spring-blooming plants are finishing up setting blooms for next year, so we want them to be healthy and happy as they head into winter.

BULBS

Spring bulbs are showing up at local nurseries. It is time to buy them to get the best selection. Keep them in a cool place for another few weeks before planting. If you plan to dig up and store your caladium bulbs, fertilize them now. The more energy they store in their roots, the larger the bulbs will be and the bigger your plants will be next year. Make sure you dig them up prior to a killing frost.

VEGETABLES

Vegetable gardens are a mixture this season. If your vegetable garden is still producing, then you are properly maintaining it. Vegetable gardens quickly turn to ruin if left untended. Fall gardens are by far the most difficult to manage, since insects and diseases have had all season to thrive and multiply. Many gardeners are growing edibles year-round with limited winter protection, including high tunnels or just moderate frost protection. You can seed carrots, lettuce, spinach, kale and other greens now. Mulch any new plantings and be prepared to water.



Fall gardening – lettuce, spinach and other greens grow well in the fall in Arkansas

FLOWERS

If early season perennials, such as peonies and lilies are looking ragged, don't wait for a killing frost to begin cleanup. They have finished their life cycle and are heading into dormancy. **The key to gardening success now is to clean up and water.** Mid-September through October is the ideal time to divide peonies. Herbaceous crowns are set one to two inches below soil level. Now is also the time that many perennials can be divided. Mulch is important the first winter after division to prevent the plants from heaving out of the ground. Summer perennials are still going strong with echinacea, rudbeckia and gaillardia, but to add to the mix, the fall perennials are starting a show with chelone (turtlehead), tricyrtis (toad lilies) and Japanese anemones for shade; and goldenrod, asters and salvias for sun. Ornamental grasses are beginning to set their plumage and will continue to grace our fall and winter landscapes. Chrysanthemums are available at garden centers. While they are perennials, many gardeners grow them

as annuals. Summer annuals that got regular applications of fertilizer and water are still performing nicely. Wait to get pansies until the temperatures begin to cool off. Pansies that get exposed to warm weather tend to stretch and get leggy, resulting in weaker plants. Winter ornamental peppers are a great way to add color in the fall garden.

HERBS

Fresh herbs are showing up in flower gardens, containers and stand-alone vegetable gardens. If you have annual herbs, such as basil and dill, harvest them regularly to keep them producing. As we near fall, be a bit more sparing in your pruning of the perennial herbs: rosemary, thyme and sage. They can continue to be harvested and used in cooking, but don't butcher them since they are permanent plants in your garden and won't put on a lot of new growth this late.

LAWNS

You can apply one last application of fertilizer until mid-month, then no more until next spring. If you want to use a pre-emergent herbicide to prevent winter weeds, now would be a good time to apply. Continue to mow and water as needed.

SHRUBS

Shrubs that are blooming now include butterfly bush (*Buddleia* spa.), crape myrtles, althea, and caryopteris. Summer spirea may set more flowers if they continue to put on new growth, as may the reblooming hydrangeas, such as Endless Summer and Blushing Bride. Knock Out Roses are still blooming, and beautyberry will soon be showing off purple or white berries.

INDOORS

Dig up your begonias now and bring them indoors as a houseplant. They will bloom all winter, so you can use the cuttings outdoors next spring. Feed your houseplants less frequently as the days get shorter. Houseplants that have had a summer siesta outside need to be prepared for the move back indoors. Late summer to early October is the ideal time to do so. Clean up the pots, check for ants and other insects, and spray as needed with insecticidal soap before you bring them in and once again after they are in to control hitchhiking bugs. Moving them in before really cool weather starts will be an easier transition for them. Cut back on the amount of water you give them and don't be alarmed by a little leaf dropping.

OCTOBER CHECKLIST

Fall is a great time to garden in Arkansas, with plenty of things to do. This is the time to make sure your garden is healthy. Cleaning up our beds is very important. Pay attention to moisture levels, especially prior to a hard freeze. Healthy plants should bounce back more easily than those that are stressed. October is harvest season. October and pumpkins go hand in hand. Look for pumpkins with a smooth outer rind, free of blemishes and with a stem attached. From miniatures to giants, they now come in a wide array of colors: shades of orange, red, white, green striped and speckled. Throw in some gourds and a few mums, and you have instant landscape pizzazz. Leaves are beginning to fall, so it is also the perfect time to replenish your compost pile. Many perennials benefit from fall division. You can also plant your winter

seasonal color. Grab your shovel and your work gloves and start gardening. How well your garden goes to bed for the season can predict in many ways how healthy it will be by the next growing season. When cleaning up the vegetable or annual flower beds, don't add diseased or insect infested plants to the compost pile. Worn out plant materials are great additions to your compost pile.

PERENNIALS

Starting in October, you can plant and transplant perennials. Enrich your beds with an organic soil amendment. Lift and divide plants that have finished blooming. Most perennials bloom better if they are divided and replanted every three years or so. Remove suckers from roses and lilacs. Winterize, protect or lift tender perennials for winter storage. Mark dormant bulbs so they won't be destroyed when the ground is prepared for spring planting. Be ready when shipments of bulbs such as crocus, daffodils, irises, day lilies, freesias, hyacinths and tulips arrive at nurseries, then plant immediately. Water well to encourage root development and cover with plenty of mulch.

VEGETABLES

Fall and winter gardening has become quite popular. With season extenders or coverings for the garden, people are gardening year-round. Fall harvest is underway, and you can still plant if you cover and protect. Lettuce, radishes and greens are coming into production, along with a second crop of squash, peppers and tomatoes. Carrots, kale, spinach and cabbage are quite cold tolerant. Carrots and turnips may die back on top with a heavy frost, but you can leave the roots underground with a light layer of mulch to harvest as needed throughout the winter.

HOUSEPLANTS

Houseplants that need to come inside for the winter need to be there now. The transition from outside to inside can be tough on plants. They go from high humidity to no humidity and light levels also drop dramatically. Moving them when inside and outside conditions are more similar can make transition easier. Check them for insects before making the move and spray with insecticidal soap if needed. Often a nice spray of water can remove some insect issues and clean them up. Also, be sure you let your plants dry out between watering. Overwatering is the leading cause of death in houseplants. Don't be alarmed if you see some yellowing of leaves or leaf drop while they make the transition. For tropical plants that you store in the garage or in the crawl space of your house, you are simply keeping them alive, not thriving and growing.

LAWNS

The lawn is transitioning into dormancy now, so the only thing you need to do is mow. Lawns still need frequent mowing, and leaves are falling in earnest. Weekly mowing not only takes care of the lawn's needs, but also the leaves. The mulched leaves can be bagged for use in the garden or landscape, or allowed to stay on the lawn. They will gradually break down into organic matter in the soil. Heavy layers of leaves should be raked and either composted or shredded and used as mulch. Catch winter weeds before they get well established.



Beautyberry (*Callicarpa Americana*)

COLOR IN THE GARDEN

If you need color in the garden, besides the seasonal pumpkins, there are shrubs and perennials that provide color every fall. Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) provide gorgeous purple or white berries. Japanese anemones have pink or white flowers. Toad lilies (*Tricyrtis*), the fragrant white flowers of Sweet Autumn Clematis, and the blue flowers of the Blue Mist Plant (*Caryopteris app.*), Itea have outstanding fall foliage as does Oakleaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*). Ginkgo gives us golden yellow. Crape myrtles have gorgeous fall leaf color and pretty bark in winter.

If you have not become familiar with the magazine, *ARKANSAS GARDENER*, you are missing a real treat. September's issue is chock full of interesting articles about gardening in Arkansas. I was especially interested in the article on houseplants, "Get Your Green Fix" and the article, "Cactus Collecting." There are many more in September's issue, and I can't wait for the October issue. If you have not seen an issue of *ARKANSAS GARDENER*, look for it. It is well worth your time and money.



Toad lilies – are such a delight in the fall. Small flowers but so unique in colors.

RIVER VALLEY'S 2018 FALL CELEBRATION!



**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 6TH
9:00AM-3:00PM**

- 10% Off Birding Products!
- 20% Off Japanese Maples!
- 30% Off Pottery!
- 40% Off Select Perennials!

Join River Valley in celebrating the fall season with fun, food, and amazing sales! River Valley has over 30 acres of landscaping inspiration, and a certified staff to answer any type of plant or design questions you may have! Come celebrate with us and an awesome collection of service organizations that help make Arkansas a beautiful place to be!



21701 Lawson Road
Little Rock, Arkansas 72210
501-821-4770



BUS TO MOSS MOUNTAIN

On Saturday, October 13, PCMG has organized a **bus to Moss Mountain** for the State 30th MG Birthday Celebration, **cost \$27**,

Pre-Paid reservations only. First Paid – First Served. The bus holds 40 people, and we still have room but need your reservation ASAP. The bus leaves St. James UMC, at 9:30 a.m. It will load to return to St. James UMC at 1:30.

Make you check payable to PCMG and mail or take it to the Pulaski County Extension Service, 2901 W. Roosevelt Rd., Little Rock AR 72204

August Flowers in Michigan

by Phyllis Barrier

In August we headed to Michigan for cooler weather, but we enjoyed beautiful flowers there too.



In Grand Rapids, we discovered the Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park: 158 acres of gardens, meadows, woodlands and wetlands, and conservatories featuring tropical, desert and carnivorous plants. There's a tram tour that helps you see the more than 200 sculptures.



In Grand Rapids we also enjoyed the small garden at the Meyer May home built in 1908-09 by Frank Lloyd Wright. The gardens are planted much as they were at the turn of the 20th century.



The flower gardens at the historic Grand Hotel on Mackinaw Island were the highlight of the trip. Flowers were everywhere inside and outside of the hotel, and they were meticulously cared for.



Residents of Michigan's small quaint towns take great pride in having lovely and well-cared for flowers in pots, on bridges, and in window boxes. Our favorite picturesque town was Leland, near the impressive Sleeping Bear Dunes. We hope to revisit Michigan, because there's still more to see and do.

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