

# LANDSCAPE LOG

by the Editorial Advisory Board, *Weeds Trees & Turf* magazine

## Transition, cleanup dominate March

Six experts willingly share their knowledge with *Weeds Trees & Turf* readers. Please write the magazine if there are specific areas of landscape management you would like addressed on a monthly basis.

**March** is a month of transition no matter where you work.

**In the Southeast**, overseeded cool-season grasses are surrendering to native warm-season turf as temperatures reach the 80's. Preemergence herbicides should have been applied in late January and February, but final applications may be in order says Bruce Augustin. Application of a complete fertilizer (including potassium and micronutrients) is appropriate at this time to help the bermuda, St. Augustine, bahia, or centipedegrass. Augustin does not recommend application of preventative insecticides because of insect resistance to organophosphates experienced the past few years.



**Power raking** or verticutting is a common March practice to remove thatch, debris, and leftover snow mold.

Calibration of irrigation systems is strongly advised for March as temperatures climb. You need to know that your system is putting down one-inch of water upon initial signs of wilt. After irrigating, wait for wilt symptoms again before irrigating. Augustin says turf diseases are not as much a problem in the late winter as in the fall. Mowing programs should be in full swing by March.

As cool-season turf fades, so do the annual beds which provided color all winter. Mulch the beds to

prevent serious weed encroachment until next fall.

**Great Plains** landscape managers contend with left over snow mold and start cleanup in March. Robert Shearman recommends power raking, aerification, seeding, and initial mowing of turf. Look for overwintering sod webworm larvae. Prepare for late March or April applications of fertilizer and pre-emergence herbicides.

Trees and ornamentals should receive dormant oil sprays in March for scale insects. Spray sycamores for anthracnose and spruces for gall adelgids. Prune winter-damaged branches, wrap up transplanting work, and fertilize perennials.

Make sure you have the needed chemical and equipment inventory for the upcoming busy season. Carefully check all irrigation and spray equipment for accuracy.

**Midwest** landscape managers should begin their insect control programs late in the month says Harry Niemczyk. Preventative treatments for grubs, chinchbugs, and billbugs should be made to susceptible areas. Check for mite damage.

Remove winter protection and remulch plantings in March says Doug Chapman. Bare root planting can begin. Prune out winter damage in trees and cut down deciduous shrubs for rejuvenation. Do not prune shrubs which flower on old wood.

**Northeast** deciduous trees should be pruned to remove fire blight damage says Martin Petrovic. Sodding can begin and soil amendments can be applied. Watch for initial symptoms of leaf spot disease and white grub feeding.

Purchase fungicides for leaf spot, stripe smut, and red thread. Check supplies of preemergence herbicides for crabgrass and postemergence broadleaf herbicides. All mowing and cultivation equipment should be ready to go.

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Editorial Advisory Board members are: **Bruce J. Augustin**, extension turf and water specialist, University of Florida, Fort Lauderdale, FL; **Douglas Chapman**, horticulturist/director, Dow Gardens, Midland, MI; **Kent Kurtz**, professor of horticulture, California Polytechnic Institute, Pomona, CA; **Harry Niemczyk**, professor of entomology, Ohio State University, Wooster, OH; **Martin Petrovic**, assistant professor of turfgrass science, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and **Robert Shearman**, associate professor of turf, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE.

