



Lawn Care and Garden Services

... an environmentally friendly way

Garden Maintenance and Landscaping

Autumn 2013 Newsletter.

Welcome to the Autumn newsletter. What a difference a year makes, summer 2012 barely saw a day go by without rain. By contrast, this summer has seen day after day of dry, hot sunny weather. Consequently, rather than the water-logging of 2012 we've seen baking hard borders making weeding and digging difficult and hand watering of bedding plants and new lawns being essential for their survival. As a result mulching of borders has been in demand, as a good layer of mulch helps to reduce weeds, increase water retention and provide plant nutrients. The most cost efficient way I have found to mulch large areas is using a soil conditioner purchased in bulk. If you require any further information on mulching please ask for details.



During the season whilst running to capacity with regular maintenance, we have continued to increase **landscaping, turfing, and fence installations.**

Left – 2 newly laid lawns establishing well.
Right - a fine display of summer bedding.
Far right - landscaped feature complete with frog!



In this newsletter we take a look at: Autumn Lawn Care; this year's common weeds; planting to tackle ground elder and improve wild flower areas; autumn garden tasks and team changes.

AUTUMN LAWN CARE

As day length shortens and temperatures fall, mowing becomes less frequent. **Cutting height should be raised** slightly to help protect the grass from the harshness of winter. If required, **scarify** the lawn to remove build up of thatch and allow light and air into the lawn. **Aerate** if the lawn is compacted. An **autumn lawn feed** can be applied. Autumn lawn feed is **low** in nitrogen, which encourages leafy growth, as the focus is now on the roots and general health of the grass which is provided by potash and phosphorous.

AUTUMN TASKS

Autumn is the time to tidy and 'put the garden to bed for winter' and prepare for flowering next spring.

Fences and gates –check fence condition and renew / repair if required. Also check on any garden **sheds** for security and weather protection, re-felting if required.

Bulbs - now is the time to be planting spring flowering bulbs such as: crocus, daffodils and tulips. Bulbs can be planted in beds, borders, lawns and pots!

Hedge trimming – last chance to trim hedges before winter frosts arrive.

Pruning – in autumn pruning of **certain** plants will encourage plant health, vigour and flower / fruit production next year. Be careful **not** to prune any spring flowering plants as this may remove their flower buds!



Antony Turnbull (City & Guilds Horticulture, LANTRA) Trading as Lawn Care and Garden Services. Est. 2009.

- ◆ Fencing ◆ Garden Sitting ◆ Hedge Trimming ◆ Landscaping ◆ Planting ◆ Pressure washing ◆ Pruning
- ◆ Tree work – chainsaw work and small tree (up to 5 metres) felling
- ◆ Lawns •aeration •mowing •mulch mowing •scarifying • over-seeding and top dressing •Turfing

TEAM CHANGES

It was with much sadness that we saw Chris complete his last day before moving onto pastures new having been successful in his application to work for the National Trust as a gardener. We wish Chris every success and thank him so much for all his hard work, experience and good nature which he shared with us.

In August we welcome Michael Newton. Michael has a wealth of experience and knowledge in conservation work coupled with a horticultural background. There will be more in the next newsletter about Michael and we'll take a look at what **conservation** means in our local environments and garden.

JUST SOME OF THIS SEASON'S COMMON WEEDS and Cats

Lawns – early in the season dandelions were in abundance, I suspect in part due to some road side verges which were amass with yellow which subsequently leads to the seed heads dispersing far and wide being carried by the wind. Buttercups and clover are also a common sight but are very much loved by the bees and insects. Some years a blue multi layered flower appears and it's been fairly widespread this season. Its botanical name is **Prunella vulgaris** but has a raft of common names inc. self heal.



Prunella vulgaris

Borders – a fast growing weed in the borders has been a type of buttercup. Called Ranunculus acris, it is a tall invasive buttercup native to Europe. It spreads by seed so, as with any seed bearer, it's important not to let seed heads develop. As the saying goes "*one years seed is seven years weeds*". As with any plant, it's only a weed if you don't want it, as in the case of this meadow buttercup, it is a fabulous plant for many a wildflower garden or meadow but as it is noxious it's not one to use near livestock or pets.



Cats – cats can leave a mess on lawns and in borders. A Client used 'used' tea bags with Deep Heat rubbed in to great effect. Harmless and effective, I recommended it to other Clients and it is proving to be a surprisingly effective deterrent.

MULBERRY TREE

We recently visited our daughter in London and enjoyed a day in Greenwich. Near the Naval Museum Samantha noticed a tree with berries. On further investigation Samantha identified it as a Mulberry tree! I was most impressed but it turned out that there was a tree plaque! It was the most marvellous tree with a beautiful bark and branch structure and the pigeons devoured the berries.



BENEFICIAL PLANTING

A Client very kindly helped with a little test this season to see if planting African marigolds in a border which suffers from ground elder would help reduce the ground elder. The results, whilst inconclusive, did show a reduction in ground elder in one part of the border.

If you're trying to grow a wild flower meadow and need to tackle unwanted grass, then planting Yellow rattle will give off toxins in the soil which help to inhibit grass growth.



Yellow rattle

and FINALLY!

A picture many thought they would never see! Our Suzuki Carry Van towering over another van... a brand new Piaggio Ape 50. 'Ape' means 'Bee' in Italian and is very apt given the sound the Ape makes when it whizzes by. Not that it can whizz past the big Suzuki of course! *Happy Gardening! Tony.*



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