

# Horticulture Hints

The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over never weeded a garden. - Ray D. Everson

## October 2020

October has arrived in all its glory! The narrow leaf sunflowers have popped open, and on overcast days (such as this one) practically glow in the low light. They remind



*'Glowing' Narrow Leaf Sunflowers*

me of the golden aspens of Colorado (from whence I hail) that are also glowing at this time. What a great time of year to be working outside! And having all the doors and windows open.

Not sure if any of you have gotten into the 'till/no-till' debate that seems to be going on in gardening circles. I have read a number of articles, and watched YouTube videos on the subject, and it seems, like a lot of things gardening-related, it comes down to a matter of personal opinion. On the 'no-till' side of things, many points make sense to me: leave the weed seeds way down in the dirt where

they can't germinate, it's the way nature makes dirt, one layer at a time, less work, etc. etc. On the other hand, the 'till' people say 'this is the way people have gardened for centuries', 'how else are you going to get the compost down into the native soil?', and so on. Personally, I like the 'way less work' aspect of the no-till argument, and have experimented with this for the past several seasons. I have found the number of weeds to be a lot fewer in number with this method, and I mean a *lot* fewer. Of course, I started out with raised beds and bagged raised bed soil, which is rich to begin with. Then I used compost as mulch, and had great luck with several different crops. I can still see advantages of tilling in certain situations, but for my part, I'm going with the 'lasagna' method of doing things. Layering from the bottom up!

Here's something that I haven't tried yet (but perhaps will!): now is the time to order spring flowering bulbs, as now is the time to plant



*Daffodils 'Regeneration'*

them in more temperate zones. However, when you receive them, instead of putting them in the ground, put them in the refrigerator until spring, and you will have a show worthy of New England. Or at least, that's what I've heard. Daffodils have always been a personal favorite, but they didn't do well in my zone 2-3 location in Colorado, and it's much too warm here. So I may give this a try. Just because I love them so much. I'll let you know the results of the experiment.

Just because it's cooled off a little, don't give up on your lawn. Give it one more feeding this month, then you can slack off on this matter. My husband and I are not big lawn people, so don't have much. And I don't usually feed it, but we do have to remember to mow, 'cos we can lose our doxies in the dog run if we don't!

There's still time to plant winter veggies: broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, kale, chard, cabbage, collards, parsnips, spinach, radishes, onions, garlic, turnips, beets and carrots are all cool weather, and some of these things actually taste a bit sweeter after a light freeze. Some things, like carrots, germinate very quickly when directly sown in the garden, and will continue to get better over the winter. If you don't want to take the

time to grow from seed, many of the box stores and nurseries have seedlings all ready for the ground.

October is also a good month in which to plant trees and shrubs. The moderate winters in our part of the state lend themselves to giving them a good start. Don't, however, plant palms this time of year, unless they have been grown in containers. Palms tend to not make much growth during the cooler weather, and balled palms planted now have a higher mortality rate than container grown ones. Having said this, it is a good time to give your palms their last fertilizer treatment for the season. This will help them store more food for the winter to come.

Flowers that you can plant now are alyssum, begonia, blue daze (evolvulus; also blue my mind), calendula, chrysanthemum, cleome, coleus, cornflower, dianthus, gaillardia, geraniums, hollyhock, larkspur, lobelia, petunia, salvia, snapdragon, sunflower, sweet pea and verbena.

Enjoy this lovely time of year, and hope to see you all at the October Garden Club meeting (via ZOOM, of course). Happy gardening!