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Early Summer



HOW TO KEEP ANNUALS LOOKING THEIR BEST

Having beautiful annuals requires matching the right plants to the right growing conditions. Here are just a few of the annuals that are known to thrive in hot summer weather:

- Impatiens
- Marigolds
- Sunflowers
- Zinnias
- Chrysanthemums
- Portulacas
- Vincas

Once planted, your annuals will need plenty of water. Since they have shallow root systems, they'll benefit from watering every day or two if it hasn't rained. Adding mulch to your planting beds will also be beneficial, since this can help to retain moisture in the soil.

Fertilizer is also very important, and will help your annuals to keep blooming if it's applied as they're getting established and again in midseason.

Finally, any spent blooms should be deadheaded. This will encourage your annuals to produce more flowers instead of seeds.

Summer Watering: Make Every Drop Count

Rising summer temperatures lead to an increase in your lawn and landscape plants' moisture needs. If rainfall is scarce this summer, your turf, trees and shrubs will really be counting on you to step in with some supplemental watering.

It's a common misconception that light, frequent watering is beneficial. Actually, this does more harm than good by encouraging shallow root systems that dry out too quickly. What you want to do is cultivate deeper, more extensive roots. The way to do that is to water less often, but more deeply.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Your lawn needs from 1" to 1½" of water per week from rainfall or sprinkling. If there's no rain in the forecast, a long, deep soaking once per week will do (letting moisture penetrate 6" to 8" into the soil).

Your trees and shrubs will also benefit from a deep weekly soaking in hot, dry weather. To keep them sufficiently hydrated, you should water them three times as long as you water your turf.

Watering early in the morning helps to avoid evaporation from wind and the sun's heat. You can further improve watering efficiency by

keeping sprinklers from hitting sidewalks and driveways.

TAKING AWAY THE GUESSWORK

To ensure that your lawn, trees and shrubs always get the right amounts of water at the right times, you may want to consider an automatic irrigation system. These systems take the work and worry out of watering with beneficial features such as:

- Timers that limit watering to the cooler parts of the day.
- Independent station programming to provide certain parts of your landscape with more water than others (depending on plants' individual moisture needs).
- Rain shut-off devices to prevent wasteful watering when it's raining.
- Soil moisture sensors to override irrigation when enough water is present in the soil.

Whether you choose the hands-on approach or let an automatic system do the watering for you, you'll be making a big difference in the health and beauty of your lawn, trees and shrubs! Give Silvis Group a call to learn more today.

PLEASE NOTE: If watering restrictions are in place, we encourage you to follow your county's guidelines for water conservation, watering your lawn, trees and shrubs whenever you can.



For lawns, let moisture penetrate 6" to 8" into the soil.

Hungry, Hungry Bagworms

As you walk around your property this summer, keep an eye out for bags hanging from your trees and shrubs. They may resemble pine cones or other plant structures, but they're really the coverings that destructive bagworms spin around themselves. Bagworms are known to infest both deciduous and evergreen trees, and they're especially damaging to arborvitae, juniper, spruce, pine and cedar.

LIFE CYCLE

Bagworms are the larval and adult female stages of moths. Females lay their eggs inside the protective bags in early fall, and the eggs overwinter inside the bags before hatching in mid to late May. Then the larvae crawl out of the bags to begin feeding and building their own protective bags (using silk and bits of plant material). With

their huge appetites, bagworms can strip trees and shrubs of all their foliage. In severe cases, tree death can occur.

MANAGEMENT

If just a few landscape plants are infested, bags can be removed by hand and destroyed. However, larger attacks will most often require one or two treatments with insecticides for effective control (proper timing of treatments is very important). If you suspect that bagworms are feeding on your landscape plants, a professional inspection is recommended to determine the best course of action. For more information, feel free to give Silvis Group a call.



Spindle-shaped bags like these protect eggs over the winter.

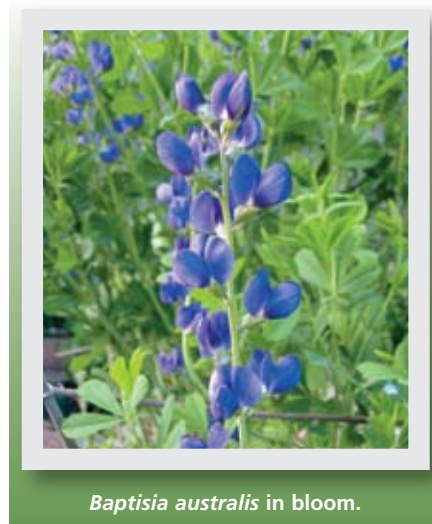
2010 PERENNIAL PLANT OF THE YEAR

Baptisia australis

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Baptisia australis* the 2010 Perennial Plant of the Year! Native to North American prairies, this showy perennial has soft, blue-green foliage and requires very little maintenance. It works well as a specimen plant, a backdrop along borders, or among meadow plantings.

Perhaps the best quality about *Baptisia australis* is its ability to provide four seasons of interest in the landscape. Indigo-blue flowers on spikes up to 1' long bring striking color to the spring landscape. Once the flowers fade, 2" to 3" seed pods emerge, changing from green to charcoal black in color as they ripen in late summer and early fall. These pods remain attractive well into winter.

Baptisia australis grows best in full sun and well-drained soil. Drought-tolerant due to its tough, deep tap root, this long-lived perennial makes a great addition to any perennial garden.



Baptisia australis in bloom.

Creating Your Own Herb Garden

Whether you want to grow herbs for cooking, for their medicinal qualities, or simply to enjoy their aromas, herb gardening is both interesting and easy to do. From mint and lavender to sage, thyme and dill, you can choose from a large selection of herbs to plant in your garden.

Herbs will generally grow best in well-drained, fertile soil (adding organic matter is always a good idea). Seeds should barely be covered with soil when planted, and the top of the soil should be kept moist. For best results, keep annual and perennial herbs separate.



If you already have a vegetable garden, you may want to extend it to include your herbs. Or, if you'd rather keep things simple, a window box outside your kitchen will do.

Avoid picking your herbs until the plants have enough foliage to maintain growth. And above all else, try not to limit yourself to well-known varieties only. When it comes to herbs, experimentation can be fun!



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