North Dakota State University

YARD & GARDEN REPORT

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Special Lilacs

Lilacs are among the most popular shrubs in North Dakota. Nothing in the landscape can match their blooms for fragrance.

These shrubs thrive in our state. Lilacs are hardy and will grow in almost any well-drained soil. When you plant a lilac, it will be enjoyed for generations.

At the recent NDSU Spring Fever Garden Forums, three cultivars of lilac were highlighted for their special qualities:

'Palibin' Korean lilac is a standout performer (Fig. 1). It blooms as a young plant and will bloom profusely every spring. The blooms themselves are light purple and extremely fragrant. 'Palibin' resists mildew disease and is one of the easiest to grow lilacs. The shrub is compact, growing about 5 feet high and 6 feet wide. It is also available as a grafted, small tree.

Lilacs bloom for a few *weeks*. Wouldn't it be great if there was a lilac that bloomed for *months*? Get to know the Bloomerang® lilacs. They bloom in spring and then again from midsummer through fall. The original Bloomerang® grows 5 feet tall and has light purple blooms (Fig. 2). Dark Purple Bloomerang® grows a little larger and has larger blooms. Pink Perfume Bloomerang® grows a foot shorter and resists mildew.

'Prairie Petite' is perfect for a small yard (Fig. 3). The slow growing plant only reaches 4 feet tall. It bears spikes of rosy pink flowers—great for cutting.

Figs. 1–3 (top to bottom). 'Palibin' is a mound of amazing fragrance. Bloomerang® will bloom in spring and late into fall. 'Prairie Petite' has fragrant spikes on compact plants.

Plant your lilac in a well-drained, sunny spot that gets good air movement. Place it where you can enjoy its fragrance. Lilacs can be used as a hedge, in mass plantings or as a specimen plant. They can serve as background plants in perennial and cutting gardens.

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Conserving Water in the Landscape

This summer has been a dry one! Much of the state has received 25% or less of its normal rainfall (see page 5). Communities are starting to announce watering bans. Here are some tips to cope with dry times:

Mulch Everything

Exposed soil can lose twice as much moisture as mulched soil. Use organic mulches (shredded bark, wood chips) around trees, shrubs and flowers. Rock mulches are less effective. Use straw/hay or plastic mulch in veggie gardens.

Adjust sprinklers

Adjust sprinkler heads to avoid irrigating sidewalks and driveways. If runoff is a problem (for example, on a sloped lawn), split your applications into two or more sessions to allow time for the water to soak in.

Mulch Clippings

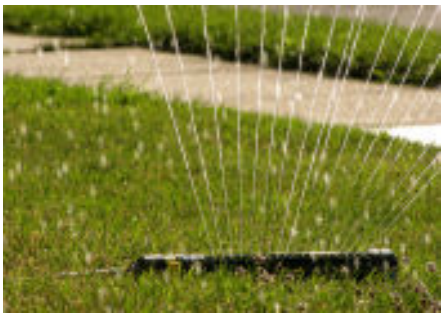
Don't bag clippings. They keep the soil cooler and reduce drought stress.

Prioritize Your Watering

New trees and shrubs have damaged root systems and are most vulnerable to drought stress; give them the first drink. Garden plants get the next drink. Lawns can go dormant; watering is optional. Mature trees rarely need irrigation.

Mow Tall

Tall grass plants resist drought by shading the soil and developing deeper roots. Tall lawns stay green longer.



Avoid Overhead Sprinklers

You can lose 25% or more of water to evaporation before it hits the ground. Use a watering wand, soaker hose or a drip irrigation system.

Use Xeric Plants

Learn about xeriscaping (landscaping to conserve water). Once established, xeric plants can grow with minimal watering. Examples include agastache (shown), sedum, salvia, liatris, Russian sage, prairie coneflower, catmint and yarrow.

Use Rain Barrels

During a 1-inch rainfall, 0.6 gallons of water falls on each square foot of your roof. That's over 1,000 gallons for an average roof (1,700 sq. ft.). That's a lot of water we can use to irrigate our flowers, trees and shrubs.

Irrigate in the Morning

This reduces loss of water from evaporation. Avoid windy days and hot afternoons.

Challenges & Chores

Lawns

Watering Tips

Lawns are turning yellow and going dormant. That's perfectly all right. But if you want your lawn to stay green and growing, it needs water. It needs about one inch per week from you, rainfall or a combination of both.

Set a group of flat-bottomed cups at 5- to 10-foot intervals from the base of your sprinkler to the edge of its reach (see photo). Measure the time it takes for an inch of water to fall in the cups. Use this as your base time.

Roots grow where the water is. Irrigate deeply to develop a deep root system. If water runs off before one inch is applied, split the watering into two or more applications.

Irrigate in the morning to minimize loss from evaporation. Avoid windy days and hot afternoons.

Mowing Tips

Mow TALL and let clippings FALL. Put your mower on a flat surface and set the blade so it cuts at the highest height you can accept (at least 2.5 inches). Taller lawns develop deeper root systems, smother emerging weeds and keep the soil cool.

Lawns with frayed tips (shown) were mowed with a dull blade. Sharpen or replace blades annually.

Trees and Shrubs

Galls on Silver Maple

Red bumps are caused by mites. The mites are gone; thus pesticides are not useful now. These galls cause very little stress to the tree in nearly all cases.

Winter Injury

Use a knife or thumbnail to scratch the young bark. If you see green tissue (shown at right), there is life in the tree. Be patient and hope for the emergence of new buds.

Tent Caterpillars

Plants can usually tolerate feeding, but a forked stick can be used to remove infested tents. Insecticides such as carbaryl (Sevin) or pyrethrin will kill mature caterpillars.

Challenges & Chores

Fruits

Curculio on Apple, Plum

Weevils scrape young fruits to lay eggs. Caterpillars will develop inside plums but not apples. A spray of pyrethrin or malathion prevents further infestation.

Codling Moth on Apple

Moths lay eggs into apples after petals fall. Spray now. Pyrethrin or malathion is effective. Future sprays (every two weeks) are optional depending on how much you can tolerate wormy apples.

Cedar-Apple Rust

Galls on junipers spew rust onto leaves of crabapple, apple and hawthorn. Mature trees tolerate rust. Prevent infection of very susceptible trees by pruning and spraying next spring.

Vegetables

Cutworm

Spray carbaryl at night at the base of plants. Cultivate the garden and remove plant debris. Place cardboard or metal collars around plants to protect stems.

Prevent Blossom End Rot

Irrigate regularly. Mulch to maintain consistent soil moisture. Calcium sprays might help. Mix 4 TBSP calcium nitrate per gallon of water. Spray fruits 2–3 times weekly when dime-sized.

Flea Beetle

Tiny (1/8-inch) pests create shotholes in radish and leafy greens. Young seedlings are very sensitive. Consider spraying carbaryl, neem or pyrethrin if 10–30% defoliation.

Wildlife and More

Rabbits

Fencing is recommended. Make it 3 feet tall (4 feet for jackrabbits) and bury 6 inches deep. Mesh should be 1.5 inches or less. Repellents, a guard dog and live trapping may help.

Sapsuckers/Woodpeckers

They are pecking to find food (sap or insects) or to mark their territory. This pecking destroys the rings where water and nutrients flow. Wrap hardware cloth or burlap around the trunk.

Ants

Ants invade homes in spring since outdoor food sources are limited. Seal cracks along doors and windows. A 3-foot-swath of insecticide may be sprayed along the home's perimeter.

Weather Almanac for June 1–June 7, 2017

	TEMPERATURE				RAINFALL				GROWING DEGREE DAYS[1,2]			
	June 1–7				June 1–7		2017		June 1–7		2017	
Site	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
Bottineau	67	60	94	42	0.00	0.80	1.02	6.02	104	68	409	345
Bowman	68	59	94	41	0.29	0.75	2.21	6.33	103	63	435	309
Carrington	70	61	95	48	0.11	0.88	2.48	6.60	115	73	423	366
Crosby	68	58	91	49	0.08	0.64	1.86	5.06	103	64	435	312
Dickinson	69	59	94	44	0.06	0.81	1.74	6.04	109	67	434	333
Fargo	73	63	95	50	0.04	0.85	2.07	7.63	133	82	452	395
Grafton	70	60	95	47	0.96	0.76	2.85	6.64	119	72	399	358
Grand Forks	73	61	97	51	1.47	0.74	3.06	6.46	131	72	438	364
Hazen	69	61	92	43	0.00	0.77	1.06	6.19	109	77	460	400
Hillsboro	71	62	95	46	0.17	0.78	1.90	7.11	121	75	428	368
Jamestown	68	61	94	42	0.12	0.74	2.37	6.36	109	71	392	352
Langdon	68	58	93	47	0.23	0.82	1.33	6.03	107	60	337	285
Mandan	70	61	95	46	0.00	0.74	1.23	5.96	114	68	452	338
Minot	70	60	92	50	0.00	0.80	0.77	6.77	114	64	425	312
Mott	68	60	93	41	0.09	0.58	2.05	6.88	105	68	422	339
Rugby	69	60	95	48	0.00	0.75	1.18	6.85	109	72	413	358
Wahpeton	72	65	96	44	0.02	0.68	3.42	7.59	126	88	447	424
Watford City	69	60	93	47	0.08	0.65	1.14	5.23	107	68	438	342
Williston	69	62	92	46	0.05	0.61	1.16	5.00	109	76	455	395
Wishek	69	59	95	49	0.03	0.76	1.22	7.77	112	61	395	311

DAYLENGTH (June 7, McClusky, center of ND)[3]

Sunrise: 5:46 AM Daylength: 15h 50m

Sunset: 9:35 PM Change since June 1: +8m

LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS[4]

June 14–18: Temp.: Below Normal; Precip.: Below Normal

June 16–22: Temp.: Normal; Precip.: Below Normal

[1] GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F., respectively.

[2,3,4] Sources: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, www.sunrisesunset.com, and National Weather Service, respectively.

Credits

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