



Nature Scapes
INC.

Cultivated News⁺

News & Notes From the Ground Up • Volume 1, No. 1 • Spring 1995

Spring Landscaping Tips for Homeowners

March — Now is the time to fertilize Fescue lawns, using a balanced fertilizer and a pre-emergence treatment for crabgrass control. Apply a broadleaf selective herbicide for weed control. Fertilize trees and shrubs with a slow-release, balanced fertilizer. Spread evenly throughout the root zone to the outer edges of the furthest limbs.

March is also a good time to vigorously prune shrubs that are interfering with lights, walkways, entrances and the like. This will rejuvenate your plants, because you are removing old wood and allowing light into the interior of the plant. This will also help produce a more natural form and enhance your plants' health. Remember to let spring flowering shrubs (like azalea and forsythia) complete their blooming first.

April — This is the time to scalp Bermuda lawns and remove excess growth. Use a power rake to de-thatch your lawn, if you have a heavy thatch buildup. This is also a good time to have lawn mowers serviced and blades sharpened.

Apply spring fertilizer to Bermuda lawns and a second round of preemergence herbicide if necessary. Start watching for insects on new shrub growth. Apply insecticidal soap if necessary. Remember: always follow labels when using chemicals and make sure you have properly identified the pest you are after, before selecting a chemical. Spraying should always be your last choice of control. (There are other, biological-control methods like using ladybugs for aphids.)

See *Tips* page 4

Ten Years — Can It Really Be?

Time has flown since I bought our first mower and took to the lawns. In 1994 we celebrated our Ten Year Anniversary. In this trade, where companies come and go with great regularity, we are extremely proud to have steadily grown and prospered. There are many factors involved in achieving success, not the least of which is the people who have contributed to this accomplishment.

Therefore, in this first issue of *Cultivated News*, we would like to take the opportunity to say *thank you* to our clients, employees and vendors for their support and service. It is through the effort of this *team* that we have attained our ten year milestone.

In October we hosted a Tenth Anniversary Open House. That gave us the opportunity to show clients the home base of our operation. We felt it would give them an opportunity to know us better. The barbecue from "Spiced Right" was excellent, and we had a wonderful time giving tours as well as literally "chew-

ing the fat" with our friends and clients. *Thanks to all of you who took time from your busy schedules to visit with us.* We are hoping to be able to host more events of this nature in the future.

Again, thanks to all of you who support Nature Scapes, Inc. in our efforts to provide quality lawn care and landscaping services.

— Rick Upchurch



Taken at our Ten Year Anniversary Celebration —

Behind the Scenes — + Meet Darren Righteous

Good employees are the backbone of any successful business. That is why we would like to introduce someone who has been with Nature Scapes, Inc. over three years now and has always given his best.

Meet Darren Righteous, originally from Winnsboro, Louisiana. Darren joined our team in August of 1991 as our Spray Technician. Currently, he has taken on the role of managing all our chemical needs. Due to ever-changing, environmental concerns about chemical applications, this is a monumental task.

Darren graduated from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1982, having received his B.S. in Plant and Soil Science. He is a lifetime member of the Atlanta Grad Chapter of Alpha Phi Omega. Other achievements include being Brother of the Year, Fall 1980 through Spring 1981 and making Dean's List

in 1979. He holds his Georgia Commercial Pesticide License and must meet educational requirements annually.

Darren met his wife, Leneequa in high school. She also attended Southern University, graduating in 1984 with a B.S. in Computer Science. Recently they bought their first house and are very excited to be new homeowners.

Since he is quite knowledgeable in his field, Darren is a major asset to our business. Should you spot Darren and the spray truck, we hope that you feel free to chat with him about any questions you may have.

Rick's Pick

This quarter, our featured plant is the *Camellia Japonica* or common *Camellia*. It has appeared in southern landscapes for over 150 years. I remember seeing their luxurious blooms in my grandmother's Mississippi garden, when I was a boy. When they appeared, I always knew that spring was not far behind.

The plant is a large shrub or small tree with glossy, dark-green leaves. If permitted, the plant can eventually achieve a height of 7–12 feet, and a spread of 5–7 feet. The leaves have a leathery feel.

There are numerous varieties, featuring red, white, pink and variegated blossoms. Camellias are a great selection for partially shaded areas with well-drained soil. They do prefer

protected areas, away from northern exposure.



— *Camellia Japonica*

Recycling With Go Green

Have you ever wondered where all the tree and shrub clippings and leaves go when they are hauled away in our trucks? Nature Scapes, Inc. has contracted with "Go Green" to dump all landscape refuse at their facility.

After receiving this debris, Go Green sorts out and saves any topsoil. Then the stumps and brush are loaded into a massive grinding machine. That machine reduces everything — even giant logs and stumps — into mulch. The resulting screened topsoil, mulch and compost are then supplied to the Department of Transportation to be used in their work.

This spring, Nature Scapes, Inc. is also adding more mulching mowers to the cache of tools our crews use. These mowers recycle grass clippings back into the lawn, a process which returns important nutrients to the soil. Another benefit is that the problem of waste disposal is eliminated.

We hope our clients take pleasure in the fact that we are serving them in a way that also serves the environment!

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Spotlight on Safety

At Nature Scapes, Inc., we take pride in our approach to managing safety concerns. Our approach is to maintain a consistent program of safety communication, education, incentives and drug awareness training as well as drug testing.

Safety Incentive Program

In June 1994, we began an incentive program called "Safety Pays," a bingo game that bases possible winnings on the number of days that have passed since the last accident. Our current winner, Miguel Maldonado, took home the jackpot of \$42 on February 10, 1995. Other winners include:

June '94	Jim Wages	\$27.00
August '94	Bill Geib/Gabriel Hernandez (split)	\$31.00
September '94	Mauricio Gonzales	\$31.00
October '94	Daniel Vega	\$30.00
November '94	Jimbo Wages	\$25.00
December '94	Terry Johnson	\$25.00

Safety Meetings

Safety meetings are scheduled for one morning each week. We discuss different topics and review any accidents, circumstances of neglect or equipment abuse that have occurred since the last meeting.

Drug Testing and Training

Nature Scapes, Inc. has been certified by the Georgia Board of Worker's Compensation as a Certified Drug-Free Workplace. This requires Substance Abuse Testing, at least once annually and Drug Awareness Training classes, two one-hour classes annually. Drug Awareness Training classes were held on February 17 for all employees. This year's first class for employees featured the problem of substance abuse and how it affects people in the workplace. The training for Supervisors outlined how to recognize the signs of substance abuse, how to document and corroborate signs of employee substance abuse and how to refer employees to the proper treatment providers.



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May — Flowering spring bulbs will come and go this season, leaving their green leaves sticking up out of the ground for some time. It is very tempting to cut them down, especially after they start turning yellow and browning out, but don't succumb to the temptation! Your bulbs use these leaves to regenerate and store needed nutrients for next spring. One gardening secret to giving these areas a neater appearance is to fold the leaves in half and slip a rubber band over them.

Now is also the time to prune azaleas and forsythia — after all blooms have faded. Remove any dead wood or long shoots sticking out. Cut the shoots down inside the interior of the plant to hide the cut. Fertilize after your plants have bloomed so they can store up energy for next year's blossoms. May is an excellent time to install summer annuals, after the risk of frost has diminished.

From Edith Henderson's *Home Landscape Companion*

There should be a tendency to feel humble when in the presence of any growing thing. No matter how many hours you watch, rarely will you be able to see that vine reach up and attach itself to an overhead wire or observe a daisy turning to face the sun. But, they do it in their own way. ...When space is a scarce commodity, the thoughtful use of it is like a breath of fresh air. We need it badly in cities, in small towns, and in our

+ own backyards. It is a definite asset around many office buildings and should be jealously guarded. When a great area is laid out before our eyes for our enjoyment, we instantly realize how cluttered most spaces have become. Uncluttered space is a priceless possession that will not be with us long unless we protect it. ...Every design plan must be based on reason, have a theme, and reduce maintenance to a minimum. Plans should be clear-cut guides to a simpler and more enjoyable way of living. Keep this ideal in mind.

Who We Are



Cultivated News is published four times a year by Nature Scapes, Inc., for over ten years a provider of landscaping, maintenance, irrigation and floriculture services to the metropolitan Atlanta area.

Nature Scapes, Inc. is a charter member of GGIA – Georgia Green Industry Association, MALTA – Metro Atlanta Landscape & Turf Association and GTAI – Georgia Turfgrass Association, Inc.

Natures Scapes, Inc. operates a drug-free workplace, as certified by the State Board of Workers' Compensation.

If you have any topics or questions you would like to see discussed or elaborated on in a future issue of this newsletter, please call and let us know.

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