

Gardener's Corner May 2024

Cicadas are coming! Cicadas are coming! And they should be here any day now. To find out more about them and their impact in Missouri, read this article from the **University of Missouri Extension (MU Extension)** service: <https://extension.missouri.edu/news/billions-of-cicadas-bring-buzzy-magic-to-missouri-in-2024>. **MU Extension** even points you to a map that will let you report and follow the cicadas emergence: <https://cicadasafari.org/> More about their effect on trees and plants from the **Missouri Department of Conservation**, <https://mdc.mo.gov/trees-plants/diseases-pests/periodical-cicadas>

While we're waiting for the hoards, here are some tips and tasks from the **Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG)**. Azaleas should be fertilized after blooming with an acid slow-release fertilizer if soil test indicates. Scotch and Mugo pines should be monitored for pine sawfly. Pines and junipers should be checked for tip blight, some types of which are common in St Louis. Prune infected branches with Kabatina blight and spray fungicide on those branches with Sphaeropsis tip blight early this month. Destroy eastern tent caterpillars and forest tent caterpillars after pruning them off.

This is also the time to watch for boxwood leaf miner and psyllid. Again, prune affected branches and dispose of leaves before adults emerge. Rose slugs (Hymenoptera) may be feeding on your roses this month. Damage will first show as tan spots, and as the larvae grow, holes will appear as the damage becomes heavier. Euonymus and other rose family shrubs may become infected with crown galls. Prune out infected branches, being sure to sterilize equipment after each cut, and/or destroy the infected plant.

As for annuals and perennials, don't prematurely remove spring bulb foliage or next year's flower production will decline. Allow the foliage to die down naturally. Once foliage has died, bulbs can be moved or divided as needed. Begin planting non-hardy bulbs such as gladiolus, caladiums, dahlias, cannas, and elephant ears as the ground warms and night temperatures consistently rise to 50°F or higher.

You can begin planting warm-season annuals around Mother's Day. Indoor plants can safely be moved outdoors around the same time and placed in bright, indirect light or direct morning sun. Some perennials such as penstemon, monarda and asters can be pruned to keep them from falling over before they bloom.

If you are looking to make some design changes, **Garden Design** has an interesting article about creating English Gardens. There are many ideas here that can be incorporated into your existing gardens to make them even more exciting. Find it at: https://www.gardendesign.com/english/?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=English-Garden-Design-4-25-24

Some virtual programs of interest in May are the following:

Tuesday, May 7 – 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. *Summer Crops and Cover Crops* presented by **Seed St. Louis** through the **St. Louis County Public Library**. Discover how to beat the heat of summer gardening and learn techniques that will keep your tomatoes and other summer crops flourishing. Register at: <https://slcl.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=362278>

Thursday, May 9 – 11:00 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Smithsonian Garden's Garden Talk** *Cultivating Wakandan Resilience: Afrofuturism & Gardening* 11:00 a.m. with speaker: Colah B. Tawkin. In this exciting webinar, we explore the fascinating intersection of Afrofuturism and gardening, drawing inspiration from the Afrofuturistic vision portrayed in Marvel's Black Panther. Register at: https://smithsonian.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_cFP51W1XQoapsyLA9v-aGA#/registration