Quick Tips for November

Fruit

- Sanitation is a very important part of managing fruit diseases and pests. Pick up and discard all dropped fruits as they often contain damaging insects that will continue their life cycle underneath your trees.
- Fruit trees should be sprayed after leaf drop with a dormant oil to help control scale, aphids, and mites. Spray all wood thoroughly on a windless day when the temperature is expected to remain above freezing for 24 hours.
- Consider covering your strawberry patch with a piece of floating row cover. This material can help prevent winter injury and promote early growth in the spring.

Ornamentals

- Pansies are a good choice for fall and winter color in the garden. If you want to plant pansies you need to do it very soon to assure that their roots get established for winter. Perennials can still be divided and replanted at this time. As a bonus, pansies often overwinter and provide early spring beauty.
- Don’t begin mulching your perennials until after the first hard freeze - around mid-November. The freezing and thawing of the soil in winter can cause many perennials to heave. Mulching helps moderate temperature fluctuations, thus reducing this problem.
- Cut back and compost most annuals and perennials after a hard frost kills the foliage. You may want to keep some of the flowers and grasses until birds have consumed all of the seeds.

Insects

- Stink bugs, ladybird beetles, boxelder bugs, house flies, elm leaf beetles, and a few other critters may be observed in large numbers congregating inside your home. Cooler fall temperatures are driving them indoors.
Escort these invaders out of your home or vacuum them up, but resist the impulse to spray an insecticide. You can also prevent pests from coming into the house by caulking openings around window and door frames and not storing firewood inside the house.

- Now that it is getting colder, store all pesticides in a place where they will not freeze. Cold temperatures can cause them to become ineffective.
- **Ticks** remain active as long as daytime temperatures are in the upper 30s. Keep grass and weeds mowed and move bird feeders to the edges of your yard to minimize tick problems. The mammals, such as mice, squirrels, raccoons, and deer, that are attracted to the bird seed will also drop ticks in these sites.

**More tips from HGIC**

**Maryland Grows Blog Highlight**

**Does Your Firewood Come with Unexpected Guests?**

Several types of beetles may emerge from firewood that is stored indoors. Check firewood logs for small, round holes in the bark. **Bark beetles** are 1/4 inch or less in length, cylindrical in shape and red, black or brown in color. They may be found around windows, lamps, or woodpiles near the fireplace, especially during the winter.

Larger wood boring beetles may also be seen. They may be metallic wood borers (e.g., **two-lined chestnut borer**, approximately 1/2 inch long, narrow, variously colored, with short antennae) or long-horned beetles (e.g., red-headed ash borer - **pictured right**, 1/2 inch or longer, narrow, variously colored, long antennae and legs, not metallic). Sawdust may be found under the firewood and oval or D-shaped exit holes may be present in the bark of logs.

Beetles may emerge from firewood that has been stored indoors for several days or more. As the wood warms, the beetles assume it is spring and emerge. They may fly around the house or congregate at windows trying to get outdoors.
Vacuum and dispose of the beetles in the trash outdoors. Only store enough firewood in the home for a day or two to prevent the beetles from emerging.

By Mary Kay Malinoski, Extension Specialist, University of Maryland Extension, Home & Garden Information Center

Comment Online

Check it out ↓
Consolidating Our Lawn and Garden Info With Our Food Gardening Info

We’re happy to announce that we’ve been making some organizational changes with the gardening information on our websites! We have consolidated all food gardening information that was previously housed on the Grow It Eat It website so that now it is under the Home and Garden Information Center website umbrella. The GIEI website still is home to Grow It Eat It community and local resources information, but we’ve moved the how-to and plant information to the HGIC website.

This is part of a larger effort to make navigating and searching for specific gardening information more efficient.

Featured Video! ↯
Watch: Soil Testing

Watch on YouTube

Q&A ↯

I didn’t get around to fertilizing my lawn last month. Is it too late to put down fertilizer now? Should I wait until spring?
November 15 is the cutoff date for homeowners to fertilize their lawns in the fall. According to Maryland's Fertilizer Use Act that went into effect in 2013, you may not apply lawn fertilizer between November 15 and March 1. The law also prohibits lawn fertilizer applications within 10 to 15 feet of waterways. These restrictions are intended to help protect the Chesapeake Bay from excess nutrient runoff.

See our Turfgrass Maintenance Calendars for Maryland Lawns to find the maximum allowable rate of fertilizer for your type of lawn. If you do miss the November 15 cutoff date, you can apply fertilizer next spring in late May or early June. (See the Optional Turf Applications schedule in the above-referenced publication.)

Healthy lawns established about ten years or more may only need one nitrogen application per year. Learn more about Maryland's fertilizer use law.

Have a plant or pest question? University of Maryland Extension's experts have the answers! Send in your questions and photos to Ask an Expert.

Have a suggestion for a topic to cover in the HGIC newsletter? Send in your suggestions.

Don't miss it!

Upcoming Events

**Frederick County**
- Nov 11 - Attracting Native Birds
- Nov 18 - Using Plant Materials for Holiday Decor

**Harford County**
- Nov 18 - Deer Resistant Gardening

**Carroll County**
- Dec. 4 - Winter Native Tree Identification - Master Gardener Advanced Training (also open to the public) Learn more and register

Have You Seen This?!

Check out two great shots from HGIC on Instagram

Did you know HGIC can also help identify turtles, frogs, and snakes you find in your landscape? These are North American wood turtles. Photo: C. Carignan
Did you know HGIC can help you with plant identification? We look at leaf arrangement, leaf margins, flowers, and other details. Send high quality photos to extension.umd.edu/learn/ask-gardening. (This is false daisy, Eclipta prostrata.)

Follow us on Instagram for more great images.

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