

Currituck Garden News



February 2015

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The Garden News is published to provide you with educational information, upcoming programs and opportunities on gardening issues. Feel free to share with others.

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To Prevent Crabgrass - Act Now

Crabgrass is a summer annual grass that germinates in the spring, grows in the summer and dies out as it gets cold in the fall. Large crabgrass (also called hairy crabgrass) is a common weed in turfgrass situations, and can germinate from March through early May in North Carolina when soil temperatures reach 53 to 58°F at a 4-inch depth. Germination of this weed is encouraged by the alternating dry and wet conditions at the soil surface in the spring. Stems have a prostrate growth habit and may root at the lower nodes. Large crabgrass is similar to smooth crabgrass. However, the leaf blade of smooth crabgrass is not as hairy.

Crabgrass is best controlled using pre-emergence weed management products. These products form a layer of protection on or just below the surface of the soil. In areas where crabgrass has been a problem, apply a preemergence herbicide in the spring when soil temperatures approach 50°F. This usually corresponds to about the time that forsythia blooms in North Carolina. A second preemergence treatment eight weeks after the initial application may be necessary to maintain season-long control of crabgrass. It is much easier to control crabgrass before you see it than to kill it after it gets established.

Preemergence herbicides available for crabgrass control will usually contain the active ingredients pendimethalin, prodiamine or dithiopyr. Most all of these will have crabgrass preventer in the product name. See the list below for examples.

Pendimethalin

- Scott's Halts or Turf Builder With Halts Crabgrass Preventer
- Lesco Crabgrass Preventer

Dithiopyr

- Vigoro Crabgrass Preventer
- Greenview Crabgrass Control
- Pennington Signature Series Crabgrass Preventer

Prodiamine

- Pennington Crabgrass Preventer with Barricade



Fertilizing Trees and Shrubs

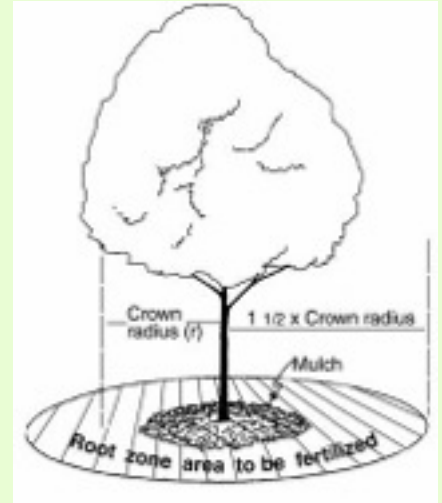
Tree fertilization needs are difficult to determine based upon growth or off-colored foliage. Similar symptoms are also caused by compacted soils, girdling roots, waterlogged sites, air pollution, root diseases, nematodes and salt injury. It's important to use soil testing to determine the fertilizer needs of a tree.

Fertilizer that is broadcasted over the soil surface is the easiest and most effective way to fertilize. Using fertilizer spikes is not recommended. Fertilizer spikes apply too much fertilizer in one small location and not enough in others. Fertilizer should be evenly distributed under the entire canopy, but keep fertilizer 1 ft. away from tree trunks.

Wait until spring to fertilize fall-planted trees and shrubs. Wait 6 to 8 weeks to fertilize plants newly planted in the spring. On established trees fertilize in February or March before new growth begins. Avoid fertilization in late summer (mid-August) since it may stimulate late-season growth that fails to harden off before frost. Do not use slow release fertilizers after July 15. Do not apply fertilizer during periods of drought. For small trees and shrubs, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of 8-8-8 fertilizer (8% nitrogen) per square yard of canopy cover. Do not exceed 1 tablespoon per foot of plant height if using a fertilizer with 10% or more of nitrogen (10-10-10 or 16-4-8). For large trees, measure the diameter of the trunk 4' off the ground and apply 1 pound of 10-10-10 for each inch of diameter. Trees less than 6 inches in diameter only need about 2 pounds of fertilizer. Water each site after applying fertilizer. Trees growing in lawns that are regularly fertilized may not require additional fertilization as long as they exhibit good leaf color and reasonable growth. Fertilizing trees with a turf grass or ground cover understory requires multiple applications at lower rates to lessen the potential for injury to these plants.

When following the recommendations found in a soil sample report, it is important to remember that pounds of fertilizer and pounds of nitrogen are usually two different things. A 40 pound bag of 8-8-8 contains 40 pounds of fertilizer but it only has 3.2 pounds of nitrogen.

For more information about fertilizing trees and shrubs see http://go.ncsu.edu/fertilizing_trees



Apply fertilizer evenly on mulched and unmulched surfaces out to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the crown radius. Diagram courtesy of Clemson Cooperative Extension.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe can be found growing in trees all across the southern US and is easily spotted during the winter. Mistletoe is a small evergreen shrub that is semi-parasitic with tiny yellow flowers that bloom from fall into winter. The plants can reach 3' across and are either male or female. Only the female plants produce the ever familiar white berries. The berries are an excellent source of food for birds in the winter and the mistletoe is dependent upon the birds for dispersing the seeds. The berries are poisonous to humans and should not be eaten, but birds seem to be immune to any toxicity. Mistletoe plants do not have true roots but use extensions called holdfasts to grip tree limbs and steal water and nutrients from its host. Mistletoe does make some of its own food so it may not kill a tree outright but it will weaken the tree over time. Healthy trees can tolerate a few unwanted guests but a heavily infested tree may be seriously harmed when combined with the stress caused by drought, insects, or disease. The best way to fight an infestation of mistletoe is to keep trees healthy. Watering during periods of drought, using mulch, maintaining the proper pH and proper fertilization will help reduce the amount of stress your trees are under. Cutting Mistletoe flush to the branch will not kill it. Infested branches would need to be pruned out, which may not be practical. When handling mistletoe keep in mind that all parts of the plant are poisonous so wash your hands and keep it out of a child's reach.



NENC Daffodil Society



The NENC Daffodil Society will meet on February 28, 2015 for their Spring Meeting and Artistic Design Class. The meeting will start at 10:00 am followed by lunch at 12:00 pm.

An optional Artistic Design Class will be offered at 1:00 pm. Francis Thrash an experienced artistic designer, judge and member of the National Garden Club will teach a class on making artistic arrangements that can be used at home

or at the daffodil show. There is a minimal charge of \$5 per person to attend the class.

The Daffodil Society will hold their annual Daffodil Show on March 28. Anyone can enter daffodils into the show. There will be categories for youth (children), novices, small growers, experienced growers, large and small collections and artistic design. Come enjoy a day of daffodils. Judging will take place in the morning and the show will open to the public at 1:00 pm.

The meeting and show will be held at NC Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center in Barco, NC. For more information contact the show chairman Clay Higgins (252) 491-9268 or clayhiggins@centurylink.net.



All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series

Are you bothered by fire ants? Do you want to know more about beneficial insects? Join us on the first Friday of every month at 2:00 pm for a webinar series called All Bugs Good and Bad. We will meet at NC Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center 120 Community Way in Barco, NC. The webinars are free but seating is limited so please register by calling 252-232-2262.

For more information contact Deborah Foster Deborah_foster@ncsu.edu.

- **March 6** - Fire Ant Management
- **April** - No Webinar
- **May 1** - Beneficial Garden Helpers



2015 Currituck Home, Flower and Garden Show

The Currituck County Master Gardeners invite you to attend this year's Home, Flower and Garden show on Friday April 17th and Saturday April 18th. Doors will open to the public on Friday at 12:00 pm and close at 4:00 pm. Saturday's hours are 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The show's theme this year is "Pollinator Appreciation".

Save the date now so you won't miss this exceptional event, as it will feature a wide variety of fascinating and useful exhibits. There will be garden displays, children's activities and demonstrations designed to enhance your gardening skills. The Currituck Master Gardeners and many other vendors will have plants for sale. Hanging baskets, annuals, herbs, daylilies, and vegetables will be among the many plants that will be available for purchase. Our vendors will offer an extensive array of garden and household items, from garden tools to potting benches, birdhouses, pottery and much, much more.

The Secret Garden, a special attraction for families, will offer activities for adults and children. Youngsters, and the young at heart, can participate in hands-on projects or browse garden literature. The Master Gardeners will hold a silent auction for a wide variety of items both big and small. Master Gardener Volunteers will also be available to answer gardening questions.

The Currituck Home, Flower and Garden show is a "don't miss" event and draws visitors from all around the region. The event is co-sponsored by NC Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center. The show will be held at 120 Community Way in Barco, NC.

For more information about the show or if you would like to be a vendor, contact Deborah Foster 252-232-2262 or deborah_foster@ncsu.edu.



Currituck County Extension
<http://currituck.ces.ncsu.edu/>

For additional information on any of the contents of this newsletter call or email Debbie Foster at **252-232-2262**, deborah_foster@ncsu.edu

Deborah E. Foster

Mission, Vision and Goals

North Carolina Cooperative Extension partners with communities to deliver education and technology that enrich the lives, land and economy of North Carolina.

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the Currituck County Center at 252-232-2262 no later than five business days prior to the event.

Coastal NC Daylily Society

The next meeting for the Coastal NC Daylily Society will be on March 17, 2015 at 10:00 am. They will meet at North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center in Barco, NC. Anyone may attend and new members are always welcome.

The Daylily Society had a great dinner meeting, January 13th, at the Dragon Buffet in Elizabeth City. Everyone in attendance had a chance to socialize, eat all the food they could manage, and win some nice prizes. Vicki Thompson was the big winner of the night, walking away with a "Don's Daylily Divider." The group is working towards the completion of an AHS (American Hemerocalis Society) Daylily Display Garden. The garden will bring national recognition to the society here in Currituck. Come join the fun as they work to reach their goals.



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Currituck
Master Gardeners
on Facebook.**



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