

Clematis in April

Last month was the month to start training tendrils as they start to climb up a trellis. If you didn't do this last month, you might like to do so now. In Parker County clematis usually come out of dormancy in late March or April. In training tendrils to climb up a trellis is extremely important with clematis. I prefer to use plant Velcro so I can undo the Velcro from time to time as the new stems develop, and the plant Velcro allows me to redirect the new tendrils. The strong wind has played havoc with the clematis plants in my gardens this season. Plant Velcro has really helped confine the long tendrils as the strong winds can cause the destruction of a clematis plant if left unattended. If you did not do this and notice some dead tendrils, cut the dead stems down to where there is healthy growth, preferably above a swollen bud. This year the only place locally that I found plant Velcro was at Home Depot.

Also, if you haven't pruned your clematis, you might want to cut the dead stems just above the swollen buds. Water the clematis thoroughly. This year I have been using 1 oz. of Thrive and 4 oz. of Garrett Juice to one gallon of water. In the past I've used Maxicrop Liquified Seaweed which is also an alternative. These products will help promote root growth. A couple of weeks after this treatment, you can fertilize your clematis plants with a fertilizer that has a high phosphorus. This can be the same fertilizer that you use on your roses or daylilies.

The best time to move clematis is when they are dormant because during the dormant season it is asleep; therefore, there will be less stress on its root system. However, if you have decided that your clematis didn't do well last year in a particular place and wish to move it to another location, try to pick a cool and overcast day to transplant. DO NOT transplant during hot or windy periods. First, have the new hole read by preparing the new planting site as you would for a new plant. I like to use a shovel to dig the plant out because this will help preserve the roots and keep it intact. Dig out as much of the root ball as possible and carefully transfer it to its new home. Thoroughly water the plant with liquid seaweed; pruning back the uppermost stems by half to compensate for the loss of roots, then attach the stems to a support or trellis. Try to find a permanent location for your clematis and leave it there for best blooming results.