

# Green Thumb Prints

Newsletter of the Hancock County  
Master Gardener Volunteers

*Gardening is our Passion . . . Education is our Purpose*

**August 2018**

Next Meeting: August 9, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

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## Coordinator's Corner

Many thanks to Dick Deerhake and Lyn Maa for opening their home to us again for our summer picnic. It was a great evening and we certainly appreciated the good meats and hospitality provided by Dick and Lyn.

Look for Ann Woolum's article in the Courier on August 25. Thanks also to Linda Casey for her informative article on mulch in July. I really appreciate each of you who volunteer to write these articles for the Courier. I also greatly appreciate the editing skills of Laurie Pressel. We get so much good publicity from them and they seem to be so appreciated.

We will be having the same big booth this year at the Hancock County Fair as we had last year. The Fair runs from Wednesday, August 29 through Monday, September 3. Please sign up at the August 9 meeting to help work in the booth. The Fair Booth is one of our best opportunities to meet people and to share our knowledge. We receive many kudos for the work we do at the fair.

There will be a judged flower show at the fair on Friday, August 31, for dahlias, roses, zinnias, marigolds and all celosias. There will also be a judged flower arrangement show at the fair this year with entries in four different categories. Please consider showing some of your flowers this year and putting together an arrangement to show your creativity. I will be helping to set up the entries into each category and if you would like to help and earn volunteer hours, join me at the Grange Building around 9:00 am on the day of the show.

We will be reviewing our new MGV organization at the August 9 meeting. Please send your comments to Ed Lentz prior to the meeting so we can have a good open discussion on ways in which we can improve our operations.

Hopefully, each of you are finding many opportunities to share your expertise this summer and remember to read the BYGL each week to keep up-to-date on what's happening in the landscape.

*Bill*

# ***HANCOCK COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS***

## **MEETING MINUTES**

July 2018

Because the July meeting was the potluck, there are no minutes.

### Next Meeting:

August 9, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

## **Calendar of Events**

April 2018

## **2018 MGV Calendar of Events (August)**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>COST</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CONTACT</b>
<b>Wednesday, August 1</b>	<b>Green Industry Summer Session</b>	<b>11:30 - 4:00</b>	<b>\$30</b>	<b>Owens Community College Perrysburg Heritage Hall</b>	<b>Plants, Pests, Practices</b>	<b>419-578-6783 stone.91@osu.edu</b>
<b>Saturday, August 4</b>	<b>Snyder Park Gardens &amp; Arboretum</b>	<b>9:00 - 3:00</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Snyder Park 1900 Park St., Springfield</b>	<b>Jubilee</b>	<b>937-521-3860 clark.osu.edu</b>

<b>Saturday, August 4</b>	<b>Trip to Toledo Botanical Gardens, Schmucker's Restaurant, &amp; Toledo Museum of Art</b>	<b>Meet at OSUE Office at 8:40</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Toledo</b>	<b>Tour of Gardens, Presentation on Wild Ones at Museum, Various</b>	<b>Ann Woolum</b>
<b>Thursday, August 9</b>	<b>Brown Bag will be our 6 month review</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Come prepared. Review Bill Jones' 7/28 e- mail for topics of conversation &amp; evaluation</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Thursday, August 9</b>	<b>Refreshments for MGV Meeting</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Ann Woolum &amp; the Leindeckers will provide refreshments</b>	<b>Ann, John, Linda</b>
<b>Thursday, August 9</b>	<b>MGV Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Bill Jones / Marilyn Beltz</b>
<b>Saturday, August 25</b>	<b>Courier Article</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>The Courier</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Ann Woolum</b>
<b>August 28 - September 4</b>	<b>Hancock County Fair</b>	<b>Various</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Fairgrounds</b>	<b>See Karl Farwig's sign up schedule</b>	<b>Karl Farwig</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>No MGV Meeting</b>				<b>No meeting due to fair</b>	

<b>Tuesday, September 4</b>	<b>Greater Bluffton Garden Club</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Bluffton Library</b>	<b>Fall Garden Cleanup &amp; Pruning</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
<b>Monday, September 17</b>	<b>Library Presentation by Tim Brugeman</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Seasonal Color Landscapes</b>	<b>Tim Brugeman</b>
<b>Saturday, September 22</b>	<b>Courier Article</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>The Courier</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Cheryl Miller</b>
<b>September 28 - 29</b>	<b>2018 State MGVC Conference</b>	<b>Fri &amp; Sat</b>		<b>Hamilton County Cincinnati</b>	<b>Rooted in Ohio various topics</b>	<b>go.osu.edu/2018State MGVConference</b>
<b>Tuesday, October 2</b>	<b>Greater Bluffton Garden Club</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Bluffton Library</b>	<b>Fall Bulbs &amp; Seasonal Color</b>	<b>Tim Brugeman</b>
<b>Thursday, October 11</b>	<b>Brown Bag Presentation</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Results of 2018 Phenology Garden</b>	<b>Bill Jones &amp; Rose Morrison</b>
<b>Thursday, October 11</b>	<b>Refreshments for MGV Meeting</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Barb Phillips, Barb Sherman, &amp; Linda Laux will provide refreshments</b>	<b>Barb, Barb, Linda</b>
<b>Thursday, October 11</b>	<b>MGV Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Bill Jones / Marilyn Beltz</b>
<b>Saturday, October 20</b>	<b>Courier Article</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>The Courier</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>Laurie Pressel</b>

<b>Monday, October 22</b>	<b>Library Presentation</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>To Be Determined</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Thursday, November 8</b>	<b>Brown Bag Presentation</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Flora of New Zealand</b>	<b>Doris Salis</b>
<b>Thursday, November 8</b>	<b>Refreshments for MGV Meeting</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Karla Dennis &amp; Lauri Pressel will provide refreshments</b>	<b>Karla, Lauri</b>
<b>Thursday, November 8</b>	<b>MGV Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OSUE Office</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Bill Jones / Marilyn Beltz</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 14</b>	<b>Fostoria Garden Club</b>	<b>Noon</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Kaubisch Library, Fostoria</b>	<b>Fall &amp; Spring Seasonal Color</b>	<b>Tim Brugeman</b>
<b>Saturday, November 24</b>	<b>Courier Article</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>The Courier</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Writer Needed!</b>
<b>Sunday, November 25</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>2:00 - 4:00</b>		<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>
<b>Monday, November 26</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>6:30 AM</b>		<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>
<b>Tuesday, November 27</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>6:30 AM</b>		<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 28</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>6:30 AM</b>		<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>

<b>Sunday, December 2</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>2:00- 4:00</b>		<b>Hancock County Library</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>
<b>Thursday, December 6</b>	<b>Wreath Class</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>		<b>Upper Church</b>	<b>Wreath making class</b>	<b>Marilynn Beltz</b>
<b>Thursday, December 13</b>	<b>Christmas Potluck</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Bring a dish</b>		<b>MGV Christmas Party</b>	<b>Barb Sherman, Marge Miller, Marilyn Beltz</b>
<b>Saturday, December 22</b>	<b>Courier Article</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>The Courier</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Writer Needed!</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 13, 2019</b>	<b>Fostoria Garden Club (Carol Kinn)</b>	<b>Noon</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Kaubisch Library, Fostoria</b>	<b>Spring Garden Makeovers</b>	<b>Need Volunteer Contact Tim Brugeman</b>

# Dahlias-Flower of the Week

Amy Stone



Dahlias can be a nice annual addition into Ohio gardens. Although a perennial in its native range in Mexico and Central Ohio, they are considered annuals in Ohio. With a little extra work the tubers can be lifted in the fall, stored over the winter, and planted the following spring.

Dahlias come in a wide variety of flower shapes, sizes and colors. The plants are beginning to enter into their showy season where flowers bloom now into fall. Plants can grow from 12 inches to topping out at 6 feet. Taller plants will need to be staked. The variety of dahlias available can become almost addicting leaving gardeners wanting just one more. Each plant brings different attributes into the garden and can be part of a dahlia collection, or planted among other plants in the garden.

Hybrid dahlias have been organized into different classifications or groups and include:

- single
- anemone



- collarette
- waterlily
- decorative
- fall
- pompon
- cactus
- semi-cactus
- miscellaneous

With that many selections, there is something for everyone. Everyone that has sun, as the plants prefer lots of sun! Dahlias can make excellent cut flowers and will attract butterflies.

Take time this season to check out dahlias in gardens near you and plan your additions for next season.

### **More Information**

Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kemp...>

Dahlia FactSheet Iowa State

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Growing-Dahlias-PDF>

The American Dahlia Society

<https://dahlia.org/about/welcome/>

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# Basswood Leafminer Damage Becoming Evident

Joe Boggs , OSU Extension

**Basswood Leafminer Adult**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Damage  
American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

BYGL readers should be familiar with the Basswood Leafminer (*Baliosus nervosus*; previously *Baliosus ruber*). We've reported on the skeletonizing and leafmining activities of this native beetle on its namesake host, American basswood (*Tilia americana*) for years.

High populations cause entire basswood trees to become reddish-brown. Although the leaf damage is just now becoming noticeable, travelers on the northern portion of I-75 in Ohio will soon be treated to "flaming" basswoods gracing the woodlots along the route. Peak color usually occurs in mid-to-late August.



**Basswood Leafminer Damage  
American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Adult**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Damage  
American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Damage  
American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

The leafminer is most often associated with American basswood (a.k.a. American linden) as well as other members of the *Tilia* genus such as little leaf linden (*T. cordata*) and silver linden (*T. tomentosa*). However, the scientific literature notes the beetle may attack a wide range of hosts including birch (*Betula* spp.), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), American hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), maple (*Acer* spp.), oak (*Quercus* spp.), willow (*Salix* spp.) and some fruit trees such as apple (*Malus* spp.) and cherry (*Prunus* spp.). There was even a paper published in 1982 assessing the damage potential to soybeans.

The basswood leafminer is closely related to the locust leafminer (*Odontota dorsalis*) which can cause black locusts to become "flamed" in late summer. Both belong to the leaf beetle family Chrysomelidae as well as the subfamily Cassidinae (Tortoise Beetles and the Hispines) and the tribe Chalepini. Both beetles were once grouped in the now defunct Hispine sub-family which is why the older literature refers to basswood and locust leafminers as "hispid beetles." Hispids share similar life cycles and life styles including adults feeding as leaf skeletonizers and larvae feeding as leafminers.

Basswood leafminer adults are wedge-shaped and around 1/4" long; females are slightly larger than the males. There is a single generation per season; however, as with the locust leafminer, adults are present at two different times during the growing season. Adults spend the winter in leaf litter beneath host trees. They emerge in the spring to feed as skeletonizers on newly expanding leaves. The damage may be noticeable when viewed up close; however, it's seldom severe enough to cause entire trees to change color.

Eggs are laid in June with females inserting single eggs beneath the upper epidermis at the edge of an area where they have skeletonized. The resulting grub-like larvae feed as leafminers between the upper and lower epidermis. The blotch-like leaf mines contain a single larva at first, but may eventually house several larvae as mines coalesce. Pupation occurs within the leaf mines and new adults emerge in August. The leaf feeding damage from this new crop of adults combined with the larval leafmining activity is responsible for the annual flaming of basswoods.



**Basswood Leafminer Blotch Mines**  
**Little Leaf Linden**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Damage**  
**Little Leaf Linden**



**Basswood Leafminer**  
**Blotch Mines**

**Basswood Leafminer**  
**Adult Damage**

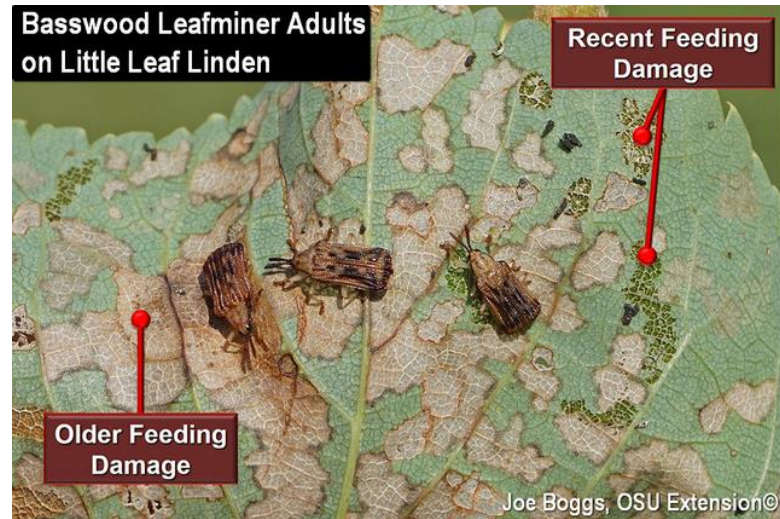
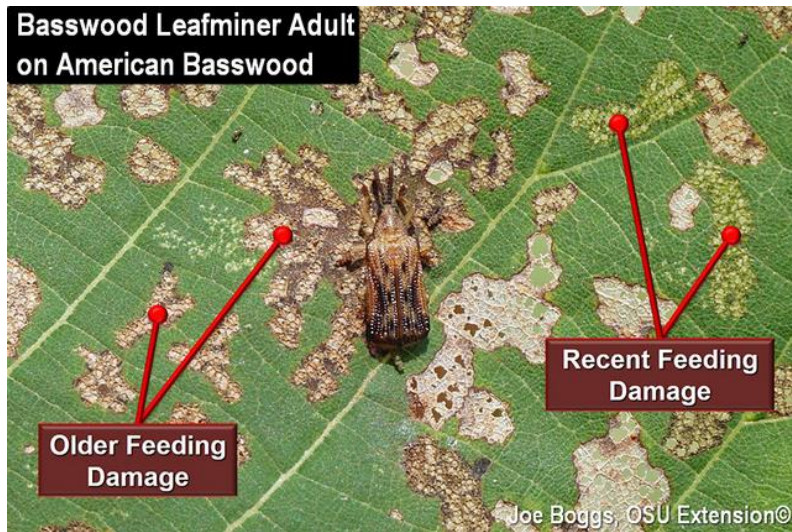
Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer Blotch Mine**  
**Note: Three Larvae in the Mine**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

Although the beetles are considered leaf skeletonizers, their damage is most accurately described as "surface skeletonizing" or scarifying. The small adults have mandibles that are too small to chew completely through the leaf; they can only remove the leaf surface. Adults may feed on the upper or lower leaf surfaces. The epidermis on the opposite side of the damage dehydrates and degrades leaving behind a fine-textured matrix of skeleton-like leaf veins.



This is unlike the coarse skeletonizing caused by Japanese beetles, which use their much larger mandibles to consume everything but the larger leaf veins. Of course, as I observed last Friday in northwest Ohio, both the leafminer and Japanese beetles can be found on the same trees causing leaf damage. I also found bagworms adding to the leaf carnage; a reminder that trees seldom deal with one insect pest at a time.





**Japanese Beetles with  
Leafminer Damage  
on Little Leaf Linden**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Basswood Leafminer  
& Japanese Beetle  
on Little Leaf Linden**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Japanese Beetle with  
Leafminer Damage  
on American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

**Bagworm and Basswood Leafminer  
on American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©

At one time, I was perplexed as to why it seemed basswood leafminer was confined to the northern part of Ohio; I've only seen it once on a small basswood in the southwest part of the state. I now believe the reason may be connected to the "preferred" host status of American basswood. Although the leafminer may attack a wide range of hosts, I'm speculating that high populations are most closely

associated with American basswood. The native range for this tree includes all of Ohio; however, as the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, notes on their website, "In Ohio, it is found in the northern and western portions of the state."

### **Basswood Leafminer Damage American Basswood**



Joe Boggs, OSU Extension©



# Perennials for Shady Gardens

By: [Rosie Lerner](#), Purdue University Extension



Variegated Solomon's seal is a well-behaved, shade-loving plant.  
Photo provided by Rosie Lerner, Purdue Extension.

Plants differ in their adaptability to different growing conditions. Sunshine is one of the most significant factors. We often think of light as being either sunny or shady, but, in fact, there are many “shades” of light in between. Your garden may experience light shade, such as that filtered through an overhanging tree; dense shade, such as that found in woodlands; or intermittent shade from an object, such as a building that blocks the sun for only a portion of the day.

Some sites vary in their light exposure, depending on the season. Wooded areas usually have much more sunlight in winter and early spring when the trees are bare than in spring and summer when foliage blocks the light.

Most horticultural plants perform best in full sun but may be able to tolerate semi-shady conditions. Trimming nearby trees and shrubs may help increase the light. Some plants may produce lots of lush foliage in the shade but produce few or no flowers unless adequate sunlight is available. Thankfully, a number of plants thrive in the shade.

You don't have to live in the tropics to have a stunning foliage display in your shade garden. Midwest gardeners have a wonderful foliage palette that can fill in areas among other perennials, or even star as the focal point. Some perennials have both attractive flowers and foliage, so they provide season-long interest.

Another important factor to consider is soil moisture and drainage. Plants vary in their requirement/tolerance of drought, wet feet and soil quality. Soils can be wet with good drainage or be wet because of poor drainage; the latter is a more difficult situation. It's wise to address the drainage issue before planting.

The following lists suggest a selection of plants for part to full shade, but be sure to do the rest of your homework in matching species to site conditions. Note that some entries appear under both flowers and foliage lists.

### **Perennial Flowers**

- *Aquilegia sp.* (columbine)
- *Astilbe x arendsii* (Astilbe x arendsii)
- *Bergenia cordifolia* (heartleaf bergenia, pigsqueak)
- *Brunnera macrophylla* (Siberian bugloss)
- *Darmera peltata* (umbrella plant)
- *Hosta sp.* (hosta, plantain lily)
- *Lamium maculatum* (spotted deadnettle)
- *Lobelia cardinalis* (cardinal flower)
- *Lobelia siphilitica* (blue cardinal flower)
- *Mertensia virginica* (Virginia bluebells)
- *Polemonium caeruleum* (Jacob's ladder)
- *Polygonatum odoratum* '*Variegatum*' (variegated Solomon's seal)
- *Primula sp.* (primrose)
- *Pulmonaria saccharata* (lungwort, Bethlehem sage)
- *Pulsatilla vulgaris* (Pulsatilla vulgaris)
- *Rodgersia aesculifolia* (Rodgersia)
- *Sanguinaria canadensis* (bloodroot)
- *Thalictrum aquilegiifolium* (meadow rue)
- *Viola sp.* (violets)

### **Perennials Grown Primarily for Foliage**

- *Asarum canadense* (wild ginger)
- *Athyrium filix-femina* (common lady fern)
- *Athyrium niponicum* var. *Pictum* (Japanese painted fern)

- *Brunnera macrophylla* (Siberian bugloss)
- *Darmara peltata* (umbrella plant)
- *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' (Japanese forest grass)
- *Hosta* sp. (hosta, plantain lily)
- *Lamium maculatum* (spotted deadnettle)
- *Matteuccia struthiopteris* (ostrich fern)
- *Osmundastrum cinnamomeum* (cinnamon fern)
- *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' (variegated Solomon's seal)
- *Polystichum* sp. (Christmas and Holly ferns)
- *Pulmonaria saccharata* (lungwort)
- *Rodgersia aesculifolia* (Rodgersia)



Pasque flower performs well with morning sun and afternoon shade.

# Purdue Landscape Report on Tree Staking



*Figure 1. Properly staked tree adds support.*

## **Stake or not to stake, that is the question!**

"No," is the likely answer to these common questions about post-planting tree care. Trees establish themselves quite well in normal situations. Support systems such as staking and guying are, in most cases, unnecessary and can even be detrimental. Movement caused by the wind is crucial to help saplings develop into strong, structurally balanced trees. However, in unusual conditions, staking, guying, or a similar system may be needed to hold trees upright until adequate

root growth anchors them firmly in the soil. When necessary, the support system must be installed properly and removed at the appropriate time to prevent damage.

### **When to Stake Trees**

When stakes are needed, timing depends on the environment and the type of tree.

- Bare-root trees and container-grown trees
- Large evergreen trees with high wind exposure
- Open sites exposed to strong winds
- Taller trees with undersized root balls
- Trees in areas with high rates of vandalism
- Threat of mechanical damage

Improperly staked trees suffer from poor development such as decreased trunk diameters and smaller root systems - and may be unable to stay upright after you take the supports away. Often trunk tissue suffers from rubbing and may even be girdled by support materials. Also, due to poor development and taper, previously supported trunks are more likely to break off in high winds or blow over after stakes are removed.

### **Proper Methods and Materials of Guying and Staking**

Staking and guying a tree trunk to keep it upright can be a necessary, temporary support system, but does not compensate for poor root development and establishment long-term.

*Guying* is temporary and typically used on larger trees that are transplanted balled-and-burlapped. Three points of attachment provide the best support for these large-trees.

*Staking* connects the trunk to a nearby steel or wooden post. This is a common approach on smaller trees or containerized tree stock.

*Underground stabilizing systems* are also effective and economical for stabilizing the root balls on larger balled-and-burlapped trees. There are several commercial anchor systems available.

The cardinal sins of support include: staking trees too high, too tightly, and for too long which all cause tree damage. Improper staking can cause stem abrasions and trunk girdling. Review the anchor, attachment point, and tension on a regular basis, adjusting as needed to make certain the supports are effective and not damaging the tree. If a tree is supported, the ties and guys should be removed as soon as feasible, usually no later than after one growing season or one

year.

For more information see Purdue extension publication, [Tree Support Systems](#).

**Related Sources:**

[Stake or not to stake, that is the question?!](#), The Landscape Report

[Tree Support Systems](#), The Education Store

[Planting and Transplanting Landscape Trees and Shrubs](#), The Education Store

[Latest Issue of the Purdue Landscape Report](#), Got Nature Post

[Plant for the Sun!](#), Got Nature Post

[Lindsey Purcell](#), Urban Forestry Specialist

Purdue Forestry and Natural Resources

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## IT'S TIME TO.....

By: [Rosie Lerner](#), Purdue University Extension Office

### HOME (Houseplants and indoor activities)

- Take cuttings from annual garden plants such as impatiens, coleus, geraniums and wax begonias to overwinter indoors. Root the cuttings in media such as moist vermiculite, perlite, peat moss or potting soil, rather than water.
- Order spring-flowering bulbs for fall planting.
- Cut flowers from the garden to bring a little color indoors or dry for everlasting arrangements.

### YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Check trees and shrubs that have been planted in recent years for girdling damage by guy wires, burlap or twine.
- Don't fertilize woody plants now. It stimulates late growth that will not have time to harden off properly before winter.
- Hand-prune and destroy bagworms, fall webworms and tent caterpillars.

- Pears are best ripened off the tree, so do not wait for the fruit to turn yellowish on the tree. Harvest pears when color of fruit changes – usually from a dark green to a lighter green – and when the fruit is easily twisted and removed from the spur.
- Prune out and destroy the raspberry and blackberry canes that bore fruits this year. They will not produce fruit again next year, but they may harbor insect and disease organisms.
- If weather turns dry, keep newly established plants well-watered. New plants should receive 1 to 1.5 inches of water every week to 10 days.
- Begin seeding new lawns or bare spots in established lawns in mid-August through mid-September.

## **GARDEN (Vegetables, small fruits, and flowers)**

- Keep the garden well-watered during dry weather and free of weeds, insects and disease.
- Complete fall garden planting by direct-seeding carrots, beets, kohlrabi, kale and snap beans early this month. Lettuce, spinach, radishes and green onions can be planted later in August and early September. Don't forget to thin seedlings to appropriate spacing as needed.
- Harvest onions after the tops yellow and fall, then cure them in a warm, dry, well-ventilated area. The necks should be free of moisture when fully cured in about a week's time.
- Harvest potatoes after the tops yellow and die. Potatoes also need to be cured before storage.
- Pick beans, tomatoes, peppers and squash often to encourage further production.
- Harvest watermelon when several factors indicate ripeness – the underside ground spot turns from whitish to creamy yellow; the tendril closest to the melon turns brown and shrivels; the rind loses its gloss and appears dull; and the melon produces a dull thud, rather than a ringing sound when thumped.
- Harvest sweet corn when kernels are plump and ooze a milky juice when punctured with your fingernail. If the liquid is watery, you're too early; if the kernels are doughy, you're too late.