

Gardening in the Fall



Tuning the clocks back an hour in the fall always makes me happy in the morning, but incredibly sad in the afternoon when it becomes dark so much earlier! We continue to work on leaves in the yard. I purchased a shredder this year and have been adding to the compost bins and the raised beds. The Cottonwood leaves are finally down and then we can finish up the yard. The tomato cages are down and need to be stored in the work shed.

November is a great time to plant milkweed seeds according to Tony Gomez (monarchbutterflygarden.net). It is too warm for the ground to be frozen, but too cold for seeds to sprout before winter sets in. Remember that perennial milkweed seeds need cold stratification, so why not let winter take care of that naturally! Exposing seeds to cool temperatures before the warmer temps of spring will cause them to break their dormancy, coaxing out your new spring seedlings.

The 10 simple steps to fall planting milkweed seeds include:

1. Put your seeds into a small bowl and bring out to the planting area.
2. Clear away any mulch or rocks from the area which could potentially block the growth of a small seedling.
3. Water the area thoroughly and let it saturate the soil.
4. Put on garden gloves and stick your index finger in the dirt up to your first knuckle.
5. Repeat this process for each seed you are planting.
6. Place a seed in each hole.
7. Cover the seeds with the already-moist soil.
8. Mark your seed area with sturdy plant labels.
9. Do you have squirrels? You might want to consider putting down chicken wire to deter squirrels or other pesky critters from digging up your new milkweed patch.
10. Relax for the winter!

A few years ago, I complained that there weren't any hedge apples on my trees. What was I thinking? This year the end of our lower driveway is covered! I guess it's time to start picking them up, so we don't run over them repeatedly and make an unsightly mess. If I start work on them tomorrow, I will have to find my hard hat!