

NoCo Bloom

AUTUMN 2018



LARIMER COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



THE GARDENS
ON SPRING CREEK



City of
Fort Collins

THE INS AND OUTS OF ALL SEASON
succulents

TIPS FOR
**PROBLEM
AREAS**

GARDENING
**WITH
CHICKENS**



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
 Horticulture and Landscape Architecture
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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**
 2145 Centre Ave.
 Fort Collins, CO 80526
 970-416-2486
fcgov.com/gardens



MOTHER NATURES' TOUGH LOVE

In our last issue of the year, we are taking on the tough stuff. Tough plants, challenging areas in the garden, and compacted soil...you name it, we've seen it. Whether this year it was weeds and watering, nasty beetles (I had those), or hailstorms, we are certain you have had your share of challenges. As the harvest season begins, our September issue can help you move forward in your unique garden space despite its challenges.

We've offered some suggestions on plants for intense sun, wet boggy soil, or dry shade. Every gardener knows soil is critical to gardening success, and we have some of the toughest to work with in Colorado. This issue provides tips on how to work and amend your soil to improve its health.

Finally, we lighten the load with tips on gardening with chickens, caring for your succulent planters, and prepping for the first freeze. Don't forget to peruse the community calendar because when the growing season wanes, the harvest begins. We invite you to take a preservation or cooking class, attend a workshop, or check out a farmer's market event to savor another beautiful season on its way. 🌻

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 The Gardens on Spring Creek*

Becca Henry
Art Director, NoCo Bloom

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.



GARDENING WITH CHICKENS

Alison O'Connor, Horticulture Agent, Colorado State University Extension

BACKYARD CHICKENS are a common feature for many residents. While most cities and towns in northern Colorado allow chickens, be sure to check your local ordinances. Also, remember to be a good neighbor—discuss your intentions and address their concerns. If you decide to add feathered friends to your household, be aware you may need to adjust your gardening practices, especially if your chickens will free range.

EATS A LOT

They will nibble (and possibly entirely consume) many landscape plants. While they excel at insect control and eating weeds, they will mow down most vegetables and your lawn.

NOT ALL PLANTS ARE SAFE

Foxglove, lobelia and plants in the nightshade family (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant) can all pose risks for chickens. Check resources and do your homework..

USE FENCING

If you want areas to be chicken-free, fence it

off. It's surprising the dexterity of chickens and how they can invade areas they shouldn't.

POOP

Chickens are prolific poopers and create up to a cubic foot of manure every six months! Composted chicken manure is great as organic matter for your soil or fertilizer.

MULCH MADNESS

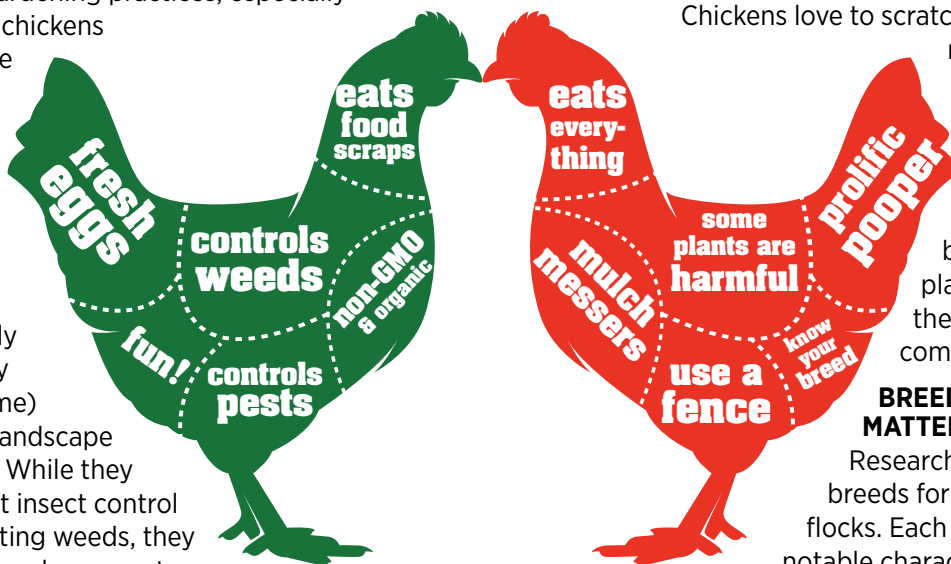
Chickens love to scratch and kick mulch. If your beds are mulched, be ready to rake it back into place after the chickens come through.

BREED MATTERS

Research the best breeds for backyard flocks. Each breed has notable characteristics like some breeds are noisier

than others. (I have one nicknamed Oprah because she "talks" all the time.)

LIKE ANY ANIMAL, chickens have their quirks, but are fun to watch, provide you with food and are pretty low maintenance once the flock is established. I encourage you to try raising an urban flock. And, it's so much fun to feed them pesky grasshoppers! 🐛



events 'n classes

FORT COLLINS

CSU Larimer County Extension Native Plant Master Program Application - Red Mountain Open Space: 8/12, 8/19, 8/26 or Reservoir Ridge Natural Area: 8/20, 8/27, 9/10, \$90 for program, larimer.extension.colostate.edu/native-plant-master-program-larimer-county

Sept 8 » **Fishbowl Terrariums**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St. \$30
gulleygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Sept 8 » **Household Hazardous Waste Event**, City of Fort Collins Streets Facility, 625 9th St, Free, fcgov.com/utilities/residential/hazwaste

Sept 8 » **Mobile Read & Seed**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Sept 9 » **Open Streets**, West Fort Collins, Free, fcgov.com/openstreets

Sept 10 » **Water Bath Canning**, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, \$25 with registration, larimer.org/ext

Sept 12 » **Basics of Preserving Food Safely**, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, Free pre-registration required, larimer.org/ext

Sept 15 » **Colorado Native Plant Society 42nd Annual Conference: Knowledge, Advocacy, and Change**, Northside Aztlan Community Center, 112 E. Willow St, \$65 with discounts for CoNPS members, early bird registration and students, conps.org/mfm-event-calendar/#!event/2018/9/15/conps-2018-annual-conference

Sept 15 » **Food Truck Rally**, Bath Garden Center, 2000 E. Prospect Rd, Free admission, bathgardencenter.com/whats-new/events

Sept 15 » **Herb Infused Vinegars**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$35, gulleygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Sept 15 » **Morning Yoga**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Donation based, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Sept 15 » **Urban Homesteading for Beginners**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/garden

CALENDAR COORDINATOR

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



events 'n classes

FORT COLLINS

Sept 16 » **Miniature Gardening Class**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

Sept 18 » **Pressure Canning**, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, \$25 with registration, larimer.org/ext

Sept 20 » **Mild to Wild Chiles Cooking Class**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$45, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 22 » **Gold Leaf Terracotta Pot w/Succulent**, Gully Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$25, gullygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Sept 22 » **The Market's Going to the Dogs**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Sept 27 » **Garden Fresh Homemade Pastas Cooking Class**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$45, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 29 » **Autumn Guided Forest Walk**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 29 » **Backyard Composting**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

Sept 29 » **City of Fort Collins Recycling Program**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Sept 29 » **Countertop Herb Garden**, Gully Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gullygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Sept 29 » **Oktoberfest**, Bath Garden Center, 2000 E. Prospect Rd, Free, bathgardencenter.com/whats-new/events

Oct 6 » **Annual Produce Drive**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Oct 6 » **Caring for Native Plants**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 6 » **Photographing Fall Color**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 6 or Oct 7 » **Succulent Shadow Box**, Gully Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gullygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Oct 10 » **Sauerkraut & Fermented Vegetables**, Larimer County Extension, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, \$25 with registration, larimer.org/ext

Oct 13 » **Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off and Fall Jamboree**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free entry, fortcollinsnursery.com

YOU GOT FRIENDS IN TOUGH PLACES

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



Kentucky bluegrass is an excellent grass for the average lawn—mostly sunny, average amount of use, and where irrigation can be provided on a regular schedule. But bluegrass isn't perfect, and there are some tough lawn situations where another grass type makes more sense—and can make lawn care easier.

Older, mature, shady landscapes with large trees are a problem for bluegrass. The fine fescues—Chewings, hard, creeping red, and sheep fescues—can do well in shady lawns. These grasses prefer lower levels of maintenance—keep on the dry side and fertilize no more than once yearly. Fine fescue is difficult to find in sod form, so you'll have to start them from seed. Pawnee Buttes and Sharp Brothers seed companies in Greeley have them, and they can be found locally at better garden centers.

Hot, dry, south- or west-facing slopes can be difficult places to grow bluegrass. Better cool-season grass choices would be turf-type tall fescue (deep roots, great heat tolerance) and Texas hybrid bluegrass (a hybrid where one parent is a native bluegrass from Texas). Both can be planted as sod, and from seed as well. Buffalograss is a native grass that will do well in hot, dry locations. Buffalograss can be planted as sod or plugs (best cultivar for Colorado is 'Legacy'), or can be seeded (best cultivar is 'Sundancer').

For high-traffic areas, Kentucky bluegrass or a Texas hybrid bluegrass will work best—if fertilized frequently (as often as monthly), mowed every 4-5 days, and watered well to encourage recovery from kid or dog traffic. A high-use lawn must be treated differently—with a greater level of care, as if it was an athletic field.

Having a problem with your lawn? Consider getting a lawncheck visit by the Larimer County Extension office (call 970-498-6005 to schedule a visit). Or call the Larimer County Extension office at the same number to speak with a Master Gardener. 🌱



FINE FESCUE



LEGACY BUFFALOGRASS



TEXAS HYBRID BLUEGRASS



TALL FESCUE

events 'n classes



Sherry Fuller, Curator
The Gardens on Spring Creek

Now that heavy construction is done in our garden expansion, we're beginning to work on improving the

soil in the planting beds. Like most new construction, the soil in the new space is compacted. Even though we started with pretty good soil, it's been treated like dirt and needs all the help we can give it.

We will use many of the below suggestions for improving our soil at The Gardens, and you might want to use these ideas in your yard as well.

TILLAGE THERAPY

Compacted soil needs tilling to loosen the hard layers that form with construction or traffic. In our expansion, the contractors are ripping the soil with heavy equipment, then we are breaking up the soil further with a large rototiller.

ADD COMPOST SUPPLEMENTS

Adding organic material to your soil is the best way to improve it. Homemade compost is great, but if you can't make enough for your needs, compost is available in bulk or bags. Ask a garden center professional which bagged compost they'd recommend or check an analysis for bulk material to be sure it doesn't contain excessive salts or have

a high pH. Organic matter will loosen clay, help sandy soil hold more water, increase beneficial microorganisms, adds nutrients, and makes plants more resilient when exposed to diseases. Remember, many native plants don't need or even appreciate compost.

ADD OTHER ORGANIC MATERIAL

Chopped leaves, mixed into soil or used as a mulch in the fall, will break down over winter and improve your soil.

A DOSE OF ALFALFA PELLETS

Yes, the kind you might feed horses are old friends to experienced gardeners. Pellets provide organic matter as well as nitrogen and other minerals (it's approximately 3-1-3). They are also great at stimulating microorganisms in the soil. We will add some with compost in many of our new gardens.

PROTECT WITH A COVER CROP

The two we use are triticale (a hybrid of wheat and rye) and buckwheat. Triticale is planted in the fall, grows over winter and early spring, then is cut and the residue and roots tilled into the soil a week or two before spring planting. Buckwheat is a warm season crop and will only grow when there is no frost. Water it well for fast growth, then cut and till into the soil. Cover crops add lots of organic material to the soil. ♻️

FORT COLLINS

Oct 13 » **Habitat Hero Workshop**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 13 » **Putting the Garden to Bed and Extending the Season**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 13 » **Science Saturday with the USDA Seed Lab**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Oct 13 » **Troll House Mini Garden**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, gulleygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Oct 20 » **Botanical Stamp Carving**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$35, gulleygreenhouse.com/upcoming-events

Oct 20 » **Food Truck Rally**, Bath Garden Center, 2000 E Prospect Rd, Free admission, bathgardencenter.com/whats-new/events

Oct 20 » **Music at the Market with Colorado Green Band**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Oct 20 » **The World of Orchids**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, Suggested donation \$5 adult, \$2 child, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 21 » **Spooky/Classic Miniature Gardening Class**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

Oct 27 » **Fall Festival**, Larimer County Farmer's Market, 200 W. Oak St, Free, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

Oct 27 » **Halloween Enchanted Garden**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$5 per child, fcgov.com/gardens

Oct 27 » **Halloween Party**, Bath Garden Center, 2000 E. Prospect Rd, Free, bathgardencenter.com/whats-new/events

Nov 1 » **Fundamentals of Horticultural Therapy**, CSU Horticultural Building, 1707 Centre Ave, see website for tuition cost, htinstitute.org

Nov 3 » **Preserving the Harvest**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 3 » **Steppe Plants for a Steppe Climate**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 10 » **Happy Houseplants: Care, Culture, and Choices**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, fcgov.com/gardens



HOW TO GROW IN SHADE, BOG & SUN

DRY SHADE

An area of dry shade, under a large tree, receiving only natural precipitation, is a challenging space to grow plants. Even drought-tolerant plants need supplemental water until established.

Coral Bells (*Heuchera spp.* and hybrids) require little water once established, tolerate shade and drought, and the plethora of hybridized Heuchera leaf colors should satisfy any gardener, no matter the color scheme desired.

The ground cover plant, hardy plumbago (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*) handles dry shade, and produces blue flowers on red stems in August, with the leaves turning red for fall.

Colorado native blue mist penstemon (*Penstemon virens*) grows naturally in the foothills beneath Ponderosa pines, and also tolerates dry shade.

WET & BOGGY

Suited to wet sites with poor drainage, native western blue flag iris (*Iris missouriensis*) is a bog-loving plant with violet-blue flowers in late spring. It could be invasive in a pasture, however. In moderately moist and wet soils, swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) is a showy, pink-blossomed food plant for Monarch butterfly caterpillars.

INTENSE SUN

If you would just like to complement your garden with plants that tolerate the hot full sun, two perennials loved by pollinators are hyssop (*Agastache spp.*) with bloom colors of pink, orange, red, or blue and scented foliage, and English lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) producing long blooming, violet-blue blossoms above aromatic foliage.



PROBLEM AREA



Karen Hallberg
Colorado State University Extension Master Gardener
in Larimer County

Maybe you've been drooling over cacti, su... quickly think to yourself, "Nice, but I have work." Don't dismay! Problem areas in the garden are have multiple challenges hitting it at one time. What's the top three environmental challenges as dry shade, and intense heat and exposure. Here are some horticult your challenge into a showcase.

BLUE FLAG IRIS



PLUMBAGO



LAVENDER



CORAL BELLS



AS SOLVED

acculents, or lush leafy hostas, and areas in my garden where those won't common, in fact, most garden sites as a gardener to do? We've identified wet and boggy with poor drainage, culture recommendations that can turn

Thyssop

TAKES THE HEAT



BLUE MIST PENSTEMON



SWAMP MILKWEED



events 'n classes

FORT COLLINS

Nov 10 - 11 » **Holiday Open House**, Bath Garden Center, 2000 E. Prospect Rd, Free, bathgardencenter.com/whats-new/events

Nov 10 » **Intro to Soap Making**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Nov 17 » **Holiday Open House**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free entry, fortcollinsnursery.com

Nov 17 » **Succulent Pinecone & Mini Pumpkin Centerpieces**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

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

Dec 1 » **Holiday Wreaths**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, fcgov.com/gardens

Dec 9 » **Holiday/Classic Miniature Gardening Class**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, fortcollinsnursery.com

COLORADO MASTER GARDENER & FOOD SAFETY BOOTH

Larimer County Farmer's Market, Every Saturday through 10/27/18, 200 W. Oak St, Fort Collins, Free entry, larimercountyfarmersmarket.org

COLORADO MASTER GARDENER OFFICE HOURS

Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday Morning, CSU Extension in Larimer County, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, Fort Collins, Free, colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/Larimer

READ AND SEED

Every Monday & Tuesday, two sessions each day, 10-10:45 a.m. & 11-11:45 a.m. Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, Fort Collins, \$3 per child, fcgov.com/gardens

LOVELAND

Sept 11 » **Community Stewardship Lecture Series: Urban Homesteading**, LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Free pre-registration required, cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures

Sept 12 » **Loveland Library Fall Gardening Series**, CSU Extension, Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams Ave, Free, lovelandpubliclibrary.org

Sept 12 » **The Basics of Preserving Food Safely**, CSU Extension, Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams Ave, Free, lovelandpubliclibrary.org



LEMON MINT

UNUSUAL AND TOUGH



By Sherry Fuller, Curator, Gardens on Spring Creek

If you enjoy growing plants that not everyone (or anyone!) has, here are a few suggestions of unusual, yet tough ones that have grown very successfully at the Gardens on Spring Creek.

LEMON MINT *Monarda citriodora*

Fragrant foliage and spectacular pink-purple flowers make this a stunner. Lemon mint isn't a true mint, but a bee-balm relative that is an annual. It will gently reseed in the right location. Attracts butterflies, hummingbirds and bees but not deer and rabbits. Like the strawberry, not usually available locally, except at our spring sale.

ALPINE STRAWBERRY *Fragaria vesca*

Also called woodland strawberry, this is a wild perennial variety native to Europe and Asia. It doesn't spread by runners, but makes a clump 12" wide and 8" tall. It is everbearing, producing tiny berries with the most delicious strawberry flavor! Not readily available at local nurseries, but we have it at our annual spring plant sale.

GOJI BERRY *Lycium barbarum*

This shrubby plant has done very well in the four years it's been at The Gardens. It can grow 8' tall by 12' wide, but ours have topped out at about 4' by 4'. They are suckering and aren't really the most attractive plants, so keep that in mind when siting it in your garden. Ours bear profuse berries in late summer that resemble tiny, oval tomatoes. Considered by many a superfruit, the berries can be eaten raw, dried, or cooked. Named varieties are available at local garden centers. 🌱



ALPINE STRAWBERRY



GOJI BERRY

WATCH US TRANSFORM!



As the gardening season begins to wind down, transformations are happening at the Gardens on Spring Creek to further our mission of enriching people's lives and fostering environmental stewardship through horticulture.

Construction of five acres of new gardens is completed and soil preparation, planting and mulching are fully underway. Our talented team of horticulturists and volunteers are bringing the theme gardens, Undaunted Garden, Prairie and Foothills gardens to life—literally from the ground up.

This January, we begin construction of our expanded Visitor's Center adding a new community meeting room, lobby with gift shop, and offices. One of the Center's main features is a conservatory serving as a North American Butterfly House in partnership with the Butterfly Pavilion. Construction is expected for nine months on this one-of-a-kind amenity for northern Colorado. Fundraising to fully complete this phase of the project is still underway.



*Michelle Provaznik,
Director, Gardens
on Spring Creek*

We are excited to watch our gardens grow, and staff is currently planning multiple grand opening celebrations of both projects in fall 2019. Find out more at fcgov.com/gardens/project. 🦋



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events 'n classes

LOVELAND

Sept 18 » **Emerald Ash Borer and Other Invasives**, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Free, suburbitat.org

Sept 19 » **Gardening Hacks with Alison O'Connor**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Sept 20 » **Northern Co Beekeepers Association's Honey: Extracting, Comb Honey, Creamed Honey, and Mead**, Larimer Co Ranch, McKee Building, 5280 Arena Cir, \$5, non-members, nocobees.org

Oct 17 » **Growing Micro Greens with Kathy Hatfield**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Nov 13 » **Community Stewardship Lecture Series: Raptors of Northern Colorado**, LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Free pre-registration required, cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures

Nov 21 » **Beth's Bees with Beth Conrey**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

Dec 19 » **Christmas Club Potluck**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, lovelandgardenclub.com

BERTHOUD & WINDSOR

Sept 12 » **Fall Lawn Care**, Clearview Library, 720 3rd St, Windsor, Free, clearviewlibrary.org

Oct 2 » **Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: Extending the Season with Cold Frames**, McCarty-Fickel Home Museum, 645 7th St, Free, berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup

Oct 9 » **Xeriscape**, Clearview Library, 720 3rd St, Windsor, Free, clearviewlibrary.org



WATER USE Q&A

WINTER IS COMING— WHERE IS YOUR BACKFLOW?



Katie Collins, Water Conservation Coordinator, Fort Collins Utilities

Do you love digging holes and fixing sprinklers? How about visiting the hardware store for sprinkler parts three times in one day? If the answer is no, then learn to avoid costly repairs by winterizing your sprinkler system.

Q. WHAT IS WINTERIZING OR “BLOWING OUT” A SPRINKLER SYSTEM?

A. Winterizing a sprinkler system means getting as much water as possible out of the equipment. Air is forced through the system and pushes water out of the sprinkler heads. Winterization procedures use compressed air and can be dangerous, so seek out a professional to winterize your system.

Q. THE WEATHER FORECAST SAYS WE ARE GETTING OUR FIRST FREEZE OF THE SEASON AND I HAVEN'T SCHEDULED A BLOWOUT. HELP!

A. Soil temperatures don't drop as rapidly or drastically as air temperatures. The soil will insulate the pipes—for now. If a freeze comes before you winterize, focus on above ground equipment. Start by shutting off your sprinkler system's water supply—most likely located in your basement. Drain excess water from the supply line into a bucket. Next, go to your backflow device and open the test cocks with a flat screwdriver to release any trapped water. After the water stops flowing, turn all the valves—test cocks and ball valves—on the backflow to a 45-degree angle (see photo). This gives any remaining water somewhere to go, instead of freezing between the fittings. Before you head back in, don't forget to detach hoses from outdoor spigots and take them inside to prolong their life. Now you should be ok for the first cold snap—just don't forget to call a professional to blow the water out of the underground lines soon.



Q. SOUNDS LIKE A HASSLE. WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T WINTERIZE?

A. The water remains in your backflow, and your underground lines will freeze. Frozen water expands, leaving you with broken pipes and equipment. Leaky sprinkler systems mean costly repairs, flooded basements, high water bills, soggy mud puddles, mosquito breeding sites...need I go on? In other words, more money, more problems.

Q. I SEE A VERY SMALL DRIP COMING FROM ONE OF THE IN-GROUND SPRINKLER VALVES. IS IT WORTH THE TROUBLE TO FIX?

A. Absolutely! Even small drips waste thousands of gallons per month. Gallons saved equals money in your pocket. ❄️



THE INS & OUTS OF ALL SEASON SUCCULENTS

Succulents are great plants for any container, indoors or out. However, many varieties are not cold hardy in Colorado and need to be brought inside during the winter months. Enjoy them year-round with these simple yet important seasonal transition tips.



*Kelly Kellow,
Horticulturist,
Gardens on
Spring Creek*

- **THEY CAN'T GO BELOW 55°**
The best time to bring your containers indoors is before night temperatures drop below 55 degrees Fahrenheit (F). It's also beneficial to make sure indoor rooms or 3-season porches where you place the container does not get below 50 degrees. Return succulents outside when day and night temperatures reach above 60 degrees.
- **THEY LIKE A LITTLE BREAK FROM THE SUN**
Succulents need less light during the winter because they are no longer actively growing. Place them in a room or on a wall that gets indirect sunlight or no more than four hours of direct sunlight.
- **THEY LIKE A FEW GOOD SOAKS**
Succulents benefit from a deep watering once every one or two months in winter. Soak the top until water runs through the bottom of the container. Watering more frequently can lead to root rot; signs for the need of water include droopy leaves or indentations/wrinkles on leaves.
- **THEY MIGHT HAVE UNWANTED GUESTS**
Check for pests like aphids or mealy bugs (which look like tiny cotton balls) under, on top, and on stems. If present, remove that succulent container from the group and quarantine into another room. Use a 3-part rubbing alcohol to 1-part water solution in a spray bottle and mist onto plants. Repeat for a couple of weeks until pests are gone. 🌿



Fall

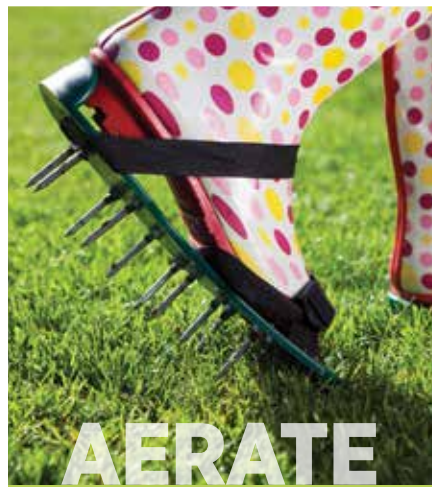
YARD & GARDEN CHECKLIST

Wait until spring to tidy up your yard. Spent plant material like flower stalks and dried ornamental grass provide food for birds and shelter for insects.



WINTERIZE

Remember October 15 as the last day to shut off and winterize your sprinkler system. It's also a good time to remove hoses from spigots and store them inside to prevent damage.



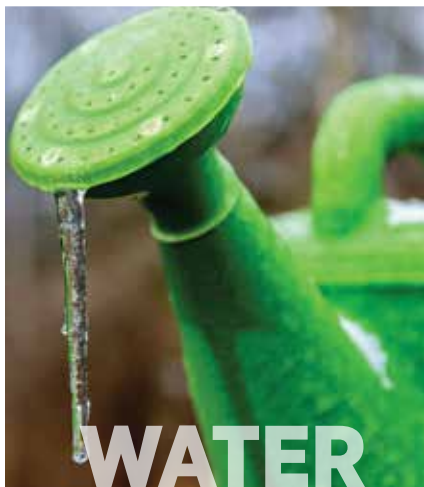
AERATE

Whether you strap on these babies or hire a service, aeration improves lawn health and reduces maintenance by helping air and water reach the root system.



PRUNE

Most shrubs and trees should be pruned in fall and winter while dormant. The exceptions are early bloomers like dogwood and lilac. Prune those just after flowering in the spring.



WATER

Colorado winters are dry! If dryness persists for more than four weeks, and there's no snow on the ground, hand water plants, trees and shrubs when temps are above 40 degrees.



Visit fcgov.com/water-smart for more tips to keep your yard healthy all year long.

Auxiliary aids and services are available for persons with disabilities.