



Garden Time

Newsletter

OCTOBER 2023



Harvest Boon
Fabulous Fall Makeovers

IMAGE BY SHEL MCNAMARA FROM PIXABAY



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The Colors of Fall/PAGE 4

OCTOBER 2023

PODCAST 029



4

PODCAST 030



10

COMING UP



14

GARDEN TIPS



16

**Garden Time Newsletter • October 2023
Volume 2, No. 10, Issue #15**

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PODCAST 029

Season 2
Episode 17

Sept. 14, 2023

Fall is here and it's time to make some changes. On this episode of Garden Time we will help you use plants to decorate your home for the upcoming season. Then we will shop the garden center to see some color that you can use to freshen up those containers and pots for the fall and winter.



Al's Garden Center's Annie Ruef and Peter Eastman with Judy and Ryan.

Fall is here and it is time to start decorating for the season. Welcoming people (or trick-or-treaters) to your home during the fall is a great way to signal the change of the season. We dropped by Al's Garden & Home in Wilsonville (<https://als-gardencenter.com>, 503-855-3527) to talk with Peter about some ideas on how to do that. Peter was joined by Annie from the Al's design team to show us different types of decorations for our front porch. She worked as Peter talked about the

placement of the fall container as part of an overall design for your front patio or porch. He mentioned the rule of triangles. The eye is drawn to triangles, whether triangles of color or height, and her decorative elements were used to create that shape. Pumpkins were stacked to create a triangle. Tall corn stalks were combined with the millet in the containers and then down to smaller pots of mums to create the desired shape. The shades also worked well together to create a wonder-

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ful and visually stimulating triangle of color.

We then moved to creating seasonal plants to create large living containers to decorate for the season. At this time of year, those summer annuals are looking a little tired and they can use some freshening up. Some of the plants he recommended go perfectly with the colors of fall. It starts with large plants to create a focal point and then spills down to filler plants and then ends with seasonal spiller plants. In the past we have built containers with a Cyprus, Osmanthus, Heuchera, pansies and cyclamens. These



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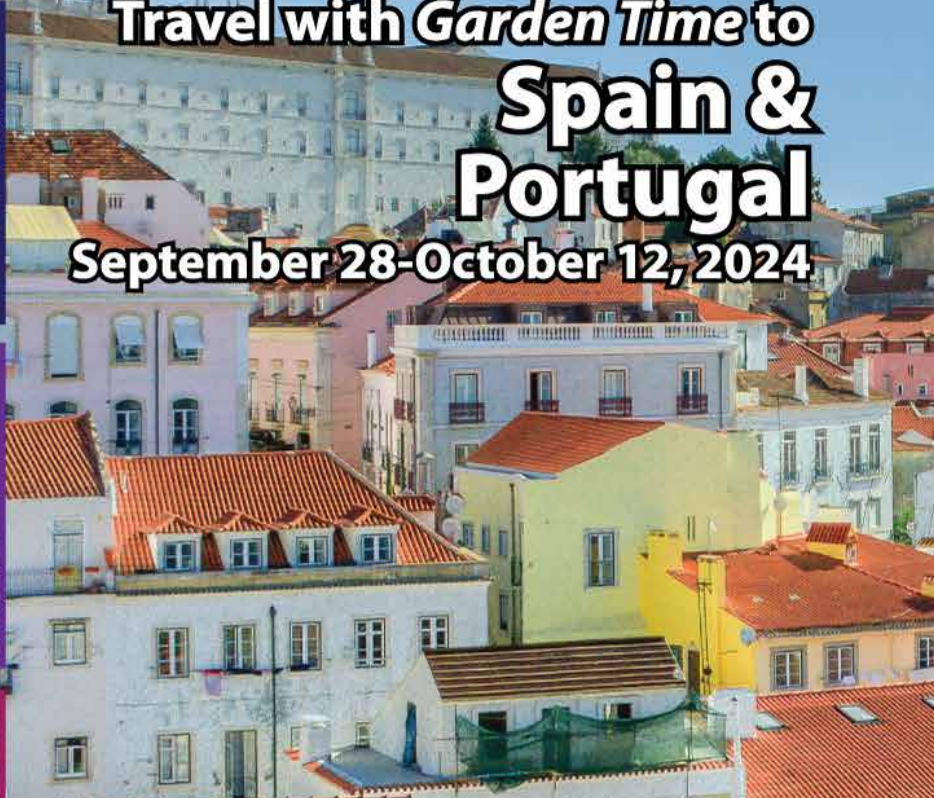


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plants can handle the cold and will do well through the next few months. To add some seasonal flavor for the upcoming holidays, we can add mini-lights, holly branches, and other holiday color décor to brighten things up. They can then be removed for the winter, and you still have a wonderful container on your patio. When spring comes you can remove some of the tired older plants and use spring annuals for a new color pop! A benefit with winter containers is that you don't have to worry as much about sun or shade plants. With the shortened daylight hours, there is not a huge amount



**Garden
Time**

Peter Eastman shows Judy and Ryan a table full of fall color.

of sun. The final touch for your container is the addition of spring flowering bulbs. Plant these before you get your planter filled and they will surprise you in a few months when they pop up between those winter perennials. Some other tips to follow; look for buds instead of flowers, especially on mums. The buds mean that more flowers are coming so your plant and container will look better longer. We also noticed that tiny decorative squash also added to the autumn feel in a container.

If you are looking for ideas on changing your fall décor be sure to stop by any of the four Al's Garden and Home locations in the Portland Metro area. They also have a full slate of classes happening through the fall to get you in the mood for the season. Plus they are also holding their Biggest Sale of the Year through October 18th.



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OCTOBER ATTRACTIONS

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PODCAST 030

Season 2
Episode 18

Sept. 25, 2023

It is finally fall and time to start to work on your lawn??? On this episode of Garden Time we will talk about how fall is the perfect season to get your grass ready for the spring and summer ahead. We will also talk about the critters and diseases you can prevent or avoid.



We have been telling you fall is the time for planting, and we aren't just talking about fall perennials, we're also talking about your lawn. Tom from Bonide (<https://bonide.com/>) joined us to talk not just about fall lawn care, but also how to deal with other fall problems in your lawn and garden. If you are thinking about planting a new lawn or overseeding to fill a few bare spots, now is the time to get that grass seed down. Right now, the ground is retaining all that heat from summer so the grass seed will grow better. In the spring the air may be warm, but the soil remains

cold so germination is a lot slower. The first thing you need to do is to get rid of any moss and weeds that you may have in your lawn. Tom had a couple products to help you get rid of your old turf. Captain Jack's Deadweed Brew is a natural product that can eliminate your turf naturally, or you can try the synthetic product 'Kleen Up' to do the same thing. Remember to read and follow all label directions for the best coverage and effectiveness.

Next, you should mow your lawn to its shortest height without doing too much damage and then you can thatch, level

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and aerate your lawn. This will remove the dead thatch and moss, and allow for greater contact with the soil for your new seed. Then you can apply a garden lime to 'sweeten' the soil. Our native soils tend to be a little acidic. Finally you apply your new seed. Be sure to pick a seed that will work for your conditions. Consider how much light your lawn will get and then pick the appropriate sun or shade mixture. Once your seed is down, cover it with a light layer of top soil and then keep it moist, but not soaking wet. This will allow the seed to germinate and grow. If your seed starts to grow and it dries out, you may have to apply more seed since the younger plants may have died.

Another autumn chore: Fertilizing! To keep your lawn healthy in the winter and give it a boost for the spring, now is the time to apply a good fall and winter fertilizer. The numbers on the bag can be confusing, but what you are looking for is a well-balanced slow-release fertilizer. Your lawn is slowly fed all through the winter and then gets a jump start when the temperatures warm

up in the spring. Keeping your lawn well maintained in the winter helps to prevent problems later.

Fall is also the time to think about and look for pests and diseases in your lawn. This fall we have seen a lot of grub activity. If you have a brown patch it could be that there are grubs eating away at the roots of your lawn. Another sign is patches of turf being torn up in your yard. This is usually a sign of other animals like raccoons, skunks and even crows digging up your lawn to look for those grubs to eat. Bonide has a product called 'Grub Beater' that you can apply to your lawn to reduce and eliminate those little guys. If you had a problem this year you can look at applying it now or in the spring to cover you through the new growing season. If you are seeing other problems with your lawn like rust, it could be a sign of a disease problem. For that you can apply 'Infuse', a systemic disease control product. This will help to control pesky diseases in your lawn AND your landscape. This product also works the best in the spring or early



Squirrels can be deterred with a natural product from Bonide called 'Repels-All'.

summer.

If you are having problems with some of our larger lawn pests you may want to apply 'Mole Max'. Moles and voles are looking for those grubs, too, and while they are looking for dinner, they can leave a torn up lawn in their wake. Mole Max is another natural product that drives these critters away from your garden and lawn without killing them. Another natural Bonide product for deterring your garden pests, like rabbits, skunks, deer and squirrels, is Repels-All. This is an irritant that makes your garden an unwelcome place for these foragers. It comes in a spray and a granular application.

If you would like to learn more about Bonide products or need help identifying a garden problem and finding solutions, check out their website for lots of helpful tips, retail locations and other great information.



Moles can wreak havoc on tender blades of grass.

PODCAST 031 PREVIEW

October 2023

We're preparing for our next podcast, and here are some of the topics we plan to discuss. Since the Garden Time Podcast is a free-form format, we never know what might pop up as we talk, but the information below is a loose guide as to where we'll begin. We would love to have your input on topics for future podcasts. Send us your ideas and questions at gardentime@comcast.net.

The colors of spring are close at hand, even with winter approaching.

Coming up in October, we will visit a local nursery to see what bulbs you can plant now to give you waves of Spring and Summer color. You will get some useful tips on planting those bulbs in your landscape and how to use them to freshen up your tired winter planters. We're not only talking about spring color, we're also talking about those culinary bulbs like onions and garlic.

Then we will get some tips for what to

do in the fall garden. There are a lot of fall chores that you can do now to help make your winter garden ready for the cold days ahead. We will also debunk some of those garden myths about common gardening practices. Just because you read about it on the internet or have seen a TikTok video, doesn't mean that it is good for you or your garden. In fact, you could be doing some long term damage to your plants!

Join us in October as we bring you two brand new Garden Time podcasts!



PHOTO CREDIT: RON DUNEVANT

Spring bulbs: Plant now for color next year.



IMAGE BY FREEPIK

Autumn chores: Teachable moments.



IMAGE BY WIRESTOCK ON FREPIK

Mother Nature's palette: Autumn in the Pacific Northwest.

What To Do in the Garden

OCTOBER

Ah, the shades of Autumn. Just when you think all the color is leaving your garden, Fall arrives and we're presented with a brand new palette of hues. It's also a reminder that time is running out to prepare your plants for winter. Take advantage of the longer daylight hours and make sure your plants are ready for the cold days ahead.

PLANNING

- Start to plan next year's vegetable garden. Take your notes from this year while everything is fresh in your mind and create the plan for next year's garden. Rotate the spaces where crops were this year to help control disease and insect problems.



- Garden Journal catch-up

time. There is no time like the present for getting caught up. This will help with the plan for next year's vegetable garden.

- Check out any conifer sales and plan the live Christmas tree purchase early. Starting a green tradition of planting a live tree after Christmas is something to get the entire family involved in. Plant the 'seed' early this year to get the family excited about the new yearly tradition!

PLANTING

- The best time to plant anything into the landscape is actually all winter long! You can move plants around in the yard now and plant in any new acquisitions to the landscape. With the rain coming on you won't have to worry about watering them until next spring sometime.

- Move the plants that are stuck beneath the house overhang under the eaves where rain doesn't reach.

- There are about two weeks left to plant a new lawn or over-seed an existing one. Lawns started in the fall start quickly but don't wait until the frosts are here or you won't have good results.

- Plant spring bulbs starting this month through December. There is no better time to get your spring bulbs in the ground for next year's bloom. This includes tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and crocus. Choose a sunny location

with well-draining soil. Add compost to the soil by spading it in with a fertilizer.

- Bulb tip! Keep the squirrels and deer from eating the tulips by placing a tablespoon of Bonide's 'Molemax' into the planting hole before the bulb goes in.



TASKS, MAINTENANCE & CLEAN-UP

- Time to clean out the Mason Bee condos and clean up the cocoons.
- Watch for Crane Fly infestations in the lawn. Using Beneficial Nematodes in the soil can safely kill these lawn destroyers before they eat it all, however you can actually have 25 grubs per square foot of lawn without seeing a lot of damage if the lawn is healthy and thick. Fertilize the lawn, apply Cal-piril lime yearly, aerate and dethatch every so often and mow the grass taller to help create a lush thick

grass lawn the Crane Fly grubs can't destroy.

- Compost excess leaves and garden debris. Composting is a great way to recycle all the yard waste back to the Earth. Mow the leaves to chop them up and add to the compost pile with greens like grass clippings to aid the breakdown of the leaves. Think layer cake when doing compost; a layer of



W T D I T G

wet green grass clippings followed by a layer of dry brown leaves.

Saving bags of dry leaves for next summer's compost pile is not too hard to do and helps provide the 'brown' needed in the compost



layer cake. You probably found out when it's all green grass clippings it quickly becomes a smelly pile of guck. Good

compost smells like good earth, not stinky at all. Turning the pile every other week helps to introduce oxygen into the mix, much needed by the microbes breaking down the material. More oxygen means faster breakdown. Do a little research and start composting!

- Don't compost diseased leaves from fruit trees. Burn them or send to municipal composting facilities.

- Get garden plants ready for winter, but don't prune back hard. Too often folks are eager to cut back their plants hard in the fall. Not a good idea. Plants get ready for winter weather from the top down, so if you cut off the top then the plant will be more susceptible to cold damage. It is more prudent to leave the plants tall and even with spent flowers on them (birds will thank you) and then pile on the leaves from the yard to cover the soil. Leaves are good insulation against the cold coming in winter. If you have to clean everything up then come back with a thick topdressing of organic compost or bark.



- Slugs patrol for eggs or adults. Use safe slug controls like Slug Magic which is just iron phosphate. As this prod-

uct breaks down the plants get

the benefit of the extra iron. Eggs look like little off-white BBs. Gather them up and toss them in the garbage. Look under rocks, boards, garden debris; wherever the mama slug found a protected spot to lay her egg stash.

- Watering, especially under the house eaves, getting ready for colder weather. Plants that go into cold weather with dry roots are extremely susceptible to cold damage. Just like our skin, plants can take the cold better when hydrated. Water plants deeply this fall if the rains are not getting to the roots; like under evergreen trees and eaves of the house.

- Winterize the more tender plants you want to save for next year like the hanging fuchsias, geraniums, dahlias and tuberous begonias. Bring them into a protected environment before the frost gets them. Treating them as a houseplant can give you a head start on next year's flower gardens.

VEGETABLE GARDEN



- Be sure to pick the crops as they mature before they lose their best flavor. Some crops can stay in the ground over winter and pulled up when wanting to prepare them for a meal; like beets, carrots, parsnips & turnips. Mulch them in good with a thick layer of leaves or compost.

- Planting cover crops to help fight weeds in winter and add back nutrients to the soil for next years crops. Give back to the soil the nutrition that your plants took out as they grew. Cover crops are the bee's knees when it comes to adding back some nitrogen plus other nutrients and adds lots of organic

matter back to the soil when you spade it under to rot next spring.



- Plant Garlic cloves You still have time to plant some garlic this fall. Be sure to purchase some heads soon or they'll be gone before you get yours! Garlic gets planted in the fall and sends up a green sprout soon afterward. The cloves need months

to mature so you should get them in soon. After it sprouts you can pop a layer of compost over them to protect them this winter. Then mark your calendar for next July to harvest the best tasting garlic ever-your own crop!

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