

## **Parker County Master Gardener Association Garden Tips - October**

October through November is an excellent time to purchase bulbs while you still have a good selection in the garden center. They may be planted at any time with the exception of tulips and hyacinth bulbs.

Chill tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator until mid or late December before planting. The lower part of the refrigerator is best. Do not leave bulbs in airtight plastic bags during refrigerated storage.

Plant bulbs in well prepared beds so the base of the bulb is at a depth that is three times the diameter of the bulb. In sandy soil, set slightly deeper and in clay soils less deeply.

In addition to bulbs, check your nursery or garden center for started plants of calendulas, pinks, poppies, snapdragons and sweet Williams. Planted later in the month and protected from extreme cold, they will usually provide a riot of spring color. If you prefer, you can wait until late winter or early spring to plant these in our area.

Prepare beds for planting pansies or violas when they become available at the garden centers. They need a well-drained soil and exposure to at least a half-day of sun. It is best to use started plants, as seeds are difficult to handle.

Plant flowering cabbage, kale, pansies and violas after the temperature begins to drop.

There is still time to divide and reset such perennials as daylilies, hollyhocks, irises, phlox, shasta daisies and violets.

Take cuttings of tender annuals, perennials and tropicals early in the month. This will ensure you have well-rooted plants before frost.

Early this month, sow wildflowers into tilled garden soils but be sure to keep them away from turfgrass.

This is still a great time for planting landscape plants (other than ones known to be winter tender).

If you are having a problem with nematodes in your soil, now is the time to plant Elbon cereal rye. The rye entraps the nematodes in its root system. You will then plow the rye under in late winter.

Remove dead stalks and foliage from your perennials as they go dormant. Applying mulch over the plants' crown will help them through the winter.

Now is a good time to remove dead and damaged limbs from your shade trees. Do so now while they still have some leaves.