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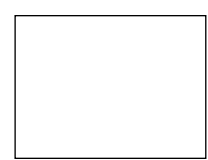


# The Latest Dirt

A Quarterly Publication from New Leaf Landscape Services



2341 Danbury Lane, Suite C  
Gainesville, GA 30507



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# The Latest Dirt

## The Groundskeeper

Dear Friends,

Autumn is the time to prepare lawns and plants for winter. It's also the time to make an appointment with the landscape architects at New Leaf Landscape Services to plan for the fall planting that will provide optimum spring and summer results.



We encourage you to contact us now before the fall planting season gets fully underway. We want to work with you to create designs that will best fit your property, your timeline, and your budget. Our goal is for you to be comfortable with the process and completely satisfied with the outcome, and the sooner we can get together with you, the better.

This is an "out with the old, in with the new" time of year - when the fescue lawns that thrive in our area are aerated and reseeded while perennial beds are cleared, prepared, and planted in anticipation of a glorious spring. Our landscape architects are looking forward to sharing with you their expertise and creativity to make the most of your outdoor spaces.

As always, please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help you keep your property looking its best while preparing the elements of your landscape for the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Steve Murray  
President, New Leaf Landscape Services



## Quick Tips

### Fescue Seeding & Aeration

- Best planting period for fescue is Sept. 15 through Nov. 1
- Lawn renovation calls for aeration via removal of soil plugs to promote air exchange between the soil and atmosphere, promote deep and healthy root growth, and improve nutrient uptake and use
- Aeration should be done prior to applying lime, fertilizer, or seed
- Fescue seeding rates must be monitored to balance rate of root establishment with drought and disease resistance
- Avoid winter and spring discoloration by ensuring a seeded lawn is well established and growing before cold temperatures arrive

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# Stepping Stones

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## Fall Bulb Planting

Locked inside the hard, seemingly lifeless “Dutch bulbs” are some of the most spectacular color producing flowers of the spring in North Georgia. Most of these spring-flowering bulbs prefer light shade to full sunshine, and they should be planted where they will receive six to ten hours of direct light each day.

The majority of bulb plants prefer a moist, medium sandy loam that doesn't stay wet and sticky after heavy rain or dry out too quickly. Good drainage is absolutely essential, and the floriculture department at New Leaf Landscape Services can determine the best places to plant spring-flowering bulbs.



Soil should be tested to determine its condition and readiness to support healthy blooming bulbs. The soil shouldn't be worked when it's too wet, and we incorporate any soil amendments at least a foot deep for optimum results. Generally, bulbs are graded and sold according to size, with larger bulbs producing larger and/or multiple flowers, although the largest bulbs aren't necessarily required to achieve the best landscape effect.

In Georgia, spring-flowering bulbs can be planted from October through late December. We typically plant bulbs in late November for the best spring-time results, so now is the time to confer with our design team to plan for a beautiful blooming season in spring.

# Service Spotlight

## Getting Your Lawn in Shape

Tall fescue is one of the most popular grasses in our area. If planted in the summer, it can suffer from excessive heat stress and seedling diseases. If planted too late in the fall, it may not be fully established before winter arrives. Seeding in winter or early spring doesn't leave it time to develop the deep root system it needs to survive the hot summer. So ideally, September and October are the best time of the year to plant tall fescue.

Proper soil preparation is essential to establish a healthy fescue lawn. All debris like rocks and trees must be removed then the soil is analyzed to determine the necessary topsoil and fertilizer treatment.

After the soil is properly prepared seeding can begin. Tall fescue tends to thin out and periodically needs reseeding. New Leaf Landscape Services utilizes only the highest quality of fescue seed to ensure a healthy lawn that will enhance the beauty and value of our clients' outdoor spaces.

A complete fertilizer treatment should be applied at six- to eight-week intervals from September to February and additional nitrogen can be applied at monthly intervals as well.

A dense, healthy turf is the best defense against weeds and pests, but herbicides are usually needed to control crabgrass in tall fescue lawns. Bermuda grass is also a common problem and sometimes a non-selective herbicide that kills all vegetation is required, with the treated area then renovated and reseeded.

Early fall provides the best opportunity to control perennial broadleaf weeds like dandelions and clover in warm season grasses such as Bermuda and Zoysia. As they prepare for winter by pulling nutrients from their leaves into their roots, they also draw herbicides into their root systems, which will eradicate them more effectively at this time of year. Actively growing grass will fill the bare spots created when the weeds die.

The buildup of thatch, living and dead grass roots and steps between the soil and green grass blades,

is unattractive and can strangle a lawn. Soil compaction occurs as a lawn ages and sustains heavy use. This reduces the space in the soil that holds air, and since roots require oxygen to grow and absorb nutrients and water, a lack of air inhibits nutrient and water flow as well as root growth.

Aeration helps fight deterioration and poor top growth in several ways. It increases the activity of soil microorganisms that decompose thatch, enhances infiltration of rainfall or irrigation, helps prevent fertilizer and pesticide run off from overly compacted areas, and improves the water, nutrient, and oxygen movement necessary for a healthy lawn.

With so much to do in your yard to properly prepare for the coming months, fall is no time to sit back and watch football on TV – unless you let New Leaf Landscape Services handle these projects for you and keep your property looking its best all year round.



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# CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

- Aerate and overseed fescue turf
- Monitor insect, disease, and weed activity
- Deadhead annuals and perennials as needed
- Root prune Wisteria that failed to bloom to encourage blooming next year

### OCTOBER

- Aerate and overseed fescue turf
- Monitor insect and disease activity
- Begin leaf removal as necessary
- Fertilize trees and shrubs
- Start fall annual (pansies, snapdragons, kale, etc) planting
- Dig and divide perennials as needed

### NOVEMBER

- Continue leaf removal
- Continue annual color planting
- Begin spring flowering bulb installation

### DECEMBER

- Complete overseeding of fescue turf
- Apply pre-emergence for winter weeds in turf
- Fertilize bulb plantings with bulb booster
- Finish spring flowering bulb installation
- Overhaul equipment for upcoming season, sharpen all tools
- Prune late flowering shrubs
- Begin winter pruning
- Apply dormant oils if necessary
- Time to transplant shrubs/trees to a new location if needed