



# **LOOKING AHEAD APRIL**

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# WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

## Start Here: OSU—Garden Tasks for April

- **Problems to manage in April**

- [Insects](#)
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- [Shrubs not blooming?](#)
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- **Good to Know**

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# LANDSCAPE PESTS

**These guys are still around--**see [February](#) and [March Looking Ahead](#) issues for images and more information

- [Western Boxelder Bugs!](#)  
<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74114.html>
- [Carpet Beetles](#) and [Drugstore Beetles](#)
- [Cutworms](#) and [other lawn pests](#)

# LANDSCAPE PESTS

## ANTS on Parade! Featuring the [Odorous House Ant](#) (AKA sugar ant)

- Live outside in temporary shallow nests, but can find their way inside
- Found marching in lines across your kitchen counter or window sill
- Attracted to sweets or any food
- The lines of ants leave “butt trails” so that other ants can find the source of food.
- Wipe all counters clean with soapy sponge to remove scent and food debris
- If problem persists, an organic chemical ant baits are is available—in gel form-E.g. Terro Ant Killer
- Important: Read and follow all directions on the product—keep away from pets and children

### Odorous House Ant

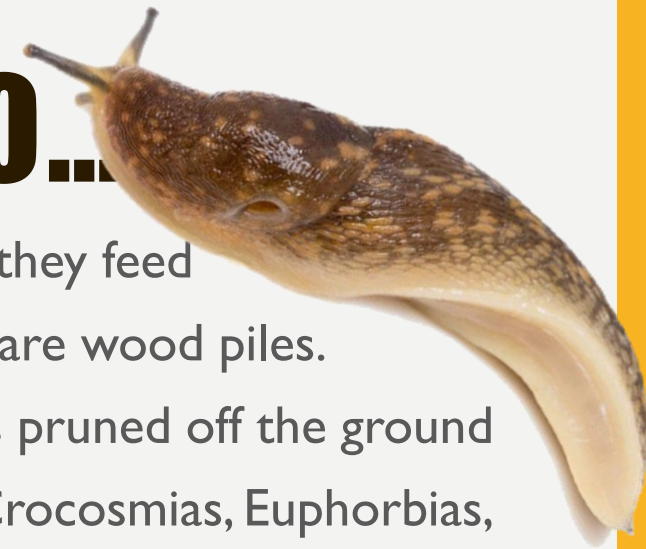


**FACTS:** • Black or Brown Bodies • 1/16" to 1/8" • Feed on dead insects and sugary things • Commonly nest in and/or around houses • Known for strong rotten coconut smell when squished • Live in colonies of up to 100,000 members. • No stinger •

<https://yourlocalpestcontrolxpert.com/wp-content/uploads/ants.jpg>



# SLUGS—THINGS YOU CAN DO...



- **Water EARLY** in the morning so surface will dry out by evening when they feed
- **Reduce hiding places-** Large bark mulch is a great slug hiding place, as are wood piles.
- **Clean up-** Remove weeds, and dead plant debris, and rocks; keep shrubs pruned off the ground
- **Plant slug resistant plants:** Aquilegias, Astilbes, Astartias, Begonias, Crocosmias, Euphorbias, Ferns, Fuchsias, Grasses, Hardy geraniums, Hellebores, Hydrangeas, Japanese anemones, Lady's mantle, Lavenders, Liliun henryi, Pelargoniums, Penstemons, Roses, Sedums
- **Traps & Bait:** Try a pie plate with beer (or yeast and water) with lip of pan 1/2 inch above the soil level.
- **Barriers-** Desiccating, caustic, & rough surface barriers: Egg shells, wood ash wood chips, lava rock, cinders, sand, sawdust, ashes, gravel, and natural diatomaceous earth (not the variety used in swimming pools).
- **Caffeine**—Researchers at Agricultural Research Service in Hawaii say that it's a natural slug killer. Spray leftover coffee around (*but not on*) plants in garden.
- **Hand-picking-**Examining plants and hand-pick slugs when found. The best results are at night, two hours after sunset. Flashlight and bucket of soapy water
- **Animals-DUCKS!**

# SLUGS—THINGS YOU CAN DO...



- **Chemical Controls--** Cereal-based **mini-pellets** and **very small pellets**, much smaller than the pencil-eraser shaped pellets we are used to-- (e.g., Metarex) have the best performance record in our rainy climate and can last 2 to 3 weeks on wet soil. They also are very palatable to slugs. **ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS!**
  - **Metalddehyde** (e.g., Durham, Deadline, Metarex ) does not affect beneficial organisms such as earthworms, predatory insects, and bees. However, it is toxic to dogs, cats, and other mammals.
  - **Iron phosphate-based products** -based products (Sluggo and Bayer's Natria are approved for *organic* production). May be toxic to earth worms and dogs if the formulation also contains SODIUM FERRIC EDTA.
- **Salt--**use with caution--can burn plants and leach into soil.

# WHY AREN'T MY SHRUBS BLOOMING?

- Age of the shrub—it may take a few years before a young shrub will be mature enough to bloom
- Environmental stress—too much or not enough water, not enough light, winter kill of flower buds, and late frost damage to young blossoms.
- Too much nitrogen fertilizer—this results in lush, green growth but no flowers
- Pruning—spring flowering shrubs should be pruned by the end of June at the latest. If you prune them later, you will be cutting off next year's flower buds. Removing more than 1/3 of the bush when pruning is excessive and may cause no flower buds to be formed because it stimulates leaf growth
- Improper pesticide (Insecticide, herbicide, or fungicide) can damage or kill flower buds. **READ THE LABELS!!**
- The **number one reason why plants of all kinds fail**, including trees and shrubs, is **not planting the right plant in the right place**. Research your plant before you buy it. Look at its growing requirements—sunlight, soil, watering, drought resistance, hardiness zone.



# CHECK OUT YOUR AZALEAS

- Do your azalea or Rhododendron leaves look like this? If so, it's from damage caused by the Azalea Lace Bug last year. You will have a problem this year—the eggs overwinter along the mid-rib on the underside of the leaf—go out and look for the now. They hatch mid-April to mid-May—This is the time to attach them in their immature stage
- First step is to wash them off with a very strong spray of water.
- For complete information on how to manage Azalea Lace Bugs, see WSU Hortsense:  
<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=1&SubCatId=4&PlantDefId=3&ProblemId=782>

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Rhododendron lace bug  
*Stephanitis rhododendri* Horvath  
Egg(s) on host

© *Ken Gray Insect Image Collection*



# COMMON ROSE PROBLEMS--

- [Black Spot](#) and [Powdery Mildew](#)  
See article for recommendations
- Prune to improve airflow
- Destroy diseased canes and leaves
- Rake up and destroy fallen leaves
- Plant disease resistant cultivars
- If you had black spot and powdery mildew last year, begin spraying with a fungicide frequently during wet weather



*Caption: Rose black spot on leaves  
Photo by: R.S. Byther*



*Caption: Powdery mildew on rose  
Photo by: R.S. Byther*



*Caption: Rose black spot stem infection  
Photo by: R.S. Byther*

Images:WSU Hortsense

WSU: Rose problem guide from WSU: this covers all the problems and what to do about it!

<http://pubs.cahnrs.wsu.edu/publications/pubs/fs246e/>

# CROWN GALL

- Can affect fruit trees, and caneberries (raspberries, blackberries, etc.). It is most commonly found on cherry, apple, peach, pear, plum, euonymus, rose, raspberry, and blackberry.
- Caused by a bacterium in the soil which infects tissue through wounds on the crown and roots
- Do not replant susceptible species in infected soil.
- Plant disease-free materials.
- Avoid injuries to the bark, roots, and crown while planting.
- Remove and destroy declining plants with large crown galls. Also remove roots and surrounding soil where possible.
- Prune out galls when practical. Sterilize pruning tools between cuts to avoid spreading bacteria to healthy tissue.
- No chemical treatment available for homeowners
- More info:

<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=12&ProblemId=4002>



Crown Gall on roots.  
Photo: R.S. Byther



Note all the galls along the stem. Many have started at pruning wounds. Jay W. Pscheidt, 2013

# PEARLEAF BLISTER MITES

- Tiny insects lay eggs under leaves, causing “blistering” galls
- Usually affect only a single tree or even a single branch
- Remove and destroying infested leaves
- Apply oil plus lime-sulfur in early spring just prior to bud swell
- Examples:
  - All Seasons Horticultural & Dormant Spray Oil Conc
  - R-T-U Year-Round Spray Oil
- More info:  
<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=3&PlantDefId=64&ProblemId=104>



Photo by G. Krawczyk



© MELODIE PUTNAM, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

# GRAPE ERINEUM MITE

- Caused by a tiny worm-like mite
- Upper leaf surface becomes blistered from mites eating the leaf, and blisters on the lower leaf surface turn white, yellow, or brown.
- Sprays aren't needed. Dormant-season oils and wettable sulfur applications used for other pests and sulfur applications for powdery mildew usually control this pest
- Does no lasting damage on established vines
- More info:

<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Public/FactsheetWeb.aspx?ProblemId=753>



Erineum mite damage on home garden grape leaves: "Blisters" on the top; corresponding concave areas on reverse filled white fuzzy material (enlarged leaf hairs). (J.R. Natter; 2016-04)



<https://agrobasesapp.com/new-zealand/disease/grape-erineum-mites>

# APPLE AND PEAR SCAB

- Apply fungicides when leaves are separating, just exposing bud cluster.
- Repeat at 7-day intervals for 3 or more applications until weather dries.
- When in blossom, wait until 3/4 of petals have fallen before applying
- For more information:

<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=3&PlantDefId=59&ProblemId=15>



Photo by Janna Beckerman

*Figure 1. Early apple scab lesion development on leaves.*



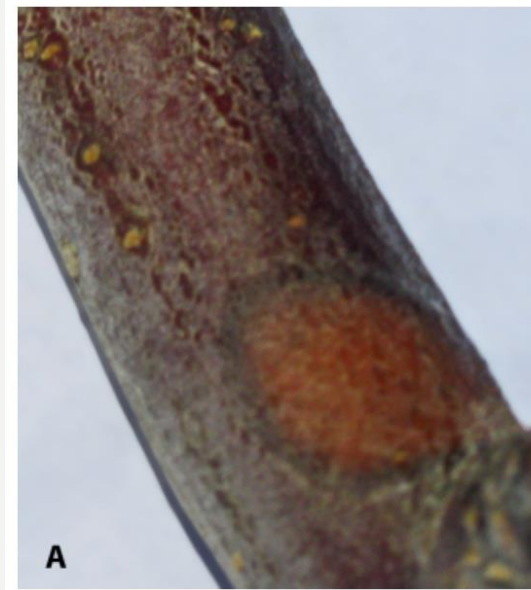
Photo by Janna Beckerman

*Figure 2. Characteristic lesions of apple scab on mature leaves.*

# APPLE ANTHRACNOSE

Managing the disease: **It's a year-round task!**

- Sanitation—Clean up all leaf and branch debris
- Pruning affected branches
- Removing cankers during dry weather year-round
- Applying copper-based fungicides every 10-14 days to limit or prevent infection during the dormant and growing seasons.
- Monitor trees monthly for new infections and cut out diseased tissue and new cankers as they appear
- [More info from Hortsense](#)



A

First sign of infection

Images: <http://treefruit.wsu.edu/crop-protection/disease-management/apple-anthrachnose/>



B

Progression: Infection causes separation of bark tissue



C

Late Symptoms--"Fiddlestring" appearance

# PEACH LEAF CURL

- Plant resistant varieties—not much available for cold rainy springs in Western WA.
  - Avalon, Frost, Indian Free, Mary Jane, Salish
- Consider growing a peach tree in a moveable pot, and keeping out of the rain.
- Continue applying fungicide at 3 week intervals after that while cool and rainy..
  - Examples: Bonide Fung-onil Multi-purpose Fungicide
  - GardenTech Daconil Fungicide
  - Monterey Liqui-Cop Fungicidal Spray



*Jay W. Pschardt, 2013.*

<https://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease/host-disease/peach-prunus-persica-leaf-curl/>

**\*IMPORTANT:** First fungicide application must begin in October when 50% of the leaves have fallen.

# WEEDS-KNOW YOUR ENEMY!

- This is one of the best weed ID guides around for common weeds we see in the PNW:  
[portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/471991](http://portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/471991) And another
- <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2054/2014/04/Invasive-Plant-Treatment-Guide-US-Forest-Service.pdf>
- When you identify your weed, or just to look at common PNW weeds, checkout Hortsense to find out how to manage it.  
<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=6>
- Cowlitz County Noxious Weed list for 2020. Noxious weeds are harmful to the environment or animals, and are difficult to control, and can have economic impact.  
[co.cowlitz.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/19664/2020-Cowlitz-Noxious-Weed-List](http://co.cowlitz.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/19664/2020-Cowlitz-Noxious-Weed-List)

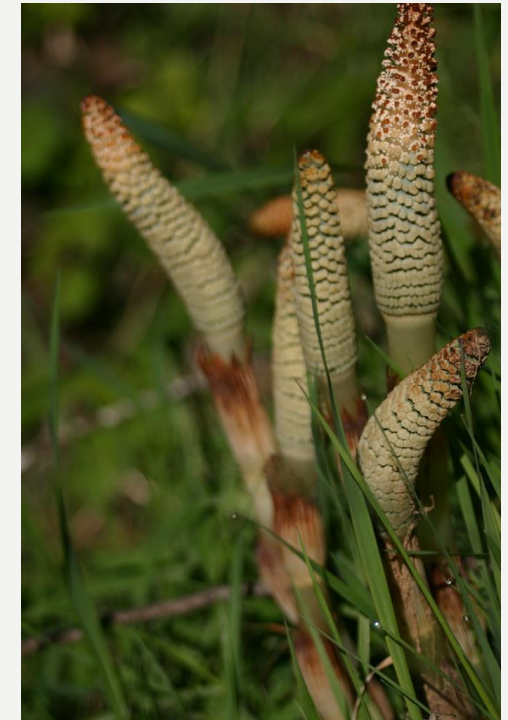


*Hairy bittercress (aka Shotweed)*  
Photo by: T. W. Miller



# HORSETAIL

- Field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) grows from a perennial, creeping root system, and is toxic to all horses.
- Prefers moist/wet areas, but can easily adapt to dryer ones
- Maintaining a healthy planting or turf area to provide competition will prevent weed establishment, and reduce weed infestation by handpulling weeds.
- Inorganic mulches, such as plastic, commercial "weed barrier" fabrics and other materials such as roofing paper, is an effective weed management option. Cover inorganic mulches with a thin layer of soil or organic mulch. This will not allow photosynthesis to occur, and eventually the roots will starve.
- As soon as the stems appear (*before* they are 6 inches tall) in March/April, remove them. If you do this consistently, you should see your horsetail population reduce.
- There are several herbicides labeled for use on horsetail that are available to homeowners, but none are particularly effective. Dichlobenil (Casoron) can be effective in the Pacific Northwest particularly when applied during midwinter just prior to an anticipated cold rain.
- More info  
<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=6&ProblemId=2024>



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Caption: Horsetail  
Photo by: R. Parker

# POISON HEMLOCK & GIANT HOGWEED LOOK-ALIKES

- We have some extremely dangerous plants that grow here in the PNW. Learn to identify them and distinguish them from similar looking plants. [Giant Hogweed](#) can cause serious skin damage. [Poison Hemlock](#) can kill or make you or an animal extremely ill within 20 minutes.
- Compare Giant Hogweed, [Cow Parsnip](#), and [Poison Hemlock](#)  
<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/shared/Documents/Publications/Weeds/GiantHogweedLookalikes.pdf>
- Compare Giant Hogweed, Cow Parsnip, and [Angelica](#):  
<http://www.wildflowersofontario.ca/tell-the-difference1.html>
- Other poisonous plants in the PNW: This is in “booklet” form, so when you’re looking at the description, note the page number at the bottom and look for the following page number to see accompanying pictures. [https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2019/02/08/Env-Wet-PoisonousPlantsBooklet\\_PRINTversion.pdf](https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2019/02/08/Env-Wet-PoisonousPlantsBooklet_PRINTversion.pdf)



### GIANT HOGWEED



#### HEIGHT

15 to 20 feet

#### STEM

1 to 3 inch diameter  
Purple blotches, stiff  
bristles

#### LEAF

Compound, lobed,  
deeply incised; up to  
5 feet wide

#### FLOWER

White flowers, flat-  
topped, umbrella, up  
to 2.5 feet across



### COW PARSNIP



#### HEIGHT

5 to 8 feet

#### STEM

1 to 2 inch diameter  
Deeply ridged, green  
to slightly purple, fine  
hairs, fuzzy

#### LEAF

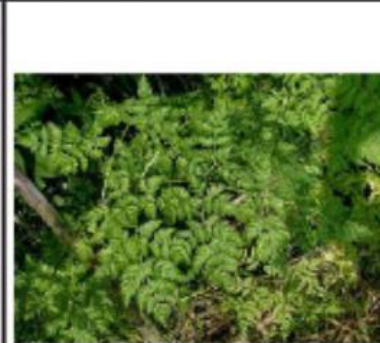
Compound, less  
incised, 2 to 2 1/2 feet  
across, fuzzy hairs

#### FLOWER

Whitish flower clusters  
no larger than 1 foot  
across



## POISON HEMLOCK



### HEIGHT

4 to 9 feet

### STEM

Smooth and hairless,  
waxy green, some  
purple splotches, 1 to  
2 inch diameter

### LEAF

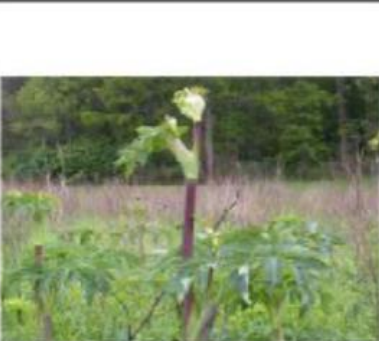
Fern-like, bright,  
almost glossy, green

### FLOWER

All branches have  
small flat-topped  
clusters of small white  
flowers



## ANGELICA



### HEIGHT

4 to 9 feet

### STEM

Smooth, waxy green  
to purple (no bristles),  
1 to 2 1/2 inch  
diameter

### LEAF

Many small leaflets,  
seldom more than two  
feet across

### FLOWER

Softball-sized clusters,  
greenish-white or  
white, up to 1 foot  
across



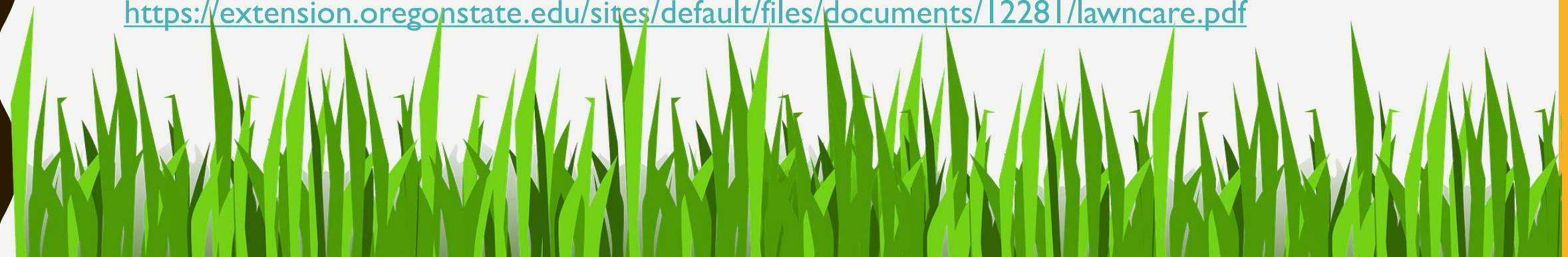
# SPRING HOUSEPLANT CARE

- Know the light, temperature, and watering needs of your plant!
- It's time to resume regular watering during the growing season. Most plants require less water in the winter, but they need it now. Water **THOROUGHLY** until the water runs out the bottom of the pot. Don't let the pot sit in the water—the roots will drown. More house plants are killed by overwatering than underwatering!
- Begin monthly applications of a diluted liquid fertilizer, following label instructions. Fertilizing once a month from March/April through September should keep your plants happy. You can also use worm castings.
- Excessive fertilizer results in the buildup of salts and excessive, leggy growth.
- This is a good time to repot plants
- Keep your plants neat and clean. Trim off old flowers and dead leaves. You can lightly prune or pinch of growing tips to improve appearance and make it fuller.
- It's too soon to even think about moving them onto your patio yet.
- For more detailed information, see: <https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/houseplant-care>



# LAWNS

- Time to fertilize—first of 3 times this year—in April. The fertilizer should be high in nitrogen (N) and low in phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) (E.g. NPK = 12-4-8 blend)
- Recommendation: For lush, green turf, add one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet; for example, if you use a fertilizer that is 20% nitrogen (e.g., 20-x-y labeled on the package), you will apply 5 pounds for 1,000 square feet of healthy lawn.
- Mow at least every week, if possible, through October.
- Don't cut it too short. If you aren't sure what kind of grass you have, set the mowing height to 2 inches.
- Keep your mower blades sharp
- Mulch grass clippings and return to lawn to return the nitrogen to the soil.
- Source: OSU 10 minute university Handout Lawn Care:  
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/12281/lawncare.pdf>



# GETTING YOUR GARDEN READY

## Composting Information for the Upcoming Gardening Season:

- <http://pubs.cahnrs.wsu.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/publications/eb1784e.pdf>
- [https://sustainability.psu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/19\\_home\\_composting.pdf](https://sustainability.psu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/19_home_composting.pdf)

## Feed Me:

- <https://puyallup.wsu.edu/soils/gardening/>

## When to Plant:

- <https://territorialseed.com/blogs/spring-growing-guides>
- <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2071/2014/04/Home-Vegetable-Gardening-in-WA-EM057E.pdf>



# READY, SET, PLANT!

- Now that you've read up on how to prepare your garden, you can plant some of the cool weather crops NOW.
- Vegetables that germinate in 40°F soil temperature include: fava bean, beet, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Chinese cabbage, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, kale, collard, kohlrabi, leek, parsley, radish, rutabaga, pea, Swiss chard, celery, and turnip;
- Lettuce, onion, parsnip, and spinach germinate at 35°F.
- Carrot, pea, lettuce, kohlrabi, greens, beet, and radish grow easily from seeds; sow seeds directly into the soil.
- Check the excellent [planting guide on the previous page](#) for specific directions for the cool weather plants you want to plant.
- Warm weather plants like tomatoes, squash, and peppers need to wait until the first week of June to plant in our area. You might be able to plant earlier if you pre-warm the soil and provide warmth and cold protection for your transplants. We will be telling you about ways to extend the growing season in next month's Looking Ahead





# APRIL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Many of the topics covered, especially pruning and pest monitoring, in the last couple months are also relevant in March:
  - [Looking Ahead: January](#)
  - [Looking Ahead: February](#)
  - [Looking Ahead: March](#)
- **Home Vegetable Gardening in Washington WSU EM057E**
- <https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/home-vegetable-gardening-in-washington-home-garden-series> (click on DOWNLOAD NOW)
- **Odorous House Ants:**  
<http://pestsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=2&ProblemId=779>
- **Slugs:** <https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect/ipm/slug> and  
<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=13&ProblemId=6033>

# YOU'RE NOT ALONE

- WSU Hortsense (E.g., search Google (e.g. for “WSU Hortsense apple”) That’s the easiest way. You can also go to the site: <http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Home/HortsenseHome.aspx> Always search for the singular, not the plural. “Apple” will get results, “Apples” will not.
- PNW Handbooks (E.g., search for “PNW Handbooks apple”) <https://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease/host-and-disease-descriptions> Always search for the singular, not the plural. “Apple” will get results, “Apples” will not. This site also has information for registered pesticide applicators. Only follow chemical advice for “Homeowners.”
- **And of course, you can get in touch with us at the Plant and Insect Clinic!**
  - Call: 360-577-3014 Ext. 8 M-F 9am-noon,
  - Email: [cowlitzmastergardener@gmail.com](mailto:cowlitzmastergardener@gmail.com),
  - PM us on our Facebook page: Cowlitz Master Gardeners

# DIAGNOSTIC RESOURCES

- **Hortsense:** <http://hortsense.cahnr.wsu.edu/Home/HortsenseHome.aspx>
- **Pestsense:** <http://pestsense.cahnr.wsu.edu/Home/PestsenseHome.aspx>
- **PNW Handbooks:**
- Insect Management <https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect>
- Plant Disease Management Handbook: <https://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease>
- Weed Management Handbook: <https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed>
- **WSU Plant & Pest Diagnostic e-Network:** <http://www.dddi.org/wsua>
- **WSU Plant Pest Diagnostic Clinics:**
- [CAHNRS Plant Pest Diagnostic Clinic, Pullman](#)
- [WSU Puyallup Plant & Insect Diagnostic Laboratory](#)