

November/December 2009

Volume 5, Issue 6

*"If you have a garden  
and a library, you have  
everything you need."*

-Cicero



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Become a **Master Gardener™** and teach others the joy of gardening! Watch local newspapers for information on upcoming training, or contact your local OSU Extension Service office. **Master Gardeners™** are a valuable community resource—sign up and get involved!



## Garden Glossary

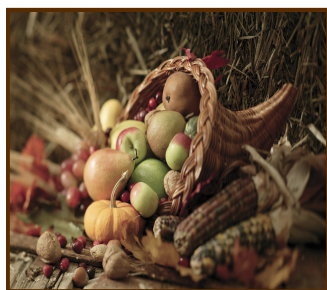
**Bioswale:** a low-gradient basin system which contains a dense cover of vegetation and is used to maintain and clean runoff during storm events. The gentle grade of the land slows the water flow, while the soil and vegetation filter and store runoff. The bioswale acts like a sponge, absorbing rain water and slowly filtering and releasing it further into the ground.

**French Drain:** a small, covered, stone-filled ditch which takes advantage of the power of gravity to create a route for excess moisture to be channeled. Helps turn wet, soggy garden areas into productive ones; also used to channel runoff water away from a home's foundation.

Marty Miller—OSU Master Gardener™



## Get Ready...Cold is Coming...Snow is Coming!



Welcome back Readers! The frosty mornings have arrived, reminding us that winter is just around the corner. And like most gardeners, I'm already counting down the days till spring! Until then, I have a laundry list of chores to keep me busy...prepping the lawn and garden for winter, raking/

composting (and cursing) the leaves of thirteen oaks, chopping wood and dusting off my trusty snow shovel. Then there is the matter of squeezing in time for football and lest we forget...the holidays are fast approaching! Aside from the chores, there remains warm fires, snowfall, and the arrival of seed catalogs. Ahh...the cycle continues!

Happy holidays and a heartfelt thanks to all my readers! May your holidays be filled with memories from summer, fall's harvest, winter's dreams and spring's promise!

-Marty

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[gardenhighlights@hrecn.net](mailto:gardenhighlights@hrecn.net)



Welcome To The Family...

(our e-newsletter family)

Susan, Diane, Bill, David,  
Pamela, Bobbie, Jason, Bud  
and Alex!

## Garden Chore Checklist - Rush to Beat the Cold!

- ☐ Clean and oil your lawnmower and other garden equipment and tools before storing for winter; drain and store hoses carefully to avoid damage from freezing.
- ☐ Good time to plant trees and shrubs; consider planting shrubs and trees such as Sumac, Elderberry, Flowering Currant, and Mock Orange that supply food and shelter to birds.
- ☐ Check your stored flower bulbs, fresh vegetables, and fruits for rot and fungus problems; discard any showing signs of deterioration.
- ☐ Rake up leaves from lawn and add them to the compost pile; shred leaves to speed up decomposition.
- ☐ Cultivate your garden soil to a depth of two or three inches by turning it with a garden spade or digging fork and breaking it up into clods; turning exposes soil-dwelling pests to birds, who love to eat them, and to freezing weather which kills the larvae and eggs of many insects.
- ☐ Cover beds with mulch to protect them from erosion and compaction by rain or snowmelt.
- ☐ Clean pots and potting benches with a 10 percent bleach and water solution to kill disease organisms; store pots away for next year.
- ☐ Tie limbs of upright evergreens to prevent breakage by snow or ice.
- ☐ Check firewood for insect infestations; burn affected wood first and don't store inside.
- ☐ During heavy rains, watch for drainage problems in the yard; tilling, ditching, and **French drains** are possible short-term solutions; consider rain gardens and **bioswales** as a longer-term solution.



## Flower of the Month



❁ **November:** Chrysanthemum; perennial; flowers summer to fall.

❁ Can be started by seed, root divisions, stem cuttings or starter plant.

❁ Prefers full sun and well-drained soil.

❁ Mums will last about two weeks in a vase.



❁ **December:** Narcissus; perennial; flowers in spring.

❁ Very fragrant, excellent for cutting.

❁ Prefers full sun and well-drained soil.

### HANDY TIP:



These houseplants flower all year and make great gifts: Shrimp Plant (*Beloperone*), Brunfelsia, African Violets, Wax Begonia, Cape Primrose, Impatiens, Lantana, Lobelia, Firecracker Vine, Oxalis, Hoya and Peace Lilies. Great for year-round color!

## Winter Project: Learn How to Make Worm Compost Bins



If you're looking for an easy winter project—try

building a worm compost bin. Worm composting is becoming more popular as folks turn table scraps into rich, black compost within a few months with the help of small “**red wigglers**” composting worms.

Unlike night crawlers, which live in the ground and eat decomposing plants, composting worms live in their food, formerly your food, and their castings are full of microorganisms that enrich the soil.

Red worms are smaller and prefer to eat waste like rotting leaves, straw and fruit on the ground. Red worms are best for composting fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee filters and other paper products.

Make worm or “vermicompost” bins from plastic (not clear) 10-14 gallon containers with lids to create a habitat for the worms that is damp and dark. Drill about 20 holes in both the bottom and the top of the bin for aeration and drainage. Fill the bin  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with a combination of bedding materials: shredded newspaper, paper or card-

board; brown and dry leaves, straw, dryer lint, peat moss and/or sawdust.

Moisten the bedding so that it is as wet as a wrung-out sponge. Add a handful of dirt or blended egg shells to provide grit that the worms need for digestion.

Then add the red worms. Check locally or on the Internet. Sometimes you can find them at farmers' markets. Most sell composting worms by the pound.

To feed the worms, pull aside some of the bedding and bury vegetable scraps, fruit peels and pulp (but not citrus, which can be too acidic), coffee grounds and filters, tea bags and foods such as old bread or crackers. Do not add meat, dairy products, greasy or oily foods as they can create odors and pest problems. Never add dog or cat waste, which can carry disease. Add more bedding as the worms consume it. Cover food added to the bin with new moist bedding.

Place your container on blocks for circulation, in an area that will not freeze in the winter and will not get over 85 degrees. Keep the bin outdoors, in a basement, cool shed or garage, or under the kitchen counter. Place a tray underneath and cover to

prevent moisture loss.

In time vermicompost will be in a layer on the bottom of the bin. To remove compost without removing the worms, feed the worms on only one side of the bin for a few weeks. The worms will move toward the food. Remove the compost and add new moist bedding to the empty side.

Compared to ordinary soil, the worm castings contain 5 times more nitrogen, 7 times more phosphorus and 11 times more potassium. Nutritious vermicompost can be used on houseplants, seedlings and in the garden. A small amount goes a long way!



Drill about 20 holes in both the bottom and top of a plastic bin for aeration and drainage. Fill the bin half to three-quarters full with a combination of bedding materials such as shredded newspaper, office paper or cardboard, brown and dry leaves, straw, dryer lint, peat moss and/or sawdust.







## Ash Benefits Gardens & Lawns



As we move into the season for woodstoves and fireplaces, consider saving the ashes for your lawn and garden. Because wood ash is derived from plant material, it contains most of the 13 essential nutrients the soil supplies for plant growth. When wood burns, nitrogen and sulfur are lost as gas, but calcium, potassium, magnesium and other trace elements remain. The carbonates and oxides in the ash are valuable liming agents that can raise the pH and help neutralize acid soils. The fertilizer value of wood ash depends on the type of wood—hardwoods produce about 3 times the ash and 5 times the nutrients per cord as softwoods. A cord of oak provides enough potassium for a garden 60x70 feet; a cord of Douglas fir ash supplies enough potassium for a garden 30x30 feet. Both types of wood ash will reduce soil acidity slightly. Where soils are acid and low in potassium, wood ash is beneficial to most garden plants. Do not use ash if your soil pH is alkaline (more than 7.0). Also, do not apply wood ash to acid-loving plants such as blueberries, rhododendrons and azaleas. **Lawns** that need lime and potassium also can benefit from wood ash—apply no more than 10-15 pounds of ash per 1000 square feet of lawn. Wood ash will also add nutrients to **compost**; mix it into your compost pile as you build the pile.

### Safety First:

- Wood ash is alkaline, which means it has a high pH level, thus you should use the same precautions with it as when handling other strong alkaline materials such as household bleach.
- Wear eye protection, gloves and a dust mask.
- Do not scatter ashes in the wind.
- Do not use ash from burning trash, cardboard, coal or pressure-treated, painted or stained wood (they contain potentially harmful substances that can inhibit plant growth).
- Never leave wood ash in lumps or piles; if it is concentrated in one place, excessive salt from the ash can leach into your garden soil.
- Do not apply ash at time of seeding; ash contains too many salts for seedlings.

Spread wood ashes evenly on **vegetable gardens**; use no more than 1.5 lb/100 sq. ft./year; don't use if the soil pH is greater than 7.0 or if potassium levels are excessive.

## CHEF MICHAEL'S GARDEN FRESH CORNER



"This time of year I am always grateful to have a few hunters in my circle of friends. I love to substitute fresh game in my favorite recipes for a new twist. This stew recipe is one of my favorites and is excellent for substituting venison, elk or any other meat. Enjoy on a crisp autumn night next to the fire!" -Chef Michael

### Veal Stew with Tomatoes and Shiitake Mushrooms

(Serves 4-6)

1 oz.	Dried Shiitake Mushrooms
3 lbs.	Veal, cut into 2-inch cubes
2	Onions, finely chopped
3 tbsp.	All-purpose Flour
20 cloves	Garlic, whole, peeled
½ cup	Beef Stock
1 can (28 oz.)	Diced Tomatoes with Juice
1 tbsp.	Finely Chopped Fresh Thyme
1 tbsp.	Finely Chopped Fresh Rosemary
¼ cup	Finely Chopped Parsley (for garnish)
To Taste	Salt & Freshly Ground Pepper



1. Place the mushrooms in a bowl and add boiling water to cover. Soak for at least 20 minutes to soften, then drain, reserving the soaking liquid. Cut the mushrooms into 1-inch pieces. Set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 450°. In a large roasting pan, combine the veal, salt, pepper, onions and flour and toss together well, making sure the flour evenly coats all ingredients. Place the pan in the oven for 10 minutes. Stir well and add the garlic cloves and return to the oven for 10 more minutes, or until the garlic is lightly browned.
3. Remove the pan from the oven and transfer all ingredients into a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot. Place the original roasting pan on the stove top over medium heat and add the beef stock and ½ cup of the reserved mushroom soaking liquid, scraping up the browned bits. Add the tomatoes and juice, thyme, rosemary, and reserved mushrooms and mix together. Add the new tomato mixture to the Dutch oven and place over medium heat. Bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover and simmer over low heat for 1 ¼ hours, stirring occasionally, or until the meat is tender.
4. If the sauce is too thick, add more of the mushroom soaking liquid to reach your desired consistency. Garnish with parsley before serving. Enjoy!



### Grow Herbs Indoors This Winter!

Nothing beats the taste of fresh herbs during the winter. Basil, cilantro, parsley, chives, chervil, dill, oregano, summer savory and sweet marjoram can be grown indoors year round. You can start these herbs from seeds, cuttings or transplant them from the garden into pots. Herbs need a southern window of a warm house in the winter. If you start your herbs from seeds, sow them in pots filled with a rich, well-drained, sterilized potting mix; cover the pots with a plastic bag or clear wrap until germination occurs; place pots in a sunny window and keep soil moist. Snip bits of fresh herbs as needed throughout winter and spring; you can then plant the herbs outdoors after the weather warms up in the spring.

## Now Is The Ideal Time To Feed Wild Birds

Backyard bird feeders can help birds get enough food to maintain sufficient body heat during cold weather; October through April is the ideal season to feed birds because their natural foods are not abundant. Be kind to the birds—they help control many unwanted insects in our gardens!

Homemade Suet Cakes	Common Backyard Birds and The Foods They Like to Eat					
	Bird	Sunflower	Millet	Nyjer	Peanuts	Suet
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat to boiling 1 part suet and 6 parts water.</li> <li>Add 2 parts cornmeal and ½ part flour.</li> <li>Allow the mixture to cool. Pour into molds to make 1½-inch cakes, and allow to harden. Cup-cake tins, butter tubs, or square freezer containers work well as molds.</li> <li>Store in freezer.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can add peanut butter, lard, or vegetable shortening to the mix, or use one of them as a substitute for the suet.</li> <li>You can also add birdseed, chopped nuts, oatmeal, or chopped fruit to the recipe.</li> </ul>	Chickadee	X			X	X
	House Finch/Purple Finch	X	X	X		
	Sparrows	X	X	X	X	X
	Jays	X			X	X
	American Goldfinch	X	X	X		
	Dark-eyed Junco	X	X	X	X	X
	Spotted Towhee	X	X		X	
	Downy/Hairy Woodpecker	X				X
	Nuthatches	X			X	X
	Mourning Dove	X	X		X	
	Quail		X			
	Crow/Raven				X	

Marty Miller—OSU Master Gardener™

### Garden Highlights

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<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/wasco>

Simply click on 'Master Gardeners™', then 'Monthly Garden Highlights'.

The print version can also be found at select garden centers and businesses in the Mid-Columbia area.

Thank you loyal readers for your continued support!

*"November comes and November goes, with the last red berries and the first white snows.*

*With night coming early, and dawn coming late, and ice in the bucket and frost by the gate.*

*The fires burn and the kettles sing, and earth sinks to rest until next spring."*

*-Clyde Watson*

### Gorge Gardeners...

get local weather information and forecasts at this great site:

<http://webpages.charter.net/hoodriverweather/weather.htm>

"For more information on articles in this issue, or on gardening in general, please contact your local 'OSU Extension Office/Master Gardener™ Program'. They have a wealth of knowledge to share!

I welcome hearing from you about Garden Highlights! Please pass along any gardening tips, jokes, stories or photos you would like to share. If your submission is used in a future issue, I'll send you a free gift! Send me your pearls of wisdom!" 'till next time...Marty

"The scent of the rose remains in the hand that gives the rose!"

