

Fall 2012



From the Ground Up



There are plenty of reasons to be out in the garden this fall.

1. Remove any weeds which may have germinated late in the season and invaded the soil near or over top a perennial. Left unchecked, robust weeds can kill the perennial underneath.
2. Surround each perennial or shrub with a generous supply of compost. This adds organic matter to the soil and assists in promoting a healthy environment for beneficial soil microorganisms. You may also want to add bonemeal or a high phosphorus fertilizer.
3. Trees, shrubs and perennials can all be planted in the fall.
4. Transplanting and dividing plants is ideally done early in the fall. The soil is generally easy to work with and the active root growth of the plant will quickly repair any root injury which occurs during the digging process.
5. Bulbs can be planted as you divide and transplant perennials. Consider the flowering time and colour of the perennial and plant a bulb which would be a good companion. For example ornamental onions are a perfect companion to artemesia or crocus & daffodils with evening primrose.
6. It is very important to mow the grass short for the final cut of the year. Long grass promotes snow mould as well as providing a home for mice, voles or moles. Short grass combined with a late season application of fall fertilizer such as 12-3-18 will do an excellent job of guaranteeing you a healthy lawn in the spring.



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TREES, SHRUBS AND EVERGREENS!!



Our “Spotlight On” page provides information on a different tree, shrub and perennial in each addition of “From the Ground Up”

Jacob’s Ladder

Polemonium ‘Stairway to Heaven’

This herbaceous perennial has a mounded form. It features beautiful spikes of lavender flowers rising above the foliage from mid-spring to mid-summer. It has pinnately compound leaves which are variegated blue green in the centre and light yellow edges. It prefers full sun to part shade and evenly moist soil. It will attain a height of 40cm and spread 30cm. It is hardy to zone 3



Little Lamb Hydrangea

Hydrangea paniculata ‘Little Lamb’

This compact shrub features bold conical white flower clusters at the ends of the branches from mid summer to late fall. It will perform well in sun to shade as long as it is not allowed to dry out. The flower heads can be left in the garden over the winter to provide some interest in the winter landscape. They are also good as cuts. Hardy to zone 3, this shrub grows to about 1m. in height and spread.

Siberian Larch

Larix siberica

This tree is a conifer that loses its foliage each fall. It has soft green needle-like foliage which turns golden yellow in the fall before it drops from the tree. It does best in full sun to part shade and prefers moist soil. It will grow to 18m tall and 7.5m wide and is hardy to zone 1.



Common Gardening Questions

Are organic pesticides less toxic than synthetic ones?

Natural or synthetic pesticides can do more harm than good if they are misused. Whenever possible it is best to go with the least toxic control option available. Many pesticides can pose serious health complications for people and pets as well as eliminate beneficial organisms. Carefully read and follow label directions concerning use and storage of all pesticide products.

When it comes to fertilizers and pesticides, is more better?

Fertilizers can raise salt levels in the soil to toxic levels, burning the roots and stunting plant growth. Pesticides can have similar detrimental effects on plants if overused. Much research and testing goes into the development of garden products to provide the best result so using the exacted recommended application is the best practise.

Do drought tolerant plants have to be watered?

All plants need to be watered to become established. Many plants can survive an average summer without supplemental watering after they are well rooted but they are not drought tolerant the first year. After that they will pretty much look after themselves but most would benefit from a monthly soaking if Mother Nature does not oblige.



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Pesticide and Chemical Storage

- Store chemicals in their original containers: information about how to use the product, how much to use and what to do in case of accidental ingestion is on the label.
- Store chemicals out of direct sunlight because some are photodegradable, which means they can break down when exposed to sunlight. The chemicals could lose their effectiveness or possibly become more toxic.
- Store certain chemicals at or near room temperature, as some can lose their effectiveness if exposed to temperatures that are too high or too low. Do not allow liquid products to freeze. Other chemicals may release harmful vapors if stored at high temperatures, even if the container has a tight-fitting lid. In some cases inhaling the vapors of a toxic chemical can be even more dangerous than absorbing the product through the skin.
- Store chemicals in well-ventilated areas and away from food products, including pet food. Contamination could occur even if the chemical is not in direct contact with the food.
- Never mix chemicals.
- Store chemicals in a locked cabinet or otherwise out of the reach of children.

Pesticide and Chemical Disposal

- Never dispose of chemicals in your household trash; they will pollute the landfill.
- Never pour chemicals of any kind down a storm drain. Doing so will ultimately contaminate a creek, river or lake downstream.
- Never pour chemicals of any kind down a household sink, especially in homes that use septic systems.
- Take all chemicals to an approved disposal site. Contact the local landfill for information on disposing of chemicals in your area.

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