

Black plastic speeds germination

This is the season when homeowners are improving their lawns, repairing places that show winter damage or areas that need a steel rake to ruffle up the soil for spot seeding.

Where you have a new planting of seed, remember that just a casual spray isn't enough. New seed plantings should be thoroughly watered. If you have an automatic system, chances are it will water deep enough for the minute hair roots to become established.

Those using a garden hose should stand in one spot, slowly count to 20 and then move on to the next and do the same thing. Be sure the spray isn't too strong.

Daffodil leaves seem to hang on long after the flower show is over. This is known as the ripening period — the cycle when the plants are forming the flower for next year. This food from the drying leaves has starches (carbohydrates). If the leaves are too annoying, you can braid them to give more open space for annuals or you can bend them over and secure them with wire tape.



down to earth Alice Burlingame

Some of us have delayed in planting our squash and large leaf vegetables. Black plastic is an excellent way to control the weeds. Decaying grass will enrich the soil under the covered area. When you are ready to plant, cut a slit and reach in and plant the seeds, spacing them as recommended on the seed packet. The covered area warms up rapidly. Your seeds will germinate earlier than without plastic covering. The soil keeps moist and insects don't seem to like the plastic cover. Don't use clear plastic. Good results with this technique are reported for melons, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes and other plants. As you saunter around your property, be on the lookout for tent caterpillars.

Carry out your campaign to destroy them early in the morning or after sunset when they have returned to the web for warmth. The best way to destroy them is to swab the nest with a cloth soaked in kerosene or cut off the branch, if it is a minor one, and burn it. You might put plastic or newspaper under the project to catch those menaces who like leaves.

Did you know that ants go in for slavery? One colony will raid another colony and bring back prisoners to do their work.

Have respect for earthworms. They are among the best soil cultivators and fertilizers in the world. They work in the soil as deep as seven feet, eating soil and munching on small stones which they turn into soil in their gizzards. By this process, they loosen and enrich the soil and prepare it to absorb water.

As the worms mingle with the surface weeds, they form channels for the absorption of water. Powerful chemical fertilizers have decreased the worm population. So, take your pick — worms or a perfect lawn.

Local churches have inquired about Biblical gardens. For our traveling population, I recommend a visit to the Biblical garden at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 110th Street and Amsterdam in New York City.

Take bus to concerts

The Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) will provide special bus service from three Oakland County locations to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra 1981-82 Coffee Concert series.

Special Park and Ride busses will provide express service to the concerts from Somerset Inn, Big Beaver and Coolidge, Troy; Orchard Mall, Orchard Lake and Maple, West Bloomfield; and Northland Mall, Greenfield between eight and Nine Mile roads, Southfield. Free parking will be available at each of the sites for Coffee Concert patrons. Busses will leave Somerset Inn at

9:30 a.m., Orchard Mall at 9:20 a.m. and Northland at 9:30 a.m. Coffee Concert dates are Oct. 9, 23, Dec. 4, Feb. 19, March 12 and May 7. All concerts will be held at Ford Auditorium.

Season round-trip tickets are available and will cost \$23 from Somerset Inn and Northland Mall and \$25 from Orchard Mall.

Send check of money order to: Coffee Concert Tickets, SEMTA, P.O. Box 533, Detroit 48231. Season ticket orders will be filled in order of receipt beginning Sept. 1. All patrons must have a ticket to board the special Coffee Concert busses.

Art classes begin June 15

Registration is underway for the summer program at Center for Creative Studies, College of Art and Design. The eight-week summer program begins

June 15 and continues through Aug. 10. For information, call the registrar's office, 872-3118. The school is at 245 E. Kirby in Detroit's University-Cultural Center.

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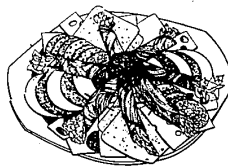
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