



GARDENING
BY GEORGE

Summertime

Some people call it the dog days of summer, but its purrrfect here at the Garden Center. Blaze and I spend time outdoors under the new shade screens. All the colorful hanging baskets and the lush green plants make it quite pleasant. Of course, when the temperature gets too hot, we scurry inside. There are changes inside and a lot of items are not where they used to be. Luckily I found a cozy spot under the houseplant table and Blaze likes to nod out beneath the Tula Hat display. I saw Toni putting together a pretty African Violet stand that I might check out.

Plants continue to arrive for THE LANDSCAPING PROJECT under the artful direction of Herr's Lawn & Landscape.

The SUMMER SALE is in full swing. I think Nancy and Bob are clearing the shelves for more remodeling. The clearance corner has books for \$1.00 and many of the items are 75% off!! (Blaze and I are not for sale however).

So in spite of the warm weather, everyone at the Garden Center is very busy. Just thinking about all that work that's going on makes me want to take a cat nap.

Our friend Mike at the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center has asked us to put the word out that there is a dire need for blood donations. If you are able to donate, and willing, please call 1-888-482-5663. Or log onto www.giveblood.org

Coneflowers

Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) are native to North America. They are members of the daisy family. The genus *Echinacea* has only nine species, but about 50 cultivated hybrids. Coneflowers are vigorous plants with rough, deep green foliage, and striking flowers—usually purple, but also pink, red, white, and rarely, yellow. It has prickly seed heads. The name *Echinacea* is derived from “echinos”, the Greek word for hedgehog, a reference to the plants prickly seed head.



American Indians called coneflowers snakeroot, scurvy root, or rattlesnake weed. They used the roots to treat a number of ailments,

including snake bites.

Echinacea purpurea is the best known species and parent of most modern hybrids. The cultivar “magnus” was recognized as the Perennial Plant Association plant of the year in 1998. It is a compact variety, 2 to 3 feet tall, covered with large flowers with deep rose-colored petals in a flat ring around a bronzy seed head.

Older varieties flowered at the top of their stems, but new varieties produce branching stems with many flowers per stem.

Coneflowers are easy to grow and trouble free. They flourish with little care and bloom for weeks in late summer and early fall. They need sun or part shade and really well drained soil. They tolerate hot, dry summers and can withstand 30 degree below zero winters. Grow from seed or propagate by dividing plants in early spring or early fall. Varieties grown from seed should bloom their first year in the garden. Fertilizer is not essential, but if you wish—use a balanced fertilizer lightly in spring. Over fertilization causes weak spindly growth. Seed heads can be stripped of petals and used in bouquets for dramatic effect.



NOW'S THE TIME - SEASONAL CALENDAR

JULY

- Begin preparing fall vegetable beds for planting this month or in August.
- Mist house plants that require high humidity. The exceptions are the Chinese evergreen and dracaenas like corn plants.
- Feed peach and plum trees with a high nitrogen fertilizer such as Fertilome "Pecan, Citrus and Fruit Tree Fertilizer".
- Summer prune roses to keep them in good shape.
- Cut off dead seed pods on crape myrtles to encourage more blooms.
- Black sooty mold indicates the presence of sucking insects. Get rid of the insects and the black sooty mold will also go away.
- *Normally* we do not recommend preventative application of insecticides. However, if you are going away on vacation, I recommend applying Nitro-Phos BugOut or Hi-Yield Permethrin granules to prevent chinch bug or perhaps sod web worm damage from greeting you when you return
- Sow wildflower seeds from now until January for flowers next spring.
- Last chance to fertilize azaleas. If you have not already fertilized three times, fertilize before last of July.

SALE! SALE! SALE! ·MANY VARIETIES OF ROSES & HYDRANGES 1/2 OFF ·FINALE - 5.99 WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

AUGUST

- Water azaleas regularly and well. Buds are now setting for next years bloom.
- Sow flower seeds such as calendula, four-o'clock, blue bonnets, hollyhock, French marigold, and snap dragon for fall or early spring blooms.
- Plant fall vegetable seed and starter plants according to accompanying guide on page 3.
- Do these rose chores in August to produce "show-stopping" flowers in the fall:
 - Cleanup your roses by pruning them. Cut out all dead or diseased canes. Shorten good canes by 5 - 6 inches. Loosen top inch of soil and add 2"-3" of pine bark mulch.
 - Take care of any insect and disease problems. During hot, humid weather roses are likely to be infested with spider mites, black spot or powdery mildew. One or two treatments with Bonide Systemic Insect Spray will take care of the spider mite problems. For black spot or powdery mildew use Fertilome Halt or Liquid Systemic Fungicide.

**Lost a shrub?
Ask About Our Replanting Service**

Fall Vegetable Planting Guide

The following table contains our recommendations of dates for planting seeds and starter plants of various vegetables as well as the approximate days to maturity.

Vegetable	Plant Seeds	Starter Plants	Days to Maturity
*Beans (Lima, String, Butter)	Mid July thru Mid Aug.	N. A.	80-100
*Beets	Mid Sept. thru Oct.	N. A.	60-70
*Broccoli	Mid Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Sept. Thru Mid Oct.	70-100
Brussel Sprouts	Mid Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Sept. Thru Mid Oct.	70-100
*Cabbage	Mid Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Sept. Thru Mid Oct.	70-100
*Carrots	Oct. thru Mid Nov.	N. A.	80-90
*Cauliflower	Mid Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Sept. Thru Mid Oct.	70-100
*Collards	Sept. thru Mid Oct	All Winter	60-90
*Cucumber	Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Aug. thru Sept.	60-80
*Eggplant	Mid May thru June.	Mid July thru Aug.	90-100
Kohlrabi	Mid Oct.	All Winter	65-85
*Lettuce	Mid Oct.	All Winter	50-90
*Mustard	Sept. thru Mid Nov.	All Winter	40-50
*Onion Seed	Oct. thru Mid Nov.	Aug. thru Nov.	100-130
Onion 10-15-Y	Mid Oct.	Plant thru Dec.	90-130
*Peas (Snap Type)	Mid Sept. thru Mid Oct.	N. A.	65-105
*Peas (Blackeye, Crowder, Purple Hull)	July thru Mid Aug.	N. A.	70-90
*Pepper	Mid May thru June.	Mid July thru Aug.	90-100
Potato (plant eyes from certified seed potatoes)	Mid Aug. thru Mid Sept.	N. A.	90-100
*Radish	Oct. thru Dec.	N. A.	35-50
*Squash (Winter Type)	Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Aug. thru Sept.	60-70
*Squash (Yellow, Zucchini)	Aug. thru Mid Sept.	Aug. thru Sept.	60-70
*Sweet Corn	Mid July thru Mid Aug.	N. A.	80-100
*Swiss Chard	Mid Oct.	All Winter	60-90
*Tomatoes	June thru Mid July.	Mid July thru Sept.	60-100
*Turnip	Sept. thru Mid Nov.	N. A.	40-70

*Botanical Interests Seed In Stock



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Watch For Our New Website Coming To kingwoodgardencenter.com

KWGC NEWS

JULY/AUG 2006

Got Clay? Well We Got The Cure!

Expanded shale? Never heard of it? Well, add it to your vocabulary because we guarantee it will be an integral part of Texas horticulture for many years.

A soil amendment that improves drainage, increases soil porosity, but also reduces compaction, insulates from temperature extremes, absorbs 38 percent of its weight in water to release later during drought periods, and does not break down!

So just what is expanded shale?

Shale is fine-grained sedimentary rock formed from clays or mud. When heated to 2,000 degrees Celsius it expands, or puffs, and is called expanded shale. This leaves a porous, lightweight material roughly the size of pea gravel. When expanded shale is added to soil there is no net change in pH or nutrient levels. Due to the porosity of the material and the large 1/2-inch aggregate size, it improves soil drainage as well as holds water during periods of drought.

Just Arrived! Expanded Shale



Since expanded shale is basically stone, it does not break down like organic matter, thus it is a long-term investment compared to compost. A lifetime of 10 years in the soil is the conservative estimate—not a bad investment for the cost.

How do I use it?

It is recommended to add a minimum of 3 inches to clay soils. Till in 3 inches of expanded shale to a depth of 6-8 inches, then additionally till in 3 inches of well-composted organic matter on top of that. The addition of the expanded shale and organic matter should raise the bed, which will also increase drainage.

Another use for expanded shale is in large containers. It increases drainage and also reduces weight. Mix 50 percent with potting soil.