

LANDSCAPE LOG

By Douglas Chapman, horticulturist, Dow Gardens, Midland, Michigan

May Landscape Jobs

1. Chewing Insect Control
2. Foliar Disease Control
3. Transplanting B&B and Container Stock
4. Begin Frequent Mowing
5. Start Applying Growth Retardants
6. Put in Bedding Plants
7. Start Aquatic Weed Control

May, horticulturally, is one of the busiest months of the year. One should be considering spraying for chewing insects and various diseases; finishing late planting of trees and shrubs; commencing lawn care with earnest; planting bedding plants (that myriad of summer color); and, in southern areas, planning aquatic weed control.

May is the month of new leaves, terminal growth, and extreme vulnerability of many trees and shrubs to **chewing insect** attack. If one can protect against catastrophic insect problems during the month of May, then often the rest of the season will require little or no control. Several of the most catastrophic insect problems to attack deciduous trees include: Spring and Fall Cankerworm, Elm Leaf Beetle, Honey Locust Pod Gall, White—marked Tussock Caterpillar, Eastern Tent Caterpillar, many leaf rollers, e.g. Oak Leaf Roller, Privett Leaf Roller, or Crab Apple Leaf Roller, and Imported Willow Leaf Beetle. All of these skeletonizers, or leaf-chewing insects, are capable of devouring all the new foliage and causing major weakening of deciduous trees.

Although one could target a spray for this group during early to late May, an insect evaluation is critical to determine if application is necessary. Further, many of the Lepidoptera larvae can be controlled by biological control, e.g. *Bacillus thuringiensis*, which has little or no impact on predatorial insects, while specifically controlling these chewing insects.

Also, several conifers, or evergreens, have their chewing insect problems in May as well. Juniper Web Worm, European Pine Sawfly larvae, and Black Vine Weevil head the list of insects that either chew on the foliage or new roots. Insect surveys to determine population when pruning the trees will greatly assist in making the management decision whether to spray. But again, the effects of those catastrophic insects can be minimized, if control measures are highlighted or contemplated during the month of May.

Foliar diseases abound during May. Although most of them can be controlled quite readily with either protected or prophylactic application of fungicides. Planting resistant tree species might be more important while reducing the need for pesticide application.

Crab apple, a major tree in the landscape, is affected by three diseases - apple scab, fireblight, and frog eye. These diseases, depending on weather conditions, can cause severe defoliation and/or death. Apple scab and frog eye are problems during cool, wet periods of spring, while fireblight is only a problem during wet periods when the plant is in full flower or

if pruning is practiced during active growing periods. Fireblight is a weak pathogen and, therefore, needs the entrance of a flower or wound for infection to occur. The best defense against these problems is to plant resistant cultivars of crab apples (see list).

Another important foliar disease, which almost eliminated the use of sycamore as a shade tree, is Sycamore Anthracnose. One can apply protecting sprays during mid-to-late May or plant resistant cultivars. The one readily available resistant cultivar is 'Bloodgood' London Planetree (*xPlatanus hybrida acerifolia* 'Bloodgood'). This tree can be effective if grown on its own root system or propagated by cuttage. Graft incompatibility has been noted as a problem. Several nurseries are offering 'Bloodgood' London Planetree, propagated by cuttage on its own roots. (One example is Lake County Nursery Exchange.)

Most foliar diseases that impact trees and shrubs need cool, wet weather for infection to occur. Monitoring of the weather is paramount to make the management decision whether to apply control measures. Current landscapers and grounds superintendents should be continually reviewing plants to evaluate their environmental tolerance or disease resistance.

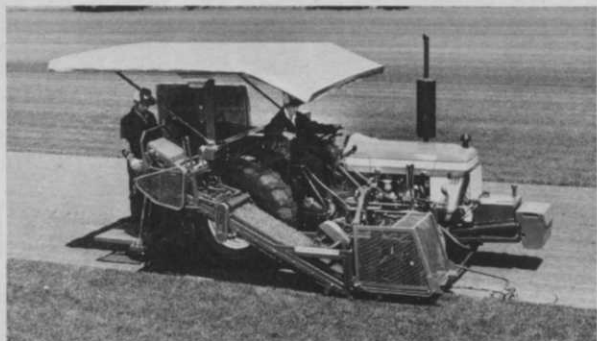
Many trees and shrubs can be transplanted during May. Growth is just initiating and success, because of cool, moist weather of May, is high. That success percentage should be in the 70-80% range. To improve success, one should only be **transplanting** balled and burlapped (B & B) or container grown trees and

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DISEASE RESISTANT CRAB APPLES —

'Adams'	'Makamik'
Baccata	'Mary Potter'
'Jackii'	'Mount Arbor Special'
'Barbara Ann'	'Professor Sprenger'
'Beverly'	'Profusion'
'Bob White'	'Red Baron'
'Callaway'	'Red Jewel'
'Candied Apple'	'Red Splendor'
'Centennial'	'Red Star'
'Centurian'	'Royal Ruby'
'Coralburst'	'Ruth Ann'
'David'	Sargentii
'Dolgo'	Scheideckeri
'Donald Wyman'	'Selkirk'
Floribunda	'Sentinel'
'Golden Hornet'	'Silver Moon'
'Henning'	'Snowdrift'
Hupehensis	'Sugar Tyme'
'Indian Magic'	Tschonoskii
'Indian Summer'	'White Angel'
'Jewelberry'	'White Cascade'
'Liset'	'Winter Gold'

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shrubs. With either B&B or container grown trees, the root system has not been disturbed to the point where transplanting success should be dramatically reduced. It still must be stressed, though, that early planting during April will, except for pines, result in an even higher percentage of transplant success.

By early May, turf has started to grow aggressively. With that period of active growth, lawn care should take precedence. Care and continuous **mowing**, that is never allowing the grass to get taller than $\frac{1}{3}$ the height you intend to set the mower e.g. mowing height $2\frac{1}{2}$ " cut when the grass reaches $3\frac{1}{4}$ ", is paramount. If this mowing frequency can be maintained, then all clippings can be returned to the soil and fertilizer requirements can be dramatically reduced.

In areas that are particularly difficult to mow, e.g. along highways and steep banks, May is the prime month to **apply growth retardants**, e.g. Embark. If the growth retardant is applied during May in this type of area, mowing frequency will be minimized, e.g. in low maintenance areas for up to 8 weeks.

Annuals, or **bedding plants**, should be planted as soon as the soil warms after the danger of the last frost, e.g. frost-free date for Midland, Michigan is May 25. Annuals, such as geraniums, begonias, impatiens, marigolds, provide 4-6 months of continuous color with little or no maintenance.

There was a great rise in popularity of bedding plants during the '60's and '70's. The result of current breeding is disease-free, reasonably low maintenance varieties of nicotiana, marigolds, impatiens, begonias, annual phlox, or, of course, seed geraniums. The color and texture afforded by bedding plants last for such a long period of time that they should be high priority.

Generally speaking, bedding plants require more maintenance than simple ground covers but not as much maintenance as turf.

Aquatic pond management is an emerging science with only broad guidelines developed. Presently, depth control, fringe or interface plantings, nutrient manipulation, and harvesting of unwanted plants are the first levels of management of weeds. Aquatic herbicide applications should be used as one of the last resorts as they often kill or suppress all aquatic plants in the pond as well as making the water unsatisfactory for irrigation and/or terrestrial plants. Generally speaking, aquatic plants are not controlled chemically until the water temperature reaches 65°F . This high water temperature exists after some growth has already commenced. One should carefully assess the total effects of herbicide application to be sure that one is not creating a new problem. **WTT**

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Participants considered such topics as phenomenal growth rate, chief executive officer seminar programs, financial management, effective Washington representation, the consumer market and the role of the allied professional.

The Interior Plantscaping Association was formed in 1979 and, beginning its fifth year, it currently has 750 members. Even with the recession of the past two years, the interior plantscaping profession continues to grow at a rate of 15 percent annually. It is estimated that between 5,000 to 10,000 businesses are involved in interior plantscaping in the United States. It was also estimated that the growth rate for plantscaping businesses would taper off to a still healthy 10 percent over the next five years. The use of plants in the commercial environment is here to stay.

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