



GREAT GARDENS GAZETTE

Winter 2005

Great Greetings!

"To create a garden is to search for a better world. In our effort to improve on nature, we are guided by a vision of paradise. Whether the result is a horticultural masterpiece or only a modest vegetable patch, it is based on the expectation of a glorious future. This hope for the future is at the heart of all gardening." - Marina Schinz

What a winter we are having so far!! Since October approximately 14 inches of rain have fallen. We have also experienced the longest cold stretch seen in while with about five days of below freezing temperatures. Conversely, we have experienced some of the warmest temperatures in recent history, as in January where we recorded nine days with 70 degrees or more for the highs. Quite a rollercoaster ride! All of this makes for some interesting gardening. The rain, while normally a good thing can wear out its welcome, especially in the winter. Too much rain and higher temperatures have made the pansies less successful than in other years, and the extended cold temperatures definitely took its toll with tip freezing many varieties of plants, especially the young and tender ones. So here at Great Gardens our "hope for the future" is a little bit more predictable and consistent weather so that all of our gardens will look great, or at least just a little bit better!



Oh, to be King for a day!!

Great Garden's Fun Facts

- ♣ That simply looking at trees and vegetation reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and relieves muscle tension.
- ♣ That gardening can produce endorphin highs similar to those experienced when jogging and cycling.
- ♣ Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30 percent and can save 20–50 percent in energy used for heating.
- ♣ One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is only enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people.
- ♣ A Live Oak tree near Fulton, Texas is estimated to be 1500 years old.
- ♣ Caddo Lake is the only natural lake in Texas.
- ♣ Brazoria County in South Texas has more species of birds than any other area in North America.
- ♣ We only use 1% of all the Earth's water. About 97% of it is too salty to drink and the other 2% is frozen.
- ♣ The world's largest rose bush can be found in Tombstone, Arizona, at the Rose Tree Inn. It was planted by Rosa Banklae in 1855 and is on a huge trellis covering 8,000 square feet. (The Lady Bank's Rose was named after Rosa.)
- ♣ The first lawn mower was invented in 1831 in England. It was a horse drawn machine and the horses' hooves were covered with rubber boots so that they did not damage the lawn.
- ♣ The percentage of Africa that is wilderness is 28%. The percentage of North America that is wilderness is 38%.
- ♣ The world's oldest potted plant is a cycad which was brought from South Africa in 1775 and is now housed at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew in England.
- ♣ Albany, Georgia, is the pecan tree capital of the United States having more than 600,000 pecan trees.

Great Garden Treatments

ONE APPLICATION FOR CONTROL OF FIRE ANTS!

Great news! We now have a product that can control fire ants for a **whole year** with just one application!! The new product is called fipronil and has low water solubility and binds readily to the soil. It waits for the ants when they are driven to the surface from rain. This product also has the residual power to control new developing queen cells and new queens that enter the landscape later. Therefore this item is both a curative and a preventative treatment for fire ants.

Dormant Oil Spray

Spraying dormant oil on trees and shrubs is a good way to kill dormant insects and larvae on the plant by smothering them to death. The spray, which is a highly refined oil, is spread on the bark of trees and shrubs and is environmentally friendly.

Deep Root Fertilization

Now is a good time for deep root fertilization of your trees and shrubs. It is important because it delivers needed materials to critical root zone. It also helps to heal the wounds plants receive during growth periods. It helps to replace missing organic materials in the soil as well as providing resistance to disease.

Azalea Mix

Winter is a good time to put some more Azalea mix out. Every 2-3 years it is beneficial to replace this due to erosion.

Mulching

Mulching is one of the most beneficial things you can do for your garden. It protects the soil from erosion, reduces compaction from heavy rains, retains moisture, maintains soil temperature, prevents weed growth and provides a finished look.

Great Garden Tales

As Valentine's Day is around the corner we thought you might consider another flower to send your loved one other than roses. This year you might want to send tulips. The tulip is a symbol of life, perfect love and immortality that dates back to the time of Confucius. People during the Victorian era used the color of the Tulip petal to convey messages of love. Red tulips signified a decoration of love, yellow ones meant that love was quite hopeless. The lucky girls who were the recipients of striped or variegated tulips, knew that an admirer thought that they had beautiful eyes. The Turks even used tulips to brew love potions.

Tulips originally came from the gardens of Turkish Sultans. The name, is from the shape of the flower that reminded people of the turban. When taken to Europe around 1634, they immediately became a status symbol and commanded high prices. During that time period it is said that a single bulb is to have sold for more than \$2,500.

So this year send your love one the symbol of perfect love and send a bouquet of tulips!



Great Reminders

Look for our Spring Flower Order Form which will be included in with the February billing.

Great Gardens Services

Yard Renovations
Landscape Design
New Construction Landscape
Flagstone Path/Patio Construction
Courtyard & Container Gardens
Retaining Walls
Sod Installation
Mulching

Total Lawn Maintenance
Fertilization
Weed & Pest Control
Irrigation Repairs
Aeration
Tree Care
Shrub & Groundcover
Maintenance

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GREAT GARDENS MANAGEMENT

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