



# Backyard Views

The Backyard Gardeners

Fall, 2010

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc. was established in 2007 as a non-profit organization to provide free education to homeowners in the Hampton Roads area on gardening and horticultural practices, designs and techniques in order to encourage conservation of our natural resources, the enjoyment of gardens, garden-related activities and creative garden art.

## Calendar of Events

Garden Talks, 7-8:30 pm  
Chesapeake Library  
298 Cedar Road

**September 21**  
"Spring Color with Bulbs"  
TBG

**October 19**  
"Indoor Plants"  
Audrey Knall, TBG

**November 16**  
Orchids in Tidewater  
Steve Ulrich,  
Kaplan Orchid Conservatory

**December 14**  
"Decorating Naturally"  
TBG

**Special Events**  
**Fall Garden Faire**  
September 18, 9am -3pm  
Chesapeake Central Library  
298 Cedar Rd.  
plants, information, displays and  
yard art

**AutumnFest**  
October 23, 12 pm-3:30 pm  
Chesapeake Arboretum  
624 Oak Grove Rd.  
Information and vendors

## Planting Trees for Success *by Audrey Knall*

You know how to plant a tree. Right? Dig a hole. Center the tree. Backfill the hole and water. Simple. We've heard that for a long time. However, new research has proven a better way of planting a tree is "bare root". Whether you bought the tree in a container or "balled and burlapped", that soil must go! Not just part of the soil, all of it.

According to Dr. Bonnie Appleton of Hampton Roads AREC, bare root planting offers a variety of benefits. It exposes the entire root system, insuring proper placement above the soil line; packs the soil into the roots, resulting in a more stable tree without staking; lightens the weight of the tree being planted; keeps the roots moist during planting; and eliminates the disparity between the hole's native soil and root ball soil.

With bare root planting, the hole is still dug twice the width of the root ball and 2/3 the depth. Don't amend the native soil removed or add any fertilizer to the hole. Once the hole is dug, remove the tree's root ball from its container and wash **all** the soil off the roots. You can use a garden hose or a large tub depending on the size of the root ball. Once the roots are totally clean, inspect them to identify the root flare (transition between the trunk and the roots which must always be kept above the soil line). Prune off any dead or girdling roots. Position the tree in the hole. Hold the tree straight and at the proper height. Spread the roots in the hole as much as possible. Begin back filling the soil around the roots. Do this in several stages, thoroughly soaking the soil around the roots before adding more. Make sure the native soil totally encompasses the exposed roots, anchoring them to the surrounding soil. When complete, the tree should not need staking and should not experience any settling. Mulch with 2-3 in. of organic mulch, keeping it away from the trunk. Your tree will still need regular watering the first year until it gets established. Plan on fertilizing your tree the following spring. Now, pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

## Plant Profiles: Trees for Fall Color

*by Shiela Strudwick*

Trees, oh wonderful trees. They help clean our air, they give us and our homes shade to cool us in the summer months, and they offer us breath-taking beauty in Autumn. If you are in the market for a tree, here are three trees for fall interest:



### Sun Valley Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* 'Sun Valley')

If you love the red color of the October Glory Maple, but need a smaller tree this is it. It has a much narrower growth habit than other maples. In October, it sports one of the hottest reds you will see during the fall. Average 20' H x 10' W. Hardy to -30F degrees.

### Raywood Ash (*Fraxinus oxycarpa* 'Raywood')

This tree has many great features including fabulous fall color ranging from red to purple. The Raywood Ash has small leaves that require less raking than most deciduous trees making it one of the cleanest trees. Its lack of disease problems makes it one of the easiest to grow. Oval in shape, the Raywood Ash will grow very quickly to 40-50' H x 25-30' W. Hardy to -10°F.



### Heritage Birch (*Betula nigra* 'Heritage')

The Heritage Birch offers fall interest for its amazing transformation into yellow foliage. Like other birches, the distinctive bark also adds seasonal interest. Unlike its other birch cousins, this cultivar is resistant to borers. A favorite form is the multi-trunk which grows 30-60' H x 25-40' W. Hardy to 0°F.

# Spotlight on Gardens



by Patti McCambridge

## The Chesapeake Arboretum

Nestled near Battlefield Blvd, the Chesapeake Arboretum is a 47-acre garden comprised of a mature hardwood forest, a 3-mile trail system, a farmhouse with a variety of theme gardens and a tree nursery. The facility is lovingly tended by volunteers and is dedicated to promoting horticultural and environmental education in the community through displays, education and nature programs. Dedicated in November, 1996, the grounds have fragrance and antique rose gardens and a variety of demonstration gardens. Many varieties of trees and plants including a significant number of native species abound in the area.

With the abundance of trees and shrubs along the forested trails, fall is the perfect time to explore the vastness of the urban oasis. Self guided tours are available on well-marked trails. With the aid of maps and clear markings along the trails, visitors can become acquainted with the vast array of trees native to Chesapeake. Adjacent to the farmhouse are the display and demonstration gardens and a picnic area. The Arboretum offers plenty of room for the kids and adults to explore and with cooler weather, it is a perfect spot for a relaxing and educational family outing.

Fall marks one of the signature events held on the grounds, AutumnFest. On October 23 from 12 pm-3:30 pm, enjoy a variety of family “farmtastic” events including a hay bale maze, kid’s activities, eco-friendly vendors & exhibitors, tree trails tours, pruning & tree-climbing demonstrations and food concessions. The event and parking are free.

Hopefully, you can take some time during the Fall to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the Arboretum and learn from “Nature’s Classroom”. The Chesapeake Arboretum is a non-profit organization and depends on donations, contributions, volunteers and membership dues. For more information or to volunteer, call (757) 382-7060.

## Tool Kit

by Gary Bennett

In gardening, often “one size” does not fit all, so smaller and adjustable length tools may be the answer. Several companies make smaller, shorter shovels that offer a length and weight more suited for a variety of gardeners and gardening situations. One such shovel,



the **Razorback® Mini Shovel with D-handle**, is ideal for tight spaces and smaller jobs. The shovel has an overall length of 27” and has a handle large enough to accommodate gloves. The handle is made from ash and the blade from tempered steel just like the full-size shovels. This little gem is a workhorse that will quickly become a favorite for use in your garden.

Available from Gempler’s at:

<http://www.gemplers.com/product/151384/Razorback-Shovel>

Adjustable tools offer another option to suit various users and uses. Made by **Bond**, the **LH015 Mini D Handle Shovel** and **LH011 5 Tine Cultivator** both have a lightweight steel handle, a comfortable soft non-slip grip, durable heat-treated heads rust resistant powder coated paint, and a 5- year guarantee. Each adjusts from 25” to 37” in length for extended reach and leverage and are made with the same sturdy construction as their larger counterparts.

Available from Amazon.com at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Bond-LH015-Mini-Handle-Shovel/dp/B000X47NJY>



## Garden Hints

- ✿ Always hose off and dry your garden tools after each use to keep them sharp and prevent rust. Use a general purpose oil to quickly wipe blades and metal surfaces to condition between uses.
- ✿ When harvesting root vegetables, toss them in a laundry basket and hose them down with garden hose. The basket will act as a strainer to eliminate the excess soil.
- ✿ Add salt to water when washing green vegetables and allow to soak for a few minutes. This will cause any foreign matter to float to the top leaving your produce ready to eat.

You may request to be added to the newsletter mailing list at

[www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org)

or by emailing [gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org](mailto:gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org).

