

NoCo Bloom

FALL 2017



IN LIVING
color

WHEN TO
PICK A
**PECK OF
PUMPKINS**

GARDEN
FRESH SALSA
**RECIPES
INSIDE!**

IS YOUR
FERTILIZER
**PET
FRIENDLY?**



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
Horticulture and Landscape Architecture
301 University Ave.
Fort Collins CO 80523-1173
Bldg. Shepardson 111
970-491-7019
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CSU EXTENSION IN LARIMER COUNTY
1525 Blue Spruce Dr.
Fort Collins, CO 80524-2004
970-498-6000
larimer.org/ext

the
GARDENS
on Spring Creek



**City of
Fort Collins**

THE GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK
AND CITY OF FORT COLLINS
2145 Centre Ave.
Fort Collins, CO 80526
970-416-2486
fcgov.com/gardens

NoCo  Bloom

Please note: If you are a gardener needing help and live in Weld County, visit the Weld Extension Office at weldgov.com/departments/csu_extension or call directly to 970-400-2066 for assistance.

We want to hear from you! For inquiries, please contact Korrie Johnston (kjohnston@fcgov.com) at the Gardens on Spring Creek.

Fall's True Colors

September brings the start of one of the prettiest seasons in Colorado. It's harvest time in the garden too and, hopefully, yours is bursting with tomatoes, peppers, and other favorite flavors you wait for all year.

From recommendations of plants that add end-of-the-year color to some tips on successful bulb choices for the spring, we've got you covered. Your edible garden is the star of the show as harvest season ramps up. Two delicious salsa recipes are included in this issue that I know I will be trying! Other highlights include how to winter proof your water plan, when to harvest pumpkins, and tips on pet-friendly fertilizer.

This issue closes out the second year of NoCo Bloom, and we are so grateful for the support you've shown us. We wish you a bountiful fall, celebratory holiday season, and we'll meet you back here next spring for more gardening goodness.

Korrie Johnston
Editor, NoCo Bloom

Dr. Jessica G. Davis
*HLA Department Head
Colorado State University*

Dr. Alison O'Connor
*Horticulture Extension Agent
CSU Extension in
Larimer County*

Michelle Provaznik
*Executive Director
The Gardens on Spring Creek*

When to Pick a Peck of **PUMPKINS**



*Dick Christensen, Master Gardener
for Colorado State University Extension
in Larimer County*



Pumpkins are harvested September through October. Remove pumpkins from the vine before the first hard freeze (when night temperatures are less than 27 degrees Fahrenheit) to avoid the risk of fruit loss. Color is not the only indication that a pumpkin is ripe. We tend to think of pumpkins as orange, but they come in other colors too. You can find pumpkins that are green, yellow, red, white, blue, or tan and will ripen at various times. Pumpkins types include miniature, carving-type, giant, pumpkins for eating and colorful varieties for decoration.

To check for ripeness, thump or rap on the pumpkin. If it sounds hollow, the pumpkin has ripened and is ready to be harvested. Another clue is the skin texture; hard skin indicates that the time is right for picking. Use your fingernail and try to gently puncture the pumpkin skin. When the skin dents but does not puncture, that is another tip that fruit is ripe. The vines need to be dry. If the stem is hard above the pumpkin, it is ready to harvest. Use a sharp knife, pruner or lopper to cut the stem from the vine. Cut the stem as long as possible if they will be used for eating. A three-to-four inch stem will increase the pumpkin's storage life.

A cleanly cut stem prevents disease from getting into the fruit and slows rotting. Don't carry pumpkins using stems, because the heavy weight can cause the stem to detach. Handle pumpkins very gently or they may bruise. Consider washing the pumpkin with mild soapy water and a ten-percent bleach solution. This removes

soil and kills pathogens on the surface of the fruit (the bleach will evaporate in a few hours). Pumpkins should be cured in the sun for about a week to toughen the skin. Avoid rain to ensure curing and then store pumpkins in a cool, dry indoor location—anywhere around 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

Visit extension.colostate.edu for more information and search for Fact Sheet #7.609 on "Cucumbers, Pumpkins, Squash and Melons." 🍂



sept events

FORT COLLINS

Sept 9 - Learn How to Make a Macramé Plant Hanger, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com

Sept 9 - Homemade Garden Salves & Balms, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 9 - Making Herbal Jellies, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 9 - Cooking Demonstration with Hot Corner Concepts, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountymarket.org

Sept 11 - Water Bath Canning, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, \$25 with registration, larimer.org/ext

Sept 13 - Wild Autumn Foods Workshop, The Growing Project Garden at Hope Farms, 1601 N. Shields St, \$12 only via website or email, thegrowingproject.org

Sept 13 - Community Connect: Food Business & Farmer Resources, Mesh, 242 Linden St, Free with RSVP, NoCoFood.org

Sept 16 - Nature's Harvest Fest, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, suggested donation \$5 adult and \$2 child, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 16 - Science Saturday with CSU Synthetic Biology Club, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountymarket.org

Sept 16 - Fall Mushrooms, The Growing Project Garden at Hope Farms, 1601 N. Shields St, \$15 only via website or email, thegrowingproject.org

Sept 17 - Miniature Gardening Class, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

Sept 21 - Garden to Fork: Rediscovering Ancient Recipes, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$35, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 23 - Macro (Close-Up) Photography in the Garden, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$40, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 23 - Beekeeping through the Four Seasons: Fall, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

CALENDAR COORDINATOR

Kathleen Atkins, Master Gardener
Colorado State University Extension
Please submit your gardening classes & events to nocobloomevents@gmail.com.



sept events

Sept 23 - Under The Sea Terrarium Fairy Garden Class, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com

Sept 23 - USDA Seed Lab Demonstration, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountymarket.org

Sept 23-24 - Orchid Obsession (orchid show), Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free admittance, fortcollinsnursery.com

Sept 27 - Pressure Canning, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, \$25 with registration, larimer.org/ext

Sept 27 - Foraging, Harvesting & Processing of Wild Grains, The Growing Project Garden at Hope Farms, 1601 N. Shields St, \$12 only via website or email, thegrowingproject.org

Sept 30 - Music at the Market with Once Upon a Tune, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountymarket.org

Sept 30 - Draped Hyper Tufa Pots, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$45, gulleygreenhouse.com

BERTHOUD, LOVELAND, GREELEY & WINDSOR

Sept 9 - Second Saturdays: Ending the Season, Treasure Island Demonstration Garden, 7th St, Windsor, Free, windsorgov.com

Sept 12 - Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: Bulbs: As Easy as 1-2-3, LTVPM Courtyard, 224 Mountain Ave, Berthoud, Free, berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup

Sept 12 - Community Stewardship Lecture Series: Film Screening, LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free pre-registration required, cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures

Sept 16 - Bird Walk around Equalizer Lake, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free admittance, suburbitat.org

Sept 16 - Nature Journaling Walk, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free admittance, suburbitat.org

Sept 20 - Preparing Your Landscape for Winter, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Loveland, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Sept 20 - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays: Putting the Garden to Bed, Treasure Island Demonstration Garden, 7th St, Windsor, Free, windsorgov.com

Sept 21 - Northern Co Beekeepers Association: State Pollinator Protection Plans, Kerst Barn, 17765 Hwy 392, Greeley, \$5 non-members, nocobees.org

IS YOUR FERTILIZER PET FRIENDLY?

*Tony Koski, Turf Specialist
CSU Department of Horticulture
& Landscape Architecture*



People often ask me for suggestions on “pet-friendly” fertilizer for their lawns (curiously, I am rarely asked for recommendations for “children-friendly” fertilizer). As with any discussion of lawn care products, it’s important to clarify the concern or question—so that we are on the same wavelength. The conversation usually goes something like this:

Me: Why do you think some fertilizers are pet “unfriendly”?

Pet owner: Because they have chemicals in them that can hurt my (dog, cat, chicken...). You know...those pesticides and herbicides?

Me: First, most fertilizer products don’t contain pesticides (and, herbicides are pesticides). Second, all fertilizers technically are comprised of chemicals. Our bodies contain chemicals, and water is a chemical. Finally, if what you want is a fertilizer without pesticides, then read the label before purchasing.

In the end, the request is almost always a recommendation for a natural organic fertilizer. While it would be easiest to do so and end the conversation there, I feel it’s important to let people know that any lawn care product (synthetic, natural, organic) can be potentially problematic for humans, pets, wildlife, water quality, and the environment. My concern (and I have observed this personally) is that the “natural/organic” designation can lead people to be careless or sloppy in use.

Synthetic fertilizers (Scotts Turf Builder, for example) are comprised of chemical salts that deliver chemical nitrogen and other nutrients to the lawn. Natural/organic fertilizers (AlphaLawn and Richlawn—two excellent Colorado-produced fertilizer products) are plant—and/or animal-based fertilizers (chicken waste, feathers, alfalfa, cottonseed meal) that are used by microbes in the soil as food, which leads to the release of chemical nitrogen and other nutrients for the lawn to use. The nitrogen that is made available to the lawn’s roots is chemically the same as far as the grass plant is concerned, whether it comes from a synthetic or organic fertilizer.

Applied sloppily (to sidewalks, street, driveways), both organic and synthetic fertilizers can run off into waterways. Applied at extremely high rates, both types can result in nitrogen leaching into groundwater. If eaten by your dog, cat, chickens, both types can potentially result in digestive distress. The FAQ sections on some websites for organic fertilizers address concerns about dogs consuming their fertilizers—because they often taste like pet food to a hungry dog (read the labels...they are sometimes remarkably similar to a pet food label).

No matter which type of fertilizer you apply, it is always best (for the lawn and your pets) to water it in well following application. This action pretty much eliminates any concerns about your furry friend feeding on the fertilizer or getting it their eyes or on their paws.

For other lawn questions, call the Larimer County Extension office at 970-498-6000 to talk with a Master Gardener (larimermg@gmail.com) or email me your turf questions, tony.koski@colostate.edu. 🌿



EDIBLES



Virginia Stephen, Colorado State University Extension Master Gardener in Larimer County

FRESH WESTERN SLOPE

PEACH SALSA

INGREDIENTS

- 3 ½ cup - diced fresh peaches (4 medium) or substitute thawed, frozen peaches
- 2 tbsp - chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- ¼ cup - diced red onion (1/2 small)
- 1 tbsp - seeded and minced jalapeño or serrano pepper (more or less to taste)
- 2 tbsp or 1 oz - unseasoned rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp - minced fresh ginger
- 1 tsp - granulated sugar
- 1 tsp - lemon juice
- 1 - minced garlic clove
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and stir well to combine. Cover and chill to develop flavors. Make ahead and serve cool or at room temperature. Delicious served with pork, chicken or fish. Recipe can be easily doubled or tripled and made in a food processor. Yields 3½ cups.

COLORADO

CORN SALSA

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ¼ cups - fresh or frozen corn kernels (about 3-4 ears fresh corn)
- ¼ cup - chopped red onion
- ¼ cup - chopped red bell pepper
- ¼ cup - chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- 1 ½ tbsp - fresh lime juice
- 2 tsp - seeded and minced jalapeño or serrano pepper (more or less to taste)
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

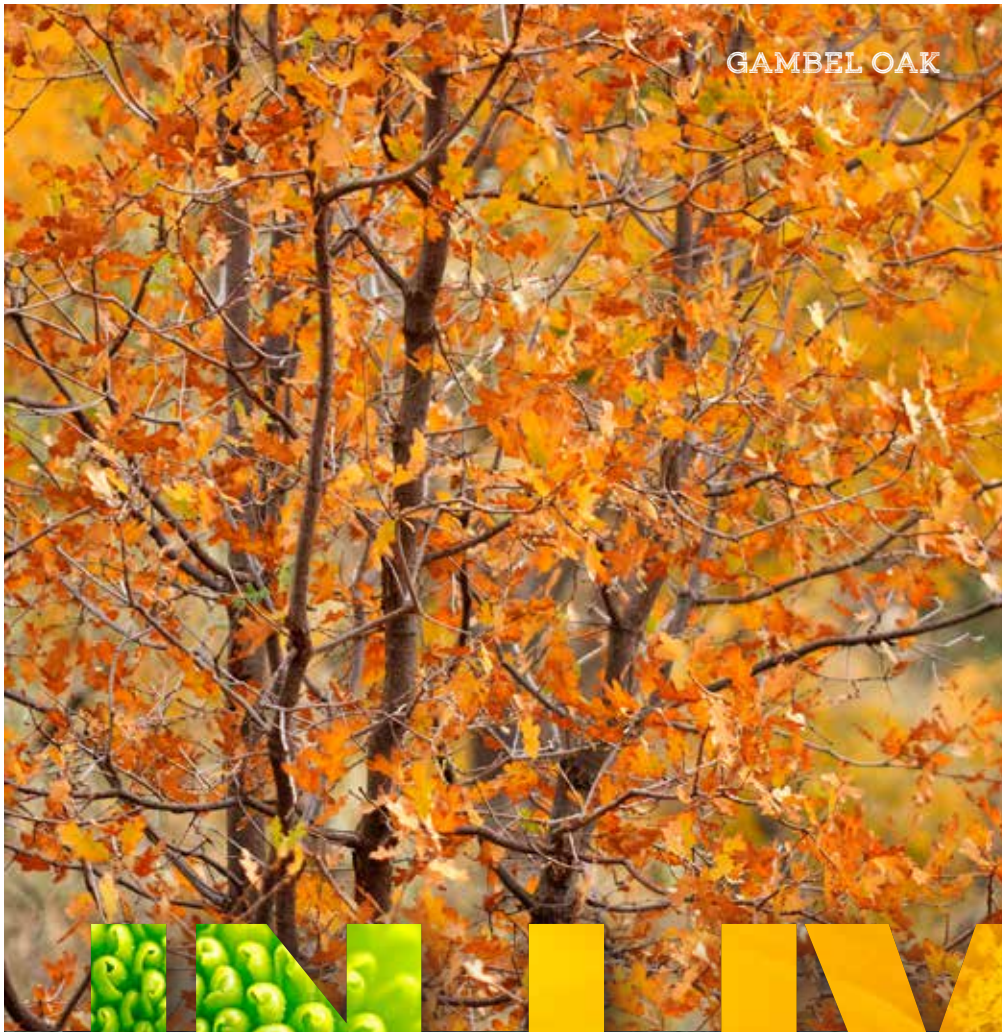
Combine all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and chill. Can be made 4 hours ahead and served cool or at room temperature. Try with beef, chicken or pork. Yields 2 cups.



oct events

FORT COLLINS

- Oct 7 - Preparing Your Yard for Fall & Winter Bird Feeding, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18
- Oct 7 - Garden to Fork: Hearty Fall Soups & Stews, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$35, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 7 - Food Drive for the Food Bank for Larimer County, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org
- Oct 7 - Beeswax Fall Leaf Mobile, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com
- Oct 11 - Roots and Medicine Making, The Growing Project Garden at Hope Farms, 1601 N. Shields St, \$15 only via website or email, thegrowingproject.org
- Oct 12 - City of Fort Collins: Xeriscape Open House, Gilded Goat, 3500 S College Ave, Free RSVP requested, fcgov.com/xip
- Oct 14 - DESIGN in the Gardens, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 14 - Artisan Pumpkin Desserts, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 14 - Master Food Safety Advisor Preservation Event, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org
- Oct 14 - Raffia Coil Bowls, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com
- Oct 14 - Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off and Fall Jamboree, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free admittance, fortcollinsnursery.com
- Oct 15 - Spooky/Classic Miniature Gardening Class, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com
- Oct 21 - Music at the Market with the Sugarbirds, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org
- Oct 21 - Halloween Enchanted Garden, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$5 per child, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 28 - Cooking Demonstration with Hot Corner Concepts, Larimer County Farmers' Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free entry, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org
- Oct 28 - Mini-Pumpkin Centerpieces: Families Together (12 years and up welcome), Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30 adult, \$15 kids, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 28 - Mini-Pumpkin Centerpieces, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens
- Oct 28 - Fall Harvest Halloween Garden, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com

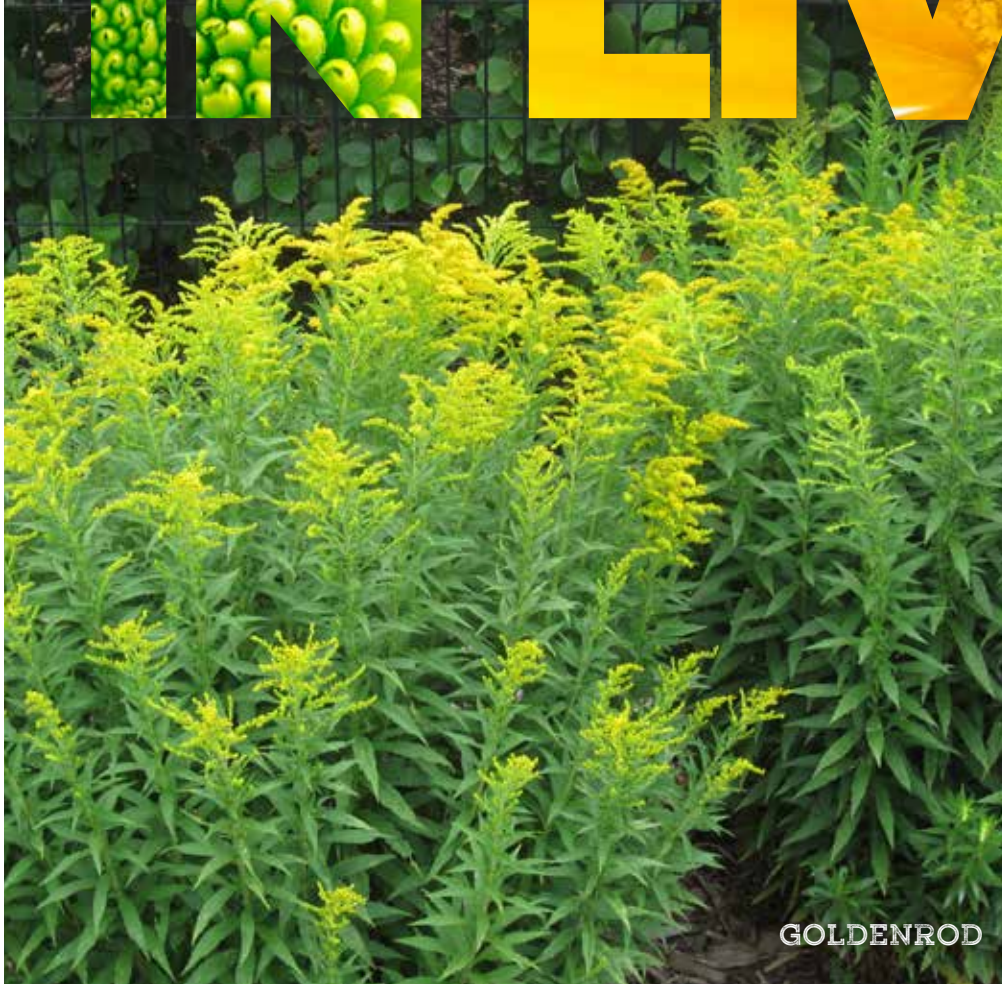


GAMBEL OAK



SERVICEBERRY

IN LIVING CO



GOLDENROD



JOE PYE



SUMAC

CROCUS

Autumn Auras in the Garden

Michelle Provaznik, mprovaznik@fcgov.com
Director, Gardens on Spring Creek,



During the fall, the Colorado mountains are known for large stands of gold quaking aspen amongst an evergreen forest with a backdrop of bright blue sky. The vistas are simply breathtaking and inspire many weekend camping and road trips. I love fall in the Rocky Mountains, but as someone who grew up in the Midwest, I find I miss the reds, russets and purples that are commonly associated with autumn. Beyond the asters and mums we usually think of during this time of year, there are several options for adding fall color to our gardens. Some of my favorites include:

TREES & SHRUBS

Many oak trees turn dramatic shades of red and orange as the garden fades in fall. Our native **Gambel Oak** (*Quercus gambelii*) is no exception. Seen along the hillsides in southern Colorado, this hardy oak is found in our landscapes as a large shrub or small tree.

The **Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier x grandiflora* 'Autumn Brilliance') lives up to its name at this time of year with red-orange leaves covering its branches. This woody plant can be grown as a shrub or trained as a small tree. An added bonus is the year round interest this plant provides with white blossoms in the spring followed by dark berries that are commonly used in jams and jellies.

Three Leaf Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) is a small to medium size, easy-care native shrub. Its leaves turn various shades of red, orange and yellow making it appear to glow. The variety 'Autumn Amber' is a ground cover-type shrub, which creates a carpet of fall color in the landscape.

PERENNIALS

The yellow splash of **goldenrod** flowers (*Solidago spp.*) brighten the autumn garden. There are many varieties to choose from—larger varieties such as 'Fireworks' form a bright background for other fall bloomers. Dwarf varieties such as 'Golden Fleece' can highlight ornamental grasses. Goldenrod is a terrific food source for pollinators.

One of my favorite late summer-into-fall bloomers is **Joe Pye Weed** (*Eutrochium purpureum ssp. maculatum*). This tall perennial is topped by huge pink-rose flower clusters that attract bees and butterflies. The seed heads persist into winter adding continued interest. The 'Gateway' variety is more compact, reaching only 4-5' tall.

The **Autumn Crocus** (*Colchicum autumnale*) adds a bright pop of color to the fall garden. Most commonly found in shades of purple, these bulbs resemble spring crocuses but are not actually related. Take note —this plant is toxic if ingested so use caution. ☹

oct events

BERTHOUD, LOVELAND & GREELEY

Oct 3 - Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: Cold Frames & Sustainable Gardening, McCarty-Fickel Home Museum, 645 7th St, Berthoud, Free, berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup

Oct 18 - Saving Seeds For Every Need, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Loveland, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Oct 21 - Bird Walk around Equalizer Lake, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free admittance, suburbitat.org

Oct 19 - Northern Co Beekeepers Association: Highlights of Hawaii WAS meeting, Kerst Barn, 17765 Hwy 392, Greeley, \$5 non-members, nocobees.org

nov events

FORT COLLINS

Nov 11 - Makin' Your Own Bacon, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 11 - Winter Comfort Foods: Families Together, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30 adult and \$15 kids, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 18 - Holiday Open House, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

Nov 18 - Create Your Own Indoor Bonsai, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$45, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 19 - Miniature Gardening Class, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

BERTHOUD, LOVELAND & GREELEY

Nov 7 - Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: The Humble Honeybee & Honey Tasting, McCarty-Fickel Home Museum, 645 7th St, Berthoud, Free, berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup

Nov 14 - Community Stewardship Lecture Series: Birding, LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free pre-registration required, cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures

Nov 14 - Nature Journaling Walk, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free admittance, suburbitat.org

Nov 15 - Jim Tolstrup, High Plains Environmental Center, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Loveland, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Nov 16 - Northern Co Beekeepers Association: A Beekeeper Retail Store, Kerst Barn, 17765 Hwy 392, Greeley, \$5 non-members, nocobees.org



EXTENDING GARDENING INFORMATION TO OTHERS: Master Gardener Program

Alison O'Connor, Colorado State University Extension Horticulture Agent in Larimer County



You've probably heard the term "Master Gardener" before, but maybe you're not quite sure of what it means. Does it mean the person is just a really good gardener? Well, kind of! Master Gardeners are part of the outreach program of Colorado State University Extension; a statewide network including Master Gardeners, CSU faculty and staff that provides lifelong educational programs for all Coloradans in their local communities using research-based information. Master Gardener volunteers work with homeowners to answer questions and help foster successful gardening in a variety of venues.

The Larimer County Extension Office is recruiting individuals interested in becoming Master Gardener volunteers. Classes are held mid-January to April 2018 on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All trainings are held at The Ranch in Loveland. Contact the Larimer County Extension office 970-498-6000 or email Alison O'Connor at astoven@larimer.org for more information.

The application process includes completing the written application, a background check, in-person interview and reference check. All applicants are interviewed to determine their potential to become effective volunteers. We encourage you to join this fun group of hardworking and passionate volunteers. There is also a non-volunteer option for a higher course fee, for those interested learning more about Colorado gardening. 🌱



PLANT IT FORWARD
Fighting Hunger from the Ground Up

Harvest for Plant it Forward

Are you harvesting extra produce right now? We are calling any and every gardener in our community to contribute your extra to our Plant it Forward program. No donation is too small! Our goal is to reach 65,000 pounds of fresh produce donated to Food Bank for Larimer County from area gardens this season. Drop off at the Gardens on Spring Creek during the weekend and at the Food Bank during the week. Find out more at plantitforwardnoco.org.



Nature's Harvest Fest

Sept 16 | 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Celebrate adventures in NoCo's big backyard with free workshops and demos, two butterfly releases, tastings of fresh produce, local artisans, entertainment, kids' activities, and food vendors. Family friendly and fun! \$5/adult, \$2/child suggested donation is appreciated.

dec events

FORT COLLINS

Dec 1-Jan 5 - Garden of Lights, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, suggested donation \$5 adult or \$2 child, fcgov.com/gardens

Dec 2 - Create a Christmas Wreath: Families Together (12 years and over welcome), Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30 adult or \$15 kids, fcgov.com/gardens

Dec 2 - Create a Christmas Wreath, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Dec 10 - Miniature Gardening Class, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

BERTHOUD & GREELEY

Dec 5 - Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: Holiday Party, McCarty-Fickel Home Museum, 645 7th St, Berthoud, Free, berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup

Dec 21 - Northern Co Beekeepers Association: The Purpose of a Garden, Kerst Barn, 17765 Hwy 392, Greeley, \$5 non-members, nocobees.org

IT'S JUST A
FLESH WOUND

SAVE YOUR FOOD

*Bruised food is still good to eat. Cut out the spots and enjoy!
Americans throw away 1/4 of all the food they buy - that's \$1,500 per household each year! Learn more about the cost of food waste and how you can save more at fcgov.com/SaveYourFood.*



Plant this, Not That

LONG-LIVING DAFFODILS

Sherry Fuller, sfuller@fcgov.com
Curator, The Gardens on Spring Creek



While it might be too warm right now to think about planting bulbs, I bet the garden centers have them in stock already and October is the best time to plant bulbs here. This year instead of planting more tulips that tend to get smaller each year until they just fade away, try daffodils.

Daffodils are one of the most long-lived perennial plants out there, multiplying each year to form larger clumps with more flowers. I recently moved daffodils from my great aunt's yard that had been abandoned close to 30 years ago. Deer, rabbits, voles, and squirrels will not eat daffodils as they do tulips. They do well in our area with little attention and can be grown in beds with other perennials or annuals. Try planting daffodils 8 or 10 inches deep where you plant annuals so you don't dig into them later.



Most of us think of the large, golden trumpets when we think daffodils, but there are so many other unusual types to try. Double daffodils look a bit like white or yellow gardenias and some smell as heavenly. Split corona varieties are sometimes called butterfly daffodils, a much more picturesque name. These have almost flat flowers and are usually bicolor.

Then there are the minis, my personal favorites. There are at least two dozen commonly available varieties that are shorter and have smaller flowers. These are delightful tucked around large rocks or popping up through an evergreen groundcover like Turkish veronica.

You probably won't find any of these unusual types in the big box stores, but our local garden centers will certainly carry some. Brent and Becky's (brentandbeckysbulbs.com) has a fabulous collection of these and most of the other hardy bulbs. If you order from them, mention the Gardens on Spring Creek and we will get a rebate from your sale. 🌱



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Winterproof Your Water Plan

Liesel Hans, Ph.D, Water Conservation Manager, Fort Collins Utilities

As the seasons change, so should your watering practices. Shorter days and cooler nights mean your landscape does not need as much water as during summer. If you keep up the same watering habits, you will overwater and put your landscape at risk for pests and disease.

Q: HOW SHOULD I WATER DIFFERENTLY?

A: You only need to water once per week, perhaps twice if we experience a late Indian summer. If your sprinkler system has a “seasonal adjust” or “water budget” feature, use this to scale back by 30% to 50% from your maximum watering setting. Another option is to simply drop one or two days from your watering schedule.

Q: WHEN CAN I STOP WATERING?

A: Make sure you shut down and winterize your watering equipment, as well as any outdoor water features by the time we experience freezing temps. In Fort Collins, the first freeze typically comes the first week of October. If we

do not get rain or snow through the remainder of the year, be sure to protect your trees and large shrubs by providing some supplemental “winter watering” once or twice a month. Learn more from our friends in Forestry at fcgov.com/winter-tree-watering.

Q: WINTER IS COMING – WHAT SHOULD I DO?

A: It is important to properly winterize your sprinkler system —otherwise water can freeze, expand and break your pipes, backflow, valves, etc. This damage may be obvious or go undetected until the spring. If you have an underground system, employ a trusted irrigation professional who will use compressed air to properly “blow out” your system. Shut off the sprinkler water supply and insulate any exposed, above-ground components, including your backflow. Detach and drain hoses. If you have an automatic irrigation controller, consider using the “off” or “rain-mode” setting; this turns off the signals to the valves, but preserves your settings for the spring.

Q: HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR NEXT YEAR?

Start planning now to xeriscape or update your irrigation practices in the spring. Strategically placed xeriscape can add eye-catching color, increase your curb appeal, and ultimately help reduce overwatering and lawn mowing. Narrow strips, sloped areas and areas along walkways/fences are great places to swap unused turf for water-wise plants. Learn more at fcgov.com/xeriscape. 🌱

Dormant Pruning

What are the benefits?

- Improves beauty of property
- Promotes healthy tree growth
- Removes hazardous branches
- Helps to prevent disease
- Enhances unobstructed views

Schedule your tree pruning today!

Schedule your **FREE** Property Evaluation!

10% Off



Schedule today 970.284.8031
myswingle.com

Applies to ornamental tree pruning services scheduled between December 1, 2017 - April 30, 2018. Residential customers only. Trees must be 30 feet and under. Other restrictions may apply.

HIGH SUMMER WATER BILLS GOT YOU DOWN?

Learn how to reduce outdoor water use by enrolling
in the 2018 Xeriscape Incentive Program.



THE XERISCAPE INCENTIVE PROGRAM CAN HELP



- Cultivate colorful curb appeal
- Reduce summer water use
- Attract pollinators and butterflies
- Create a unique outdoor living space

For more information about the Xeriscape
Incentive Program, fcgov.com/xip,
970-212-2900 or V/TDD 711.

Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.