

Timely Turf Tips

March 2012

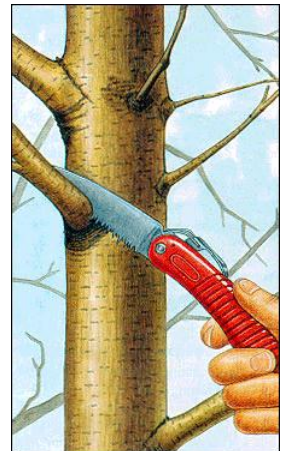
Fellow Gardeners—Start Your Seeds: Indoors! Last month we challenged you to grow a vegetable garden this year. We will provide monthly advice for both beginners and veterans. Now that you have decided what to plant AND you've placed your seed order for this year, it's time to gather your seed starting supplies: soil-less seed starting mix, containers and fluorescent lights.

Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and head lettuce should be started now if you're a veteran gardener. Beginners may want to purchase transplants from local garden centers closer to planting time. Peppers and eggplant should be started by mid-month. However, Steve has a certain fondness of peppers and will have an impressive variety of both sweet and hot pepper plants for you to purchase at planting time end of May. He's been pouring over his catalogs to choose a few more interesting varieties to add to the already 200 varieties that he can't do without! Stop by the Mill to pick up your seed starting supplies and take advantage of the coupons below. For complete instructions on how to start seeds indoors click on this link: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/M1245.html>

March is a great time of year to prune many trees and shrubs.

- Prune oaks and fruit trees this month before spring growth starts.
- Wait to prune spring flowering shrubs, like lilac and forsythia, until after they're done blooming. Hold off on maples as they tend to bleed heavily in spring.
- This month is a great time to conduct rejuvenation pruning on many shrub species like dogwood, spirea and barberry. Rejuvenation pruning involve removing a small proportion of the oldest stems as close to the base as possible. This will help keep shrubs producing new, strong stems to be more vigorous, healthy, and flower better.
- How to prune trees and shrubs:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/dg0628.html>



Are you ready for some spring blooms?

- Bring in some stems for forcing of early spring flowering shrubs and fruit trees. Apple, cherry, plum, forsythia, pussy willow, and flowering almond buds are already formed the season before and are ready to continue to develop as temperatures warm up.
- Treat cut stems like standard cut flowers by changing the water frequently and using floral preservative.

Time for house plant TLC

- Wash accumulated dust from the surfaces and undersides of leaves.
- Resume fertilizing at half strength.
- Transfer plants that have outgrown their old containers to new ones that are only an inch or two larger in diameter.

Sign of Spring: Cardinals are starting to sing their spring song! Listen here: <http://tinyurl.com/7gv8mau>

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