

News Letter

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Civic Center, Iowa City, Iowa 52240
www.projectgreen.org

PROJECT GREEN

PUBLISHED IN EARLY SPRING AND LATE FALL

SPRING 2011

GREEN Garden Fair May 7, 9-11:30 a.m. Carver-Hawkeye Arena

It's the time of year to turn your thoughts to your garden and to plants. MARK YOUR CALENDARS and join us for the 41st Annual GREEN Garden Fair. Whether you are looking for sunny perennials, shade perennials, or hostas, trees or shrubs, shade groundcovers or wonderful sculptures for your garden, you will find them all at the GREEN Garden Fair!



All plants have been grown in our experienced gardeners' own gardens. They are choice hardy plants that will survive Iowa's weather. Choose from thousands of plants set out on tables that go halfway around Carver-Hawkeye Arena. Grab a box, stroll around collecting the plants you like, or make a mad dash to one area to get that special one-of-a-kind plant you always wanted. Booths are marked by colorful hanging banners, and plant sitter areas are available to hold your plants while you go get more. We even have volunteers who will help you carry everything out to your cars on rolling carts.

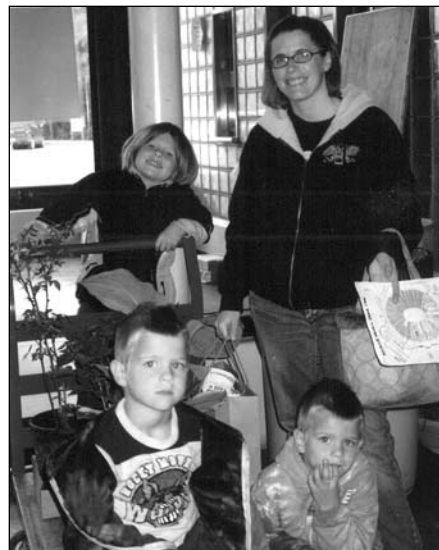
Fair booths, starting at the north end of Carver-Hawkeye, will include Trees, Shrubs, and Vines; then Shade Perennials and Hostas; then, toward the south end of the arena, will be Groundcovers; and, finally, Sunny

Perennials. Garden sculptures will be near the front doors. Information maps will be available at the doors when you come in.

Experts such as Master Gardeners of Johnson County, DNR wildlife specialists, the DNR district forester, and folks from the Iowa City Compost Program, Iowa City Recycling, and the Johnson County Heritage Trust will be on hand to answer questions on woodland management, tree pruning, wildlife, or gardening. Also, Project GREEN volunteers at each booth can answer specific questions about their plants.

If you are through buying plants and you want to sit and visit with friends, or just relax, Leaf Kitchen will once again operate a café area near the entrance, serving coffee, juices, and their great cookies and muffins.

Come and enjoy your morning with us. There is no admission charge and the parking is free. We look forward to seeing you on May 7th!



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Plant Sitters

When you get loaded down with plants and still want more, our team of Plant Sitters can be a great help. Drop off the selections you've already made, and we'll take care of them while you continue shopping. We're located in three convenient spots—near the Sunny Perennials, the Hostas, and the Trees/Shrubs areas. As a bonus, some strong young volunteers will help move your plants through the checkout process and on to your vehicle.

If you or your own "strong young volunteer" would like to volunteer to sit with or move plants during the sale, please call any of the names listed under "Plant sitters" located on page one's Garden Fair Chairs directory.



Trees and shrubs volunteers, Kasey Jurgensen and Mike O'Leary

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Information Booth

• Please visit the Project GREEN Information Booth. We'll have brochures, photos, plant lists, and sign-up sheets for volunteering. Sign up for door prizes as well!

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Shade perennial volunteers, Carole Knutson and Jan Carpenter

Cashiers

Everyone is getting excited about the 2010 garden fair, and the cashiers are ready to greet that excitement.

We will have three stations running to expedite checkout, with plenty of smiles and help at each checkout. Letters are in the mail to all of last year's volunteers. Are you interested in helping? Please contact any of the names listed under "Finance" from page one's Garden Fair Chairs directory. We are looking forward to hearing back from everyone and to seeing all of you at the garden fair!

Shade Perennial Booth

An **extravaganza of hostas** awaits shoppers at the GREEN Garden Fair once again this year! More than 1,000 hostas donated by local gardeners will include the full gamut of sizes (mini to extra large) and colors (green, gold, blue, and variegated). Some hostas may be available as one-of-a-kind, but many will be offered in larger numbers.

Shade perennials will be available to enhance those shady spots in your garden. Cultivars include many of Iowa's favorite spring wildflowers—bloodroot, jack-in-the-pulpit, bleeding heart, Solomon's seal, variegated Solomon's seal, trillium, twinleaf, Dutchman's breeches, perfoliate bellwort, shooting star—and astilbe, ligularia, primroses, ferns, columbine, celandine poppy, pulmonaria, epimedium, perennial geraniums, and many more.

Groundcover Booth (Shade and Sun)

Look for your favorite shade and sun-loving groundcovers in the Groundcover Booth, located this year between the Shade and Sunny Perennial Booths at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. Popular groundcovers include ajuga, pachysandra, vinca minor, dwarf Solomon's seal, European and wild ginger, sweet woodruff, violets, and sedum. Some groundcovers will be sold by the flat.



Garden Fair Coordinator, Barb Gartner



A happy garden fair shopper makes her purchase

After-the-Sale Sale!

If you miss the GREEN Garden Fair at Carver-Hawkeye Arena, you will have a second chance to purchase shade plants. Those that did not sell at the fair will be available for purchase at Carole Knutson's driveway, 137 South Mt. Vernon Drive, Iowa City (2 blocks east of City High School). The After Sale will be on Saturday, May 7, from 2 to 5 p.m., and Monday, May 9, from 5 to 7 p.m. You may also shop by appointment by calling Carole at (319) 338-8442.

The Shade Booth is always looking for volunteers! Think about joining the fun, and volunteer to help with shade perennials and hostas. Please call or email coordinators for additional information.



Sunny Perennial volunteer, Lynn Gardner

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines

Shrub borders are pleasing to the eye and, if planted with care, will provide the color and leaf contrast to give your home a special pizzazz. A balanced selection of flowering shrubs, which might include forsythia and spirea, will add seasonal color. Viburnums have great leaf texture, and a perfectly placed group of lilacs will enhance the landscape and produce fragrant bouquets. Or you might plant a nice patch of red, black, or golden raspberries. With minimal maintenance, your shrub border will give you years of pleasure.

Come and see these and many other plants in the Trees, Shrubs, and Vines booth.

Sunny Perennials

April showers bring May flowers, and April potters bring those May flowers to the Carver-Hawkeye Arena for the 41st Annual GREEN Garden Fair. We are the Sunny Perennial Booth, and our plants, like all other Project GREEN offerings, have survived the blustery Iowa winters. Make no mistake about it, these plants are hardy! We'll have peonies, fern peonies, bleeding hearts, salvia, daylilies, daisies, sedum, phlox, mountain bluet, veronica, and much more.

Each year we know the dawning of spring is near when we have our kickoff Sunny Booth meeting. After the meeting we anticipate being able to get our hands dirty within a matter of weeks and hope to begin potting plants at the end of March, if there are plants and if weather permits.

We welcome old and new volunteers each year. You will find a team of potters at the Treloars' barn at 2385 Sugar Bottom Road every Saturday morning until Fair day. Come join us for friendship, fellowship, and good fun. Don't forget your gloves and a garden trowel, and you'll fit right in.

Setup day is Friday, May 6, and Fair day is May 7. It doesn't end with Fair Day either. We are always looking for gardeners to work in our lineout beds to help with weeding and upkeep. You can do a little or a lot. It all goes to a great cause—beautifying the greater Iowa City area landscape. See you at the barn!



Beetle Tea



By Mary Lowder

Ten years ago, I planted a climbing hydrangea next to a hickory tree in my garden. The tree later came down, and the hydrangea really needed something to climb on. So this spring I put up a trellis, expecting a thrilling display. Instead, Japanese beetles moved in and ate most of the hydrangea's leaves. I was so disappointed!

A good friend suggested that I put an annual vine on the trellis so that I could get over my distress. Since this area is in only partial sun, the sweet potato vine I planted took forever to get established. Meanwhile, I went out every morning and knocked the sleepy beetles off the climbing hydrangea into a bucket of soapy water. Within a few days, the bucket started to smell bad, so I poured its contents on the sweet potato vine. By the end of June, this vine took off like a rocket and had the largest leaves I've ever seen.

Join Us for a Bus Trip

We are planning a day-long Project GREEN bus trip to Des Moines on Friday, June 3. Our schedule is tentative at this point, but we hope to visit private gardens, perhaps a display garden, and a nursery.

Please contact one of the following people if you are interested. We will go only if we have enough interest.

Shirley Lekin 338-0041,
shirleylekin@q.com

Melanie Hupert
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(cell) 541-2900,
melaniehupert@gmail.com



Jamie, Deb, and Gary— Our Kind of Speakers!



Jamie Beyer presenting at the February Garden Forum

Sunday, April 10, at 2:00 p.m. at the Iowa City Public Library, Gary Whittenbaugh will present "Conifer Companions," illustrated with photos that will inspire you to consider new plants, shrubs, and conifers for your landscape. His program will include plants that work well in any garden. A lifetime Master Gardener, Gary is an experienced and entertaining speaker.

Our February Garden Forum featured Jamie Beyer, who shared his enthusiasm about water and stone in the garden. In March, Deb Walser showed us her excellent photos of new perennials along with lots of good plant information.

Project GREEN Garden Tour 2011

Sunday June 26, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



***Do all you can, with what you have,
where you are.***

—Theodore Roosevelt

This presidential quote introduced Nora Steinbrech's description of her garden's ongoing transformation, and fits all of the four inspiring Iowa City gardens scheduled for this summer's garden tour. Got deer? Do all you can. . . Got shade? Do all you can. . . Vexed with plant choices? Poison ivy or garlic mustard? Energetic pets? Boggy soil? Hernia-provoking boulders and sculptures? How about a surprising "Uboughtwhat?" Just do all you can!

With humor, perseverance, and determination, these gardeners have battled a host of weather and critter combatants to entice fresh potential into their garden creations. With diversity in style and structure, they eventually resolved many of their problems and continue to experiment with possible solutions.

Beginning just south of Interstate 80, in Manville Heights, with Nora's garden, tour-goers will continue north along Dubuque Street toward the Coralville Dam Recreation Area to visit the next three gardens. Watch for signs to guide you. You may buy your ticket (\$5; children 15 and under, no charge) at any garden; with it you'll receive a map of all the garden locations).

Nora and Bill Steinbrech, 404 Magowan Avenue

Since moving to a 60' x 150' Iowa City lot in 1973—and after several frustrating summers before someone suggested that sun-loving flowers do not bloom in shade—the Steinbrechs have transformed their garden through patience and realistic plant choices.

Instead of a wished-for glorious riot of summer color, woodland wildflowers and ferns now spread happily under ancient basswood linden, venerable oaks, and an over-achieving magnolia. Patches of limp, wispy grass were replaced with lush plants that thrive in the summer shade. Most of their plantings have been allowed "off leash" to recreate a natural woodland in the middle of the city.

Also unleashed, two wild-eyed Scottish terrier pups, who yearned to stretch their little legs, now happily guard the property via an avenue built by their owners around the perimeter of the garden. When rainwater cascaded down a drainpipe to churn a large garden section into a temporary bog, a French drain was constructed to siphon new floods into an attractive rock basin. The Steinbrechs are related to a long line of "old German gardeners" who are the inspiration for ongoing adjustments to their garden dreams. Their mantra, "We have accommodated," continues!

Don Bolin and Liz Hall, 7 Valley View Place NE

A seven-foot-high gargoyle named Uboughtwhat? (Liz's exclamation when she found out what Don had purchased at a Renaissance Faire) is one of two sentinels that guard this property in River Heights. The other—a 300-pound angel sculpture—is dubbed Hernia because her owners barely escaped that condition when moving her into position.

Overlooking Shaffer Pond, the Bolin and Hall woodland garden of nearly one acre began in 1996 amid hillside ravines choked with poison ivy vines. Don and Liz consider themselves perhaps halfway toward completing their vision, which may include a babbling brook in the future. (Little things like earning a living and daily activities have kept them distracted) The garden has continued to grow in spite of

these diversions, because presently there are hundreds of varieties of perennials, shrubs, and trees. An emphasis is put on hardy, shade-tolerant perennials (especially wildflowers) from temperate North America, Europe, and Asia. They caution that this is what is can happen if you want one of every plant that you see.

Winding, intersecting paths have delighted Don and Liz when the occasional confused visitor tries to find her or his way out of their maze. Yet wildlife always find their way to a goldfish pond that entertains a wide assortment of hungry and curious critters.

Barb and Chuck Clark, 9 Wildberry Court, Iowa City

Iowa humidity, wet clay soil, and deer threatened to halt the Clarks' attempts at landscaping their 3.5 acres. A grove of river birch and aspen was originally watered with a drip irrigation system which proved to provide too much moisture for the drainage-loving aspens. So out with that irrigation system! More than one and a half acres is now landscaped with evergreens, blooming perennials, and annuals.

Munching by hungry deer necessitated the move of numerous hostas from the front of the house to the back, after it was enclosed by a deer fence. In 2004 the Clarks reassessed their 27-year-old swimming pool and gutted it. Now dotting an updated sunny poolside oasis are boulders of Iowa fieldstone found near Waterloo. (Most of the boulders available here come from Wisconsin, but Iowa stone has more color.) "Rockcoustics"—speakers installed inside the rocks—join birdsong and wildlife babble from the encircling woods.

You will be spellbound when you descend into their forested fairyland. Pathways dodge huge stones, streams, and waterfalls that tumble along the sloping landscape underneath a leafy canopy. Designed and constructed by landscape architect David Biehl, this lyrical garden journey took eight years to complete. Over four seasons from 2007 to 2010, Biehl carved and graded the sloping ground, hauled tons of rock, constructed and drainage and water systems, and planted groundcovers and perennials throughout.

Carrol and George Woodworth, 14 Westview Acres NE

Over a span of thirty years, Carrol and George Woodworth have created a multilevel garden on a sloping two-acre site endowed by nature with clay soil, bad drainage, vulnerability to wind shear, herds of ravenous deer, and invasive plants. Landscape architects, arborists, and designers have made welcome contributions, but the Woodworths are a problem-solving couple—a statistician who builds and a researcher who plants.

Now, as they skirt the eight-foot-high, trellis-paneled-and-mesh-gridded fence that George built to enclose the backyard, the deer file up a meandering swale and past a berm that together divert storm runoff into the ravine below. When the backyard was trenched and contoured to control water runoff, entire perennial beds were shifted to temporary quarters to accommodate the installation of storm drains, a U-shaped berm, and a ha-ha (a trench with one side concealed from view).

Although many trees have fallen victim to wind shear and disease, native gray dogwoods are thriving, as are serviceberries, witch hazels, a group of "Little King" river birches, and two 35-year-old "dwarf" Alberta spruces. Shade- and clay-tolerant plant materials repeat patterns throughout the garden. Shrubs such as boxwood, oakleaf hydrangea, leatherleaf viburnum, and winterberry join favorite perennials—astilbe, cranesbill, daylilies, doricum, euphorbia, heuchera, hosta, ligularia, sedges—and wildflowers, especially jack-in-the-pulpit.

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Betty Kann

Can-do Betty Kann

Some time back in 1987, Betty Kann was approached by Emilie Rubright, then president of the Project GREEN Steering Committee, who said, "Have I got the job for you! Project GREEN needs a new chair of its annual garden tour." Betty, employed in the Medical Records Department at Mercy Hospital at the time, admits, "I knew nothing about organizing a garden tour." But, unable to dissuade Emilie, Betty became garden tour chair . . . a position she held for the next ten years. During those years she was always on the lookout for private gardens that would inspire tour-goers. She says, "It was an eye-opening experience to realize how many Iowa City gardeners took such pride and interest in beautifying their home landscape." From 1994 to 1999, she co-chaired the garden tour with Emil Rinderspacher.


In 1997, Betty began a fourteen-year stint as secretary of the Project GREEN Steering Committee when a new slate of officers assumed their duties. She is the last of those officers to retire; but she will remain on the Steering Committee to continue to monitor the list of our more than 2800 newsletter subscribers, hoping to minimize newsletter mailing costs and to offer readership to those who indicate a preference for online delivery.

Over the years, Betty has worn many hats for Project GREEN and, of course, she continues to offer choice plant materials, as she has for many years, to both the Sunny Perennial and Shade Perennial Booths at the annual GREEN Garden Fair.

Johnson County Master Gardeners are holding their Fourth Annual Flea Market and Plant sale on Saturday, May 14 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Johnson County Fairgrounds. If you have cuttings or divisions from your favorite plants, seedlings, gardening books, tools, containers, or garden art to donate, call Barb Krug at 319-431-5865.



United Action for Youth is hosting its 6th Annual Festival of Flowers, a floral show and competition at Brown Deer Gold Course clubhouse on May 26, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. More information and entry forms are available online at www.unitedactionforyouth.com. The Festival of Flowers raises money for UAY's Teen Parent, Youth Development, and Counseling Programs.



Thank You, Shirley Lekin!

She is quiet, humble, and a good listener; but behind that soft-spoken exterior lies enough creative energy to leave the rest of us back a pace or two. Shirley Lekin has laid brick and stone, built a good-sized potting shed, dug and installed two backyard ponds, and bricked a patio and a front walk to her home. She has designed beds and built berms with both imagination and an eye for beauty that keep us coming back to her garden for GREEN Garden Tours.

Shirley has also established a garden in the property behind her backyard, thanks to the generosity of Dr. Raymond Gill, who owns the site. This lineout bed, as we call it, gives us room to raise plants for the GREEN Garden Fair. Shirley dug and rototilled the bed and, until recently, did all the weeding herself, all summer. From it and her own garden, Shirley has potted more than a thousand plants and tended them for our big plant sale.

Need we say more? Shirley has worked, organized, dug, and potted, but she has also been a kind and caring ally of Project GREEN. It's easy to see why we want her to know how much we appreciate her hours of service.



Shirley Lekin

Volunteer Opportunities With Project GREEN – We Need You!

To become a member of Project GREEN, all you need to do is volunteer – and volunteer opportunities abound in Project GREEN! Contrary to popular belief, you do not need to possess gardening skills to help out! Our needs also include such duties as helping with the website and newsletter, creating brochures and displays, serving in administrative roles, and working with publicity and media contacts. We are in IMMEDIATE NEED of a secretary for our Steering Committee; the primary duty is to take minutes at our monthly meetings (2nd Thursday of the month; 11:30 a.m., Robert A Lee Recreation Center). Please contact one of the officers listed on the back page of this newsletter if you are interested in a volunteer position.

City High School Front Campus Planting Accomplishment

On Saturday morning, October 9, 2010, the front campus of City High School was teeming with workers. Many different groups—civic as well as school-associated—came together in a cooperative effort to plant dozens of new trees, shrubs, and grasses to revitalize the campus appearance. Older and younger workers alike dug holes, placed the plantings, and filled and mulched and watered the new areas.



Former City High parent and Project GREEN volunteer Emil Rinderspacher spearheaded the final efforts to implement a plan which had been started early in 2001. After the school district completed hardscaping, which included new emergency-vehicle-accessible walkways and reconfigured parking, as well as a new front entrance patio area for use of students, the final planting could proceed. Project GREEN contributed half of the cost



of the plants through the GREEN Grants program for the schools.

The final phase of this lengthy process will be new foundation plantings along the front of the building. This will be done either this spring or in the fall.



Take a walk around the revitalized front campus of City High School. It is an engaging area which will just grow more beautiful with the passage of time.

*Top: Diane Allen and Judy Shroeder
Middle: Joanie Parsons and Emil Rinderspacher
Bottom: Karrie Craig and her three sons*



City High School students

November 4, 2010

Cindy Parsons, Diane Allen, and Mary Gantz
Project GREEN
Civic Center
410 East Washington St.
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

John Bacon
Principal

Ann Browning
Assistant Principal

Terence Coleman
Assistant Principal

D'Anne Kroemer
Athletic Director

Dear Project GREEN Leaders,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help with our tree planting at City High School last month. This project has been in the dreaming stage since 1996 and to see it finally take shape is due in no small part to your generous financial support of our project. This was without a doubt the largest planting project the schools have undertaken and although we had the dream, Project GREEN coming through with the matching funds and SIGNIFICANT help the day of the planting made our dream a reality. We had over 100 volunteers from students and parents to teachers and administrators to community members and neighbors help on the project day. This shows our commitment to making your generous donation to us a significant and lasting one.

City High has a long tradition of people stepping up when major or minor projects need to be completed. What you helped us accomplish on just this one day will leave a lasting impression on our school and community for decades to come. Thank you once again for all you have done for us.

Sincerely,

Terry Coleman

1900 Morningside Drive • Iowa City, IA • 52245

www.projectgreen.org



"Thank you so much for helping to coordinate the purchase and delivery of our Kindergarten tree! We LOVE it!" Sincerely, Wickham Kindergarten



Iowa Avenue and Melrose Avenue

Iowa Avenue and Melrose Avenue underwent some damage during the harsh winter months of 2010 and 2011. Deep tire tracks from vehicles that slipped off the road caused deep gouges in the grade and turf areas. These areas will be re-graded and sodded or seeded as part of city maintenance and repair work.



Spring Gardening Tasks

By Laura Hawks

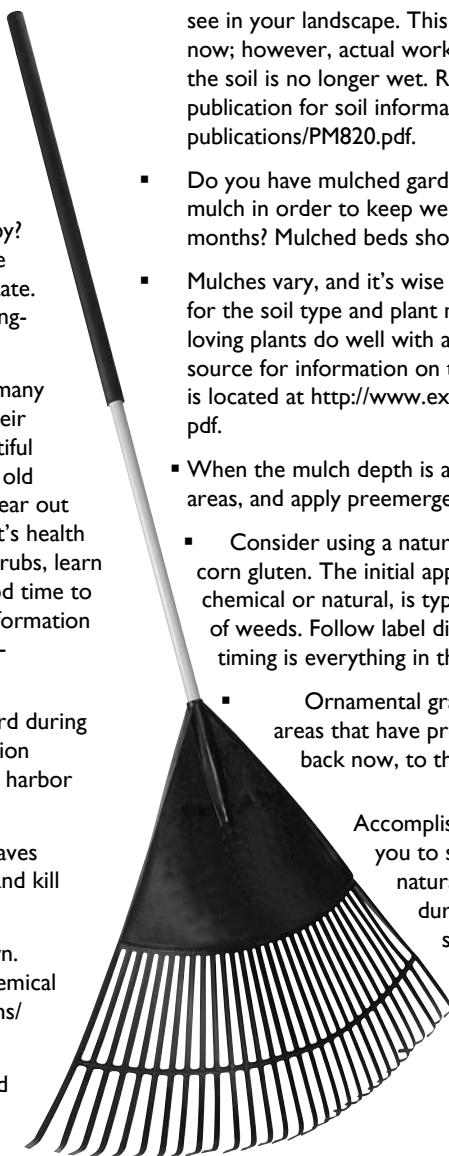
The ground in your yard is probably thawed—and beckoning you. If it's time for you to be out in your garden, here are some springtime chores to think about—and do:

- Assess your shade and ornamental trees. Do you see limbs crossing each other too closely? Any double leaders? Is a branch causing a physical hazard to passersby? Now is a good time to prune many trees. A good source of information on pruning trees is at www.extension.iastate.edu/article/ask-isu-extension-gardenexperts-about-pruning-trees.
- Now, take a look at your shrubs. Some shrubs, such as many within the *Viburnum* genus, need very little pruning, as their natural growth habit and pattern maintains its own beautiful integrity without any pruning. Other shrubs, such as the old common lilacs, require pruning at least once a year to clear out old, declining, or dead canes; pruning promotes the plant's health and its flowering potential. Prior to pruning flowering shrubs, learn whether they bloom on old or new wood. Now is a good time to prune some shrubs. A good source for shrub pruning information is at www.extension.iastate.edu/article/ask-isu-extension-gardenexperts-about-pruning-shrubs.
- Clean up debris and leaves that have blown into your yard during the winter months. Remove leaves from around foundation areas. Accumulated leaves and debris in these areas may harbor unwanted insect populations during later warm months.
- Rake lawn areas to remove excess thatch and leaves. Leaves packed down and piled on lawn areas promote mildew and kill grass.
- Consider nonchemical alternatives to managing your lawn. Refer to the Iowa State University publication on nonchemical alternatives: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/pml680.pdf>
- Plan ahead—do you want to create additional landscaped areas? Identify the qualities and functions you'd like to

see in your landscape. This planning work may be accomplished now; however, actual work with the soil should begin only when the soil is no longer wet. Refer to the Iowa State University publication for soil information: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/PM820.pdf>.

- Do you have mulched garden areas? If so, will they require more mulch in order to keep weed growth in check during summer months? Mulched beds should be at a 2" to 3" depth.
- Mulches vary, and it's wise to select a type of mulch appropriate for the soil type and plant material in the bed. For example, acid-loving plants do well with a pine-needle-mulched bed. A good source for information on types of organic mulch available to you is located at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/rg209.pdf>.
- When the mulch depth is acceptable, rake and cultivate the planted areas, and apply preemergent weed control.
 - Consider using a natural preemergent weed control such as corn gluten. The initial application of preemergents, whether chemical or natural, is typically in March, prior to germination of weeds. Follow label directions closely for the application, as timing is everything in the control of weeds.
 - Ornamental grasses, perennials, and native prairie areas that have provided winter interest may be pruned back now, to the ground.

Accomplishing the above spring tasks will enable you to sit back more often and enjoy the natural wonders unfold and reveal themselves during the 2011 growing season. Happy spring!



Recent Project GREEN Newsletters can be viewed at www.projectgreen.org



PROJECT GREEN

Civic Center

410 E. Washington St.

Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Return Service Requested



Please plant trees

Clip and Save

April 10, 2011, 2–4 p.m.

“Conifer Companions” by Gary Whittenbaugh, a Project GREEN forum at the Iowa City Public Library

April 15 and May 2, 2011

Listen to the **Dottie Ray Show** at **8:45 a.m.** on KXIC 800AM for Garden Fair information.

41st Annual GREEN Garden Fair

Saturday, May 7, 2011, 9–11:30 a.m., Carver-Hawkeye Arena

GREEN Garden Tour

Sunday, June 26, 2011, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. (rain or shine)

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