

THE SPARTANBURG MEN'S GARDEN CLUB
AFFILIATED WITH THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUBS OF AMERICA
Spartanburg, South Carolina
"EVERY GARDENER A MEMBER"

GARDENETTES

October-November 1965

Fellow Gardeners:

At the October meeting of the Men's Garden Club the following Officers and Directors were elected to lead you during the year 1966:

Sidney Moorhead - President	J. J. Burnett, Vice-President
Bob Hicklin - 1st Vice-President	S. Frank Logan - Membership
George Drummond - Programs	Cecil Haney - Treasurer
Charles Lea - Secretary	J. Sidney Dunlap, Jr. - Asst. Secretary

Directors in addition to the elected Officers:

W. M. Walker	John P. Carlton	Jim Burnett
W. O. Ezell	John Peduzzi	John Cantrell
Paul Cook		Bob Hines

The November meeting will be held in the Civic Room of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association at 7:30 P.M., November 22, 1965. The Directors have decided to have a HOME COMING and invite every member of the Club to be present for this night. A good program has been arranged which we believe you will enjoy. Some of you have not been able to attend any meeting this year. This is an opportunity for all of us to get together. This will be the last meeting during 1965. We will have no meeting in December.

The program is as follows, and we know you will agree with me that it is a good program, so come and make it a real HOME COMING:

Selection and Planting of Roses	- John Cantrell
Selection and Planting of Camellias	- Thomas B. Butler
Selection and Planting of Bulbs and Perennials	- W. O. Ezell
Selection and Planting of Azaleas	- Wm. M. Walker
Selection and Planting of Shrubs	- Robert Hines

Again the two Johns have good selections of the Yard-of-the Month, and again we want to thank the Spartanburg Journal for the fine pictures of the yards.

If you didn't attend the picnic at Mr. and Mrs. John Cantrell's Mountain home last month during that wonderful harvest moon weather, you certainly missed one of the best meetings ever held by the Club, and we are indebted to the Cantrells for their fine hospitality in inviting us to come. We look forward each fall to this visit and the picnic that follows.

The October meeting was auction night, and although the attendance was poor, there were plenty of plants and the bidding was good. The Treasury was upped \$28.00 and a few cents.

THINGS TO DO NOW
By Dr. Fred J. Nisbet

Continue planting evergreens this month when the soil is warm and moist and the nights cool.

If some woody plants are starting late growth pull away the mulch to dry the soil and use a "small grain" fertilizer (0-12-12) to help harden them off.

It is not too early to start your autumn clean-up. Keep at it until winter is really here. There is no better way to keep down pests in the future. Weeds that have seeded and all plants infected with diseases or insects should be pulled and burned. Use only clean materials in compost piles.

It is not too late to start another compost pile. Leaves are abundant, annuals and tops of perennials, lawn clippings and plants from the vegetable garden are all good. Keep the stack as straight sided as possible and "dish" the top so that water will go through the pile, not off of it.

A rose bed for fall planting should be prepared now, giving ample time for settling. Make it deep, at least 16 inches, and work in a liberal amount of superphosphate in the bottom. Use plenty of humus, compost, peat moss or rotted manure, and good top soil. Add sharp, coarse, clean sand if your soil is heavy. If you can't get this kind of sand (and we can't here in Tryon, N.C.) use the coarse "horticultural grade" of Perlite. This keeps the soil more open and promotes better growth. (If your garden center or nurseryman doesn't have it, try your building supply dealer; he can get it).

Make a check list of the most brilliant colored fall foliage and keep it handy for planning future plantings. A similar list of well colored fruits is equally effective as a guide to autumn color.

Keep after your sanitation clean-up! If you grow peonies wait until the foliage is brown, then cut off at the soil line and dust the soil with a good fungicide.

As long as rose foliage is active and the days warm, maintain your dust or spray schedule to keep the plants healthy and vigorous.

As annuals are taken out you can plant winter rye in their place to improve soil structure. Turn under in the spring when the leaves are eight inches high or four weeks before planting, whichever comes first. A good fertilization before turning hastens breakdown of the green tissue and adds fertility at the same time.

In the Piedmont, this is the time to plant evergreens. Allow at least four, better six, weeks before freeze-up for the plants to become well established. Water thoroughly every four to eight days.

Many gardeners work bone meal into the soil when planting bulbs. Better results come from using superphosphate. Plant all bulbs early enough so that they can make good root growth before very cold weather. Try a few new kinds each year. This adds to the thrill of waiting for blooms and keeps your plantings from becoming stereotyped. Scillas are especially fine for "woodland gardens" or where there is light overhead shade. Why do we use so few of them?

If you grow many lilies keep away from tulips. The "fire blight" of tulips will infect the lilies eventually, killing many and stunting most of the rest.

As tools are put away for the winter use bad weather times for a thorough clean-up and sharpening. If storage is damp, coat all metal with a light film of oil or one of the various preservatives.

WETTER WATER AIDS LAWNS

Wetting agents used as detergents revolutionized dish washing and now bid fair to make their mark in the home lawn field. Before you start spreading detergent suds over your lawn, a word of caution.

THE MATTER OF IONS. The two basic types of wetting agents are classed as ionic and non-ionic. Most detergent washing preparations are ionic, forming charged particles when in solution. As an illustration, common table salt when dissolved in water groups into sodium ions and chloride ions.

Non-ionic materials such as common table sugar do not form charged particles when in solution; dissolved in water, sugar remains as the sugar molecule with no charged particles.

The ionic wetting agents are erratic when applied to soil. The greater chemical activity of ions causes them to combine with soil matter and lose their identity.

On the other hand, the non-ionics are inert and therefore retain their identification as wetting agents.

Ionics have been found to be toxic to plants and micro-organisms.

NOTHING NEW. Non-ionic wetting agents have been used by professional golf greenskeepers for several years. These golf course superintendents and athletic field turfmen have found that non-ionic wetting agents are not toxic to plants and soil bacteria when properly applied, promote micro-organism activity and are consistently beneficial.

It was noted by these pros that lawn areas treated with a wetting agent were markedly denser, faster growing, required fewer waterings, and had better color and root structure.

Wetting agents are not to be confused with soil conditioners. The material of the wetting agent is held in the soil but in no way changes it. The change is in the physical properties of the water itself. The wetting agent lowers the surface and "interfacial" tensions, thus permitting freer movement of water and deeper penetration.

Most gardeners have faced the problem of wetting dry peat moss. Water will stand on this material in much the same way it behaves on the proverbial duck's back. Treated with a wetting agent, peat moss will absorb water quickly, evenly, and will not float away.

When applied to a home lawn, a wetting agent reduces the frequency of waterings. Aside from cutting down on labor, there is a pleasant reduction in the water bill. By allowing water to penetrate deeper into the soil, the root system is improved, thus strengthening the lawn and giving it a greater ability to survive periods of drouth.

NUTRIENT DIVIDENDS. Soil nutrients are available to plants only when they are in solution. It follows then that a deeper, more even water distribution will take more nutrients into solution and make them more readily available to the grass roots.

If these benefits of wetting agents are so great, why haven't they made a bigger splash in the home lawn area? Basically, it is a matter of distribution. These agents are not generally available to the individual who fights the grass war alone. Golf course supply houses stock these agents, but the container sizes run more toward quantities for football fields or baseball diamonds than the average lawn. One organization, Aquatrols Corporation of America, Camden, N.J., offers their product, Aquagro, by mail in one-quart cans. A quart will treat 4,000 square feet.

Perhaps soon, wetting agents will be available at most garden centers for individual use and there will be a significant breakthrough in home lawn care.

A TURF MAN'S LAWN TIPS

By H. J. Fey

"You can't grow grass without oxygen!"

Harold P. Henry, Superintendent of Kansas City's Metro Golf Club, ran a hand through his grizzled crew cut and said, "I'd venture that more lawns are ruined, more grass killed, through suffocation than just about any other cause."

Henry, who has been honored by the Golf Superintendents' Association of America and other groups vitally interested in turf, is a firm believer in aeration, thatch removal and sweeping.

According to this veteran grass professional, far too few lawn owners spend enough time working with the soil in which their grass grows. The mowing, watering, worrying routine will not produce a good lawn. The highly prized green blades of grass are supported and fed by a maze of food and water seeking roots. It is through the process of aeration, increasing the ability of the soil to take up and retain water, that lawns are improved.

"If the soil has become so compacted that water cannot penetrate, the grass starves, smothers, and dies," Henry stated.

When does a lawn need aeration? A good method to follow is to check on the amount of water penetration. If the water is not soaking into the lawn, it is time to look up the local garden center and rent an aerator. Few home owners will want to invest the considerable sum aerators cost in a machine that is used only about twice a year.

The majority of turf professionals aerate in spring and again in fall. A similar schedule would be appropriate for a home lawn.

Several types of aerators are available. Some poke holes, others cut slits; the results are the same. Both systems open the soil and allow air and water to penetrate to grass roots.

Henry suggests aeration be followed by treatment with a good soil conditioner.

Along with compaction, he rates thatch as a prime grass strangler. Thatch, not to be confused with an ancient roofing material, is that disease-breeding accumulation of grass clippings that builds up with each mowing. When thatch becomes thick enough to form a mat, the lawn and the lawn owner are in trouble. Nothing remains but to either employ the services of a professional turf specialist, or to rent a thatch removing machine.

A thatch removing machine, often referred to as a renovator, cuts the matted thatch loose and permits the soil to "breathe" again. The thatch removal operation should always be followed by a thorough sweeping of the lawn. Henry noted that the cut thatch would make fine compost. "Unfortunately," he said, "most folks just throw it away, thus robbing themselves and their gardens of excellent plant food."

CLEAN SWEEP PREFERRED. Professional turf specialists favor a clean sweep of grass clippings. Mowers used to cut golf greens are equipped with catchers to prevent a harmful layer of thatch from forming. Home lawns benefit from the same practice.

Sweepers are good investments for lawn owners in that they can be used not only to pick up the grass trimmings, but to sweep the lawn clean of leaves and other litter that could quickly breed disease, spread rot, or foul up the lawn mower.

"Aerate in spring and fall. Remove the thatch whenever it mats. Sweep the lawn after every mowing. Use a good brand of fertilizer. Use a razor-sharp mower and water as needed," said Henry, "and you'll have a fine lawn--IF the weather is cooperative, IF you keep the crabgrass under control, IF snow mold doesn't strike, IF webworms stay away, and IF there are no other outbreaks of disease or fungus.

"However, if you keep your soil open through aeration, keep it free of a thatch mat, and get air to the roots, you have three-fourths of the battle won."

MAIL BOX THAT SAYS WELCOME

By George Taloumis

Drive along Country Road in Ipswich, Mass., and you'll encounter a unique and eye-catching mail box. Attached to its sides are two small planters filled with gay flowers. There are annuals in spring and summer, chrysanthemums in fall, and greens in winter.

Mr. Jerome Richardson, the owner, attached the two-foot long fibreglass winder boxes to the red metal mail box himself. Two vertical boards were first secured to the mail box base with screws. Then L-shaped angle irons were attached to the boards, two on each side, so the two boxes may rest of them. They can be lifted off when desired.

The window boxes have holes in the bottom, and drainage material is put in before soil is added. Soil is changed every time the plants are. For replanting, the boxes are lifted and taken to the back yard. Fertilizer is added to the new soil. Plants are watered every two days, not daily. Dwarf French marigolds, with lobelias, are favorite summer flowers because they are gay, compatible in color, and just the right height. Low chrysanthemums are the fall selection, and in winter, greens are enlivened with red and silvered ruscus, cones, strawflowers, and plastic red ribbons. "I got the idea in Vermont," says Mr. Richardson. "Neighbors always watch to see what I have planted. Even school children pause to take a look."

Don't forget that Monday, November 22, 1965, is HOME COMING NIGHT, and every member not out of town is expected to be present.

Will be looking for you.

YOUR GLOWWORM