

Key to lush lawn is maintenance Heads up! Cabbages can look fabulous

Do you want your lawn to be the envy of the neighborhood? Are you tired of weeds, insects or disease plaguing your yard? The key to a lush, problem-free lawn is proper lawn maintenance.

Follow these simple tips:

- **Watering:** Water only when needed - about every three days - with a thorough, even watering that reaches the roots. Increase frequency in hot, dry weather or whenever the grass begins to look wilted, or has a gray tinge.



Landscaper's Cove
Rick Vespa

As a general guideline, apply one to two inches of water per week early in the morning to reduce susceptibility of disease and keep newly seeded lawns moist until established.

■ **Fertilization:** Try an easy four-step approach to fertilization with granular products specifically formulated for seasonal application. Apply fertilizer with crabgrass preventer before the first spring bloom, then continue the following steps at six- to eight-week intervals. For best results, use either a drop-type spreader or a broadcast spreader.

Drop-type spreaders are the most accurate and good for weed-control products, whereas broadcast spreaders are the easiest and fastest to use. For best results, see your

lawn care professional for details.

■ **Mowing:** Always use a sharp mower blade, as dull blades can cause bruised and ragged leaf tips, making grass more susceptible to disease and insects.

Be sure to remove only a third of the leaf blade per mowing - mowing too low can weaken grass plants.

Other helpful tips include changing direction of the mowing pattern regularly and avoiding mowing when grass is wet.

The Garden Writers Association commissioned a 2003 spring garden trends research study. Concerns about the economy and the war with Iraq haven't dampened the enthusiasm of gardeners.

Fifty-five percent of gardeners plan to spend the same this year on flowers and ornamental plants (flowers, trees and shrubs), while 12 percent said they planned to spend more. Twenty-one percent planned to spend less on ornamentals.

Fifty-seven percent planned to spend the same, 13 percent more and 14 percent less, on vegetables and fruits.



These cabbages make an attractive vegetable bed.



Garden Spot
Marty Figley

Nona Wolfman Knivula, GWA president and executive director of the National Garden Bureau, said, "These responses are encouraging and further support that gardening provides important relief from the pressures of daily events, especially during periods of significant economic and political uncertainty."

Flowers will be the top choice of 27 percent of the public this spring, followed by vegetables and fruits at 24 percent, grass at 18 percent, and trees and shrubs at 11 percent.

Suburban dwellers, married couples, those with higher education and higher incomes and females all showed a stronger preference for flowers over edibles.

I However, when asked which type of plant they would spend more money on this year, 41 percent of the consumers planned to increase their spending on edibles, and 36 percent planned to increase their spending on ornamentals.

The survey was conducted in March by Technometric Market Intelligence. At the 95 percent confidence level, the margin of error for respondents overall is plus/minus 3.2

HOME AND GARDEN CALENDAR

- Royal Oak Garden Club**
The Royal Oak Community Plant Exchange will be 9-11 a.m. Saturday, April 19 at the Royal Oak Community Center just off I-94 Mile Road on Maris Road, and all trades are free. Master Gardeners are available to answer questions and lively garden chats.
- African Violets Sale**
The Michigan State African Violet Society will have its annual spring display and sale 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, April 19, and 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, April 20, at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Birch Road, in Ann Arbor. Admission is free. Standard African violets will be for sale, as well as minis, seminimis and trailers.
- Depression Glass Club**
The Great Lakes Depression Glass Club Show and Sale will feature Depression-era glass, which is all glassware made in the United States from the early 1920s until mid-1940s and a few patterns in the 1950s. The glass was a molded product, often a giveaway item with another purchase, such as the "dish night" at the movies. The show and sale takes place 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, April 26 and 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Sunday, April 27 at the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Building, 876 Horne Brown Drive, Madison Heights (west of John R and east of Stechenon Highway). Admission is \$5. For information, call Maltelyn Blair-Fisher at (586) 739-4920.
- Meadow Brook Hall**
Oakland University's Meadow Brook Hall Garden Club will meet 10 a.m.
- Friday, April 25, in the Coach House at Meadow Brook Hall on the OU campus in Rochester.**
Horticulturist Sandra Richards of the Michigan State University Extension will talk on Getting Your Garden Ready for Spring. Non-member donation \$5. Reservations aren't required.
- Landscaping design**
Learn about designing gardens for continuous blooms at a workshop sponsored by the Hardy Plant Society at the Bowers School Farm in Bloomfield Hills, located on the north side of Square Lake Road between Adams and Squirrel Road at the I-75/Adams road from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26. Charlene Harris, a landscape designer who has taught classes at Michigan State University and Hidden Lakes Gardens and worked with the American Conifer Society, will show how to combine perennials, foliage plants, flowering trees, shrubs and conifers to create gardens to be enjoyed throughout the seasons. The \$20 fee does not include lunch. Attendees can brown bag their lunch or visit a nearby restaurant. Send checks to Hardy Plant Society, 322 E. Lovell, in Troy 48065-1521. For information, call (248) 819-3272 or hardyplantsociety@comcast.net.
- Basement remodeling**
Birmingham Community Education, in cooperation with Oakland Builders Institute, will offer an eight-hour basement remodeling seminar 6:10 p.m. Monday and Wednesday, April 28 and 30, at Berkshire Middle School, 21707 W. 14 Mile in Beverly Hills.
- Cost is \$90, plus a textbook fee of \$8. Pre-registration with payment is required no later than Thursday, April 24, to Birmingham Community Education. To register, call (248) 203-3800 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday.
- The seminar is designed to help people make better use of valuable space in their homes by planning and completing a successful basement remodeling.
- The instructor, a licensed builder, will explain the many facets of basement remodeling, including planning, meeting building codes, insurance, permits, estimating materials, the basics of home construction, working with subcontractors, finishing techniques, and tying into existing plumbing, electrical and heating systems.
- Oakland Builders Institute teaches building courses in 38 schools in Michigan. For a free brochure and current schedule of class locations, call (800) 940-2014.
- Gilda's Club**
Visit Gilda's Club, 3517 Rochester Road, in Royal Oak, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Monday, April 28 for a free lecture on Butterfly Gardening presented by Anton Andersen. Andersen, a cancer survivor, will present "Seed Seeds of Hope - Butterfly Gardening" free to the community.
- Learn how to devise a garden filled with flowers that attract butterflies and contain delicious scents.
- Andersen will present a slide show to give dozens of ideas. Reservations required. For information, call (248) 577-0800.

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