

# LANDSCAPE LOG

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## SEPTEMBER JOB FOCUS

### 1. Lawns

- a. renovation
- b. insect control
- c. fertilization
- d. broadleaf weed control

### 2. Transplanting shrubs

- a. balled and burlapped (B. and B.)
- b. container-grown
- c. broadleaf evergreens

September is a pivotal month. Certainly, we are well into "fall landscaping." This fall activity for the lawn includes renovation, insect control, fertilization, and broad leaf weed control. Further, it includes transplanting of shrubs, specifically B. and B., container grown, and broadleaf evergreens.

## LAWNS

Early September in the north and the entire month throughout central Ohio remains the prime time for either new lawn installation or renovation. The air temperature is cool and the soil is warm with photoperiod favoring new grass seed germination, but the aforementioned climatic conditions discourage new weed establishment. In general, by September the weed season is over and cool season grass growth is at its peak. Latitude will dictate how late one can consider new seeding of areas. Generally speaking, for central Michigan, seeding should be completed by the second week of September or consider late dormant seeding. Grass germination is usually rapid, depending upon the type (5-15 days) with a weed-free turf. Each part of the country should contact its land grant college for the correct seed type, but it should be stressed, for most commercial areas and home grounds, that a mixture of bluegrass, fescue, and perennial ryegrass (hardy) is probably the best to result in a high quality-minimum maintenance turf.

If your landscape is in an area where Asiatic Garden Beetle, Japanese Beetle, or any of the June beetles are a problem, then control in September is important. Although there are several compounds that are effective, Dursban, Diazinon, and Turcam are among the most highly recommended by the Cooperative Extension Service. Again, one should check with the local Cooperative Extension Service for individual state recommendations and clearance. Generally speaking, it is easier, safer, and still an effective way to apply granular herbicides, contrasted to spraying, if not an experienced applicator. It has frequently been suggested they cost a little more but the cost benefit ratio certainly favors the use of these granular materials when inexperienced and when one infrequently applies pesticides.

## FERTILIZATION

Fertilizing should certainly be high on the list. With the return of rain and cool air temperatures, bluegrass

and fescue again become quite active. This activity should be supported with adequate fertilization. Current research is suggesting the application of 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1000 square feet with a 3-1-2 ratio gaining more and more acceptance. In other words, it is important to stimulate the turf with nitrogen while potassium encourages carbohydrate storage, thus winter and drought hardiness.

Broadleaf weed control is generally effective spring or fall. Most materials used to control broadleaf weeds include a combination of hormone type herbicides or a mixture of 2,4-D and MCPP or Dicamba. These combinations of materials are extremely effective in controlling most or all broadleaf types while having little or no effect on turf. Garlon is an established herbicide for industrial weed and brush control and is showing exciting potential for use in combination with 2,4-D for broadleaf weed control in turf. This potential is in the wide range of broadleaf weeds that can be controlled. Controlling broadleaf weeds in the fall in central Michigan has been extremely effective. With the cool season grasses again growing actively, they often fill in where the undesirable plant was, before the onset of another weed season in June. Further, many worthy trees and shrubs are not growing actively, thus are less sensitive to volatilization. It should be noted that the safest formulations are amine salts, L.V. esters, or granular formulations. Further note that if one is applying granular formulations, it should be applied to set turf areas and not watered in for at least 24 hours.

If there is such a thing as step-wise procedure, the turf areas should be fertilized, mowed, and the broadleaf herbicide applied with 1 to 2 days between each step.

## TRANSPLANTING SHRUBS

Container grown trees and shrubs, B. and B. shrubs, and ericaceous plants can be transplanted before leaf drop, or dormancy. In fact, it is a good opportunity to get an early start on replacement or initial installation. With the warm soil and cool air temperatures, root establishment can be quite extensive prior to the onset of winter. It should be noted, at this point, that we have suggested container grown deciduous trees, not B. and B. trees as the transplant shock prior to leaf drop can be extensive. Ericaceous, or broadleaf evergreens, because of their extensive shallow yet dense fibrous root system, are effectively transplanted in September and October. One thing to consider in stimulating lateral root development on ericaceous plants and many container grown trees and shrubs is root slicing. This shallow slicing with a knife into the root system stimulates lateral root development and hastens landscape establishment. If soil amendments are used frequently, they will encourage early development. In this case, we would suggest composted animal manures, peat moss, leaf mold, or COMPOSTED BARK. The addition of organic matter speeds up establishment, conserves moisture, and provides an excellent environment for any plant establishment.

September—the transition month through fall when planting can again be considered and turf establishment and care are paramount.