



## GARDEN TIPS FOR JUNE!

*David Hillock*

### General Landscape

- Find someone to water plants in the house and garden while on vacation. Harvesting vegetables and mowing the lawn are a must and imply that someone is home.
- Mulch ornamentals, vegetables, and annuals to reduce soil crusting, and to regulate temperatures and moisture during hot summer months. Mulching will reduce about 70 percent of the summer yard maintenance.
- Remain alert for insect damage. Add spider mite to the list. Foliage of most plants becomes pale and speckled; juniper foliage turns a pale yellowish color. Shake a branch over white paper and watch for tiny specks that crawl. Watch for first generation fall webworm. ([EPP-7306](#))

### Turfgrass

- Fertilize warm-season grasses at 1 lb. N per 1,000 square feet. Don't fertilize fescue and other cool-season grasses during the summer.
- Dollar spot disease of lawns can first become visible in mid-May. Make certain fertilizer applications have been adequate before applying a fungicide. ([EPP-7658](#))
- Seeding of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of June (through July for improved varieties such as Riviera and Yukon to reduce winterkill losses. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. ([HLA-6420](#))
- White grubs will soon be emerging as adult June Beetles. Watch for high populations that can indicate potential damage from later life cycle stages as grubs in the summer.

### Fruit and Nut

- Renovate overgrown strawberry beds after the last harvest. Start by setting your lawnmower on its highest setting and mow off the foliage. Next thin crowns 12-24 inches apart. Apply recommended fertilizer, preemergence herbicide if needed and keep watered. ([HLA-6214](#))

### Trees and Shrubs

- Vigorous, unwanted limbs should be removed or shortened on new trees. Watch for forks in the main trunk and remove the least desirable trunk as soon as it is noticed. ([HLA-6415](#))
- Pine needle disease treatments are needed again in mid-June.
- Remove tree wraps during the summer to avoid potential disease and insect buildup.
- Softwood cuttings from new growth of many shrubs will root if propagated in a moist shady spot.
- Protect trees from lawnmowers and weed eaters by mulching or using protective aerated covers.

### Flowers

- Pinch back leggy annuals to encourage new growth. Fertilize and water appropriately.

- Feed established mums and other perennials.
- When picking fresh roses or removing faded ones, cut back to a leaflet facing the outside of the bush to encourage open growth and air circulation.
- Stake tall perennials before toppling winds arise.

## **Selecting Deciduous Trees for Oklahoma**

*David Hillock*

Deciduous trees (trees that lose all or most of their leaves at the end of a growing season) affect the well-being and appearance of Oklahoma communities. They contribute to an atmosphere of peace of mind and relaxation. One of the most effective ways to improve community appearance is to plant trees. Trees also increase recreational opportunities, bolster local property values, and aid in reduced noise pollution. Because there are so many deciduous trees for use in landscaping, carefully select appropriate trees for your needs.

Selection should be based on several different factors. The intended purpose should influence selection of trees with appropriate shape, size and other physical characteristics. Deciduous trees are used for shade, ornamentation, screening, windbreak, sound-reducing purposes and to attract wildlife. Deciduous trees can also be selected to provide edible fruit or nuts. When properly selected and maintained, trees can increase property values. Selecting native or adapted trees is important for long-term survival and reduced maintenance.

Consider the size of mature trees and where they are to be used. Trees that grow tall, such as the American elm, burr oak, sycamore, and tulip tree, are suitable for larger buildings and spaces. They tend to dominate or hide one-story buildings. For attractive and proper balance with one-story buildings, trees shorter than about 35 feet when full grown are recommended. Careful consideration of mature size will reduce the need for pruning. Avoid placing trees too close to the home, as they can cause damage to the roof and fill gutters with plant debris. Plant trees at a minimum distance of half the mature canopy width away from the home.

Shape is especially important in selecting trees for ornamental and shade purposes. Tall trees with long, spreading, vase shapes, or weeping branches give abundant shade. Small trees and trees of other shapes, including narrow, columnar, pyramidal, and clump forms and the low growing types such as hawthorn, crabapple and dogwood have ornamental purposes, but do not provide abundant shade.

Environmental conditions should influence the selection of trees. Size of the planting area is important, as are site characteristics such as sun or shade, wet or dry, exposure to winter winds or pollution. Trees selected should be tolerant of existing conditions, and be hardy in the appropriate climate zone. The amount and quality of underground rooting space impacts tree growth too. Tree roots are typically found in the top 18 inches of soil and often extend past the canopy. Trees growing in restricted root zones, such as between the sidewalk and street, or in new subdivisions with compacted sub-soil, often succumb to insect pests and diseases quicker, exhibit slower growth rates, and reach shorter mature heights than trees growing in open spaces.

Finally, consider how much maintenance the tree will require and any possible disadvantages including susceptibility to attack by disease and insect pests; soft or brittle wood that is easily damaged by wind and ice; fruits and seeds that are large, messy, smelly or otherwise obnoxious; and abundant shedding of twigs and small branches. Some examples of these conditions are the killing of ash by borers, breaking of Siberian elm branches by wind and ice, and the production of bad-smelling fruit by the female ginkgo. The production of fruit by the

mulberry, which attracts birds, can also be an undesirable characteristic. Since this fruit is soft and decomposes rapidly when ripe, it is messy on walks and attracts flies and other insects.

Fast-growing trees, such as silver maple and poplars, typically possess weak wood and are often short-lived. In addition, trees with weak, narrow crotch angles are sometimes susceptible to limb damage from snow/ice storms. Fast-growing trees and trees with weak, narrow crotch angles should be planted away from houses and other buildings to avoid potential damage from falling limbs. Under good growing conditions, trees known for slow growth rates, such as oaks, can grow up to two feet per year, and will provide long-term benefits.

## Deadheading!

*David Hillock*

“Deadheading” is a term often heard amidst the conversations of gardeners across the country. One not familiar with the term may be somewhat startled by such a word. However, it simply means to remove old, faded, spent blooms from your plants by pinching or cutting them off. By deadheading your flowers, new blooms are encouraged and the blooming period of many plants can often be extended.

Remove old blossoms by cutting or pinching back to just above a leaf node on the stem below the flower. If the stem of the plant is somewhat woody and tough, then pruners or a pair of sharp scissors may be used. Soft herbaceous plants can be pinched by hand. When I was working as a gardener in Utah, we used a good old pair of sheep sheers to cut back the hundreds of petunias and other annual flowers we were growing. Petunias respond well to a good haircut about early to mid-July. Many of the newer varieties on the market are self-dead-heading and may not need trimming. But, if necessary, cut them back about half way, give them a shot of fertilizer and watch them bloom like crazy the rest of the summer. Other plants that respond well to deadheading include ageratum, geranium, marigold, and zinnia.



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This newsletter is one way of communicating horticultural information to those interested.

**DAVID CANTRELL**  
Extension Educator, Agriculture  
[david.cantrell@okstate.edu](mailto:david.cantrell@okstate.edu)

PREPARED BY: Stephanie Wilson  
[stephanie.wilson12@okstate.edu](mailto:stephanie.wilson12@okstate.edu)

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