

Timely Turf Tips

April 2019

Well, it finally feels like winter is over. Many of our winged friends are beginning the long trek back to Minnesota. There is a website that tracks some of these journeys aptly titled, "Journey North: Tracking migrations and seasons." Follow the spring migration of the American Robin, hummingbirds, orioles or Monarch butterflies with observation reports and maps pinpointing sightings. A person can even register on this site to report their own first sightings. Check it out at <https://journeynorth.org>. Get your children involved and have it be a family event.

Spring Yard and Garden Tips

Once the snow melts, begin cleanup by picking up any sticks, litter, and pet waste that has accumulated over the winter on the lawn. Sweep any sand, rocks, and other debris off any hard surfaces to prevent it from reaching the storm sewer.

Do not rush to remove last year's plant residue. With fluctuating spring temperatures, that residue provides some frost protection and early spring gardens are too wet for any foot traffic anyway. Use the crumble test to see if the garden is ready for any work. This is done by taking a handful of dirt, shaping it into a ball, and poking the ball to see if it crumbles into smaller pieces. If it doesn't break apart, then wait to begin in order to prevent soil compaction.

You may not need to apply fertilizer in the spring. If the lawn is well-established, clippings were left on the turf, and a fall application was done, then spring fertilization may not be necessary. Consider a soil test for help in knowing the correct type and amount of product to use and when to apply it. To download a form, go to <http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/> and click on the Lawn & Garden link. Please contact the mill if you have any questions about sampling your yard or garden.

If your yard had problems with crabgrass or other annual weeds, apply a pre-emergent herbicide when the soil temperature reaches 50 degrees. Be sure to watch your email for a notice from Steve when it is the right time to apply. Save now on your purchase with the coupon below.

Start to plant cold season crops (like lettuce, beets, carrots, peas, spinach, and radish) mid to late April depending on the weather.

Trim back any perennials that were left for winter interest or to provide food for birds before the new growth begins. Popular summer blooming shrubs, like Annabelle hydrangea and Anthony Waterer spirea, can be pruned back level with the ground because these plants bloom on new wood. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum recommends this be done the first week in April.

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