



Environmental Stewards Since 1957

Summer / Fall 2010

Central Maryland

About seven months ago, when I wrote copy for our winter newsletter, we had closed out a moist, normal growing season. Then the heavens opened. Our region was blanketed with back to back **record snow falls** that added up to a new seasonal grand record total at BWI. Now, as I look toward fall, our record setting heat wave and severe humidity make it difficult to think straight. How our landscapes survive these continuous swings of extreme weather, continues to marvel laymen as well as professionals of our industry.

That said, we should consider some of the effects both pro & con. The abnormal snowfall helped top-off area reservoirs that were already brimming from record setting rainfall in 2009. The additional snow pack seeped into the soil supplementing aquifers and soil, providing moisture to shade and ornamental trees root systems. Supplemental soil moisture brought most of our landscapes out of the grueling winter in pretty good shape, **EXCEPT**, the cold and wet conditions persisted well into spring. Cool moist spring conditions are the perfect scenario for fungi development causing **leaf disease problems** on plants like: *dogwood, crabapple, photinia, vinca, pachysandra, ash and sycamore*. Protection from these problems can only be accomplished with preventative spring sprays or fall injections. Too late for problems this season, however, you should consider scheduling treatments for next year. Premature leaf drop and thinning means you should consider Root Feeding this fall!

The wet early spring conditions have also caused some root rot conditions which can be treated with fungicide soil drenches. To prevent root rot problems be aware of site conditions prior to installing new plants. Plants that do not like "wet feet" (azalea, yew, rhododendron) should be planted a little high in well drained areas. Avoid mulch accumulations over 2"-3", they can be deadly!

We're not sure which is harder on trees, the extreme wet seasons or the extreme dry ones, however, we shouldn't forget about them. Healthy trees (like humans) fight off and survive, adverse conditions better! The wide spread premature leaf drop and bark beetle infestations we have seen throughout our area will weaken trees. **We recommend deep root feeding trees every other year.** We will be contacting those of you who have trees due for feeding this fall very soon.

So much for the winter/spring wet conditions as our current concerns are **HEAT, HUMIDITY and DROUGHT.** The biggest victim of the severe summer conditions (other than us!) are our lawns. If you aren't lucky enough to have an irrigated lawn, it has struggled this summer. Central Maryland started drying out in mid June with very little relief until early

This spring *Scientific Plant Service, Inc.*, partnered with public radio station, *WYPR*, to sponsor their monthly garden segment. "*Back To The Garden*", is presented by Anne Raver on the first Wednesday of the month. Listen for our spots throughout the week.



We're looking for friends! Join us on Facebook, become a friend and get current tips or find out when something new goes up on our website, **PLUS, save 10% on OVER-SEEDING this fall!**



August when rains started once again. Once again, the resilience of grass plants is amazing. We have a drought, it goes dormant, we add water, it responds and recovers. Usually! We are already seeing a lot of turf loss this season. The duration and severity of the drought has actually caused as much as 30% turf loss in non-irrigated lawns. The thinned turf also opened the door to crabgrass and broadleaf weeds. A problem easily fixed with sprays. If you have a *full* lawn care program with SPS, those sprays are free, just call and let us know you may have a problem!

The best time to address these lawn issues is now, FALL. By now you know the drill, there are numerous ways to tackle getting your lawn back into shape. Aeration, aeration & over-seeding, slice-seeding, tilling and seeding, stripping and sodding are all the options, and we can do them all! Most important, however, don't think you shouldn't fertilize due to a failing lawn. It desperately needs fertilization this fall. If regular rains don't continue into the fall, manual irrigation should be considered. The cooler temperatures and shorter daylight hours make sprinkler watering much more efficient.

DEER REPELLENT

Munching deer continue to be a problem throughout the area. Our route takes us from Roland Park to Pasadena, to Clarksville, to Northern Baltimore County. There is no escape! Right now they are going into "rut" season, rubbing their antlers on trees stripping and shredding their bark. As lush growth disappears this fall, their feeding on landscape plantings will increase. Fall blooming plants along with fall/winter annuals will be in jeopardy.

Increased browsing by deer in our backyards increases the possibility of finding **Lyme Disease** carrying deer ticks. September is their breeding season! We can fog your woodlines and yards where deer travel to control tick populations.



SNEAK PRE-VIEW

Our new web site should be up and running by mid-September. It's been a while coming, but, we wanted to make sure we got it right. If we have your email, we'll let you know when it's ready!

REMEMBER FALL IS FOR SEEDING & FEEDING

FALL SERVICES: LAWNS- Weed control, seeding, aeration, repair **TREES-** Dormant Oil, WinterGuard, Deep Root Feeding **PHRAGMITES CONTROL, DEER REPELLENT**

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