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Prime's Clippings

August 2017



Prickly Poppy, *Argemone Albiflora*

an August wildflower and excellent forage plant for quail and bees

Dog Days of Summer

After a fairly pleasant June, July came on hot and dry as expected. Rains have been widely scattered so consider yourself lucky if you had any in your part of the world. As I write this on the last day of July we are expecting a very nice start to August with increased rain chances and high temperatures in the low nineties—sweet! But for the next two months plants and lawns can go south in a hurry. Keep an eye on tender plants like hydrangeas or newly planted trees and shrubs, and check your sprinklers regularly for clogged nozzles, low heads, heads blocked by shrubs, etc. It only takes a week or so to do serious damage to lawns and landscapes that are not receiving enough water, so stay alert!

So why do we refer to the sultriest days of summer as the “dog days?” Is it because the heat makes dogs short-tempered and mean, or lazy and lethargic? Because we eat a lot of hot dogs?



The original meaning actually had nothing to do with heat or dogs, but hot weather is what we in the northern hemisphere now associate with the phrase. The ancient Greeks marked this time of the year by the rising of Sirius the dog star just before dawn, and associated it with a potential for war or disaster. It also happened to coincide with a really hot time of year, but depending on where you are in the world Sirius will rise at

different times. And because the stars in our night sky move independently of Earth's calendar, in

about 13,000 years we will be experiencing the dog days of winter. And I bet the dogs will still be lethargic and lazy, laying about by a warm fire.

Time to Treat for Grubworms!

Don't forget! August is the time of year to treat for grub worms. Most of our grub damage is brought on by the larva of the June beetle. Peak flights of the June beetle occur in mid May to mid June and eggs hatch about 1 month later. Grubs are easiest to kill at this early stage of their growth due to the fact that they are closer to the soil surface and very small. Not every yard will have a large enough population to cause damage, but if you have had one in the past you may be in a location that is prone to infestation. Lawns close to street lights where June bugs gather are often hit, and ironically they often attack lush lawns when soil is soft and food (roots) is abundant. They can do serious damage to turf over the next two months. And the application we make for grubs may also act as a preventative for chinch bugs, another bad lawn pest.



Prices start at just \$49.95 for customers that are already on our 7 step program!

This many grubs in 1 sq ft of soil is enough to do serious damage.

Summer Surprises

While enjoying a late afternoon walk a few years ago we were fortunate enough to be caught in a heavy downpour. Like a couple of kids, we came home soaking wet, chilled, and thrilled to have a good rain in mid summer. Then, just a few days later, we discovered a vast swath of beautiful white flowers held on single stems 8 inches tall, growing in an old mowed field that was once the site of the Pike Drive-In Theater in the fifties. Having driven past this corner my entire life, funny how I never really noticed them until I took the time to actually walk through the field. Sometimes you just have to slow down to find the treasure that was there all along.



These summer jewels are rain lilies. Even though these flowers are called lilies, they actually belong to the Amaryllis family. Rain lily is a generic term that applies to numerous species of plants in three different genus: Zephyranthes, Habranthus, and Cooperia. We dug several clumps to set in our beds and after a few days they went to seed. A second rain brought another flush of flowers a week later.

These resilient little bulbs will flush after nearly every summer rain and last virtually forever. Our new wild additions joined some pink ones we purchased at a nursery years ago.

Another plant that will help ease the dog days of summer is the Surprise Lily, *Lycoris radiata* or *Lycoris squamigera*.

Around the end of August, when you have just about given up on keeping your plants pretty, up jumps a little shoot of fresh green growth. In just about a week it is 2-3 ft. tall and a gorgeous spidery red or pink bloom appears.

Excellent in a mondo grass bed or all by themselves, a few clusters of this beauty will transition you



pleasantly into Fall.

Planning for Fall Projects

Every year we like to remind customers that Fall is an excellent time for landscape improvements. Everyone gets spring fever and enjoys freshening up their yard in spring, but well informed gardeners know that Fall is really the best season for planting most of our landscape ornamentals.

Trees, shrubs, and perennials that are planted in September through December get to take advantage of our traditionally mild temperatures and regular rains. Plants that go in the ground in the Fall have reduced heat stress and are better equipped to handle the inevitable dry conditions of next summer.

Although most plants will show little or no top growth during the winter, it's what is going on in the ground that counts. Root systems thrive in our mild Fall weather and grow vigorously all winter, giving you bigger, healthier plants next year.

Use these hot days of August to make plans for your fall landscape projects.

The Big Email Push

Experts agree, e-mail is the only way to go!

Once again, we are reminding everyone to sign up to "Go Green" and start receiving your

invoices and newsletter via e-mail. We do not share your address with anyone, and we do not send out e-mail blasts soliciting your business.

You can also pay with your favorite credit card if you prefer.

Just call us at 817-461-4000 to set it up.

Better yet, send an e-mail to: contactus@primelandscapeservices.com

Thanks!



where the grass is always greener

August Chores

- Mow weekly and do not bag clippings
- Hand water newly planted areas & trees
- Watch for dry spots and chinch bugs in turf
- Check and adjust sprinkler systems
- Mulch beds
- Treat for grub worms

Our goal is to fulfill the needs of the customer by providing timely, quality services and products.

Thanks for your business!



Spencer Young

Pool and Water Garden Services Manager



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