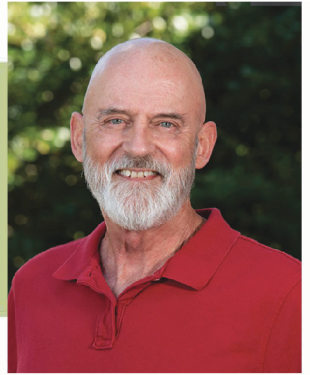


Our in-house horticulturist/arborist, Craig Miller, dispenses practical advice for those seeking to simultaneously conserve water and grow thriving, high-visual-impact, drought-tolerant (xeriscape) gardens and landscapes.



Now is the time to schedule lawn aeration, which is the first step in fall lawn care. Aeration breaks up clay soils, improves water penetration, and helps reduce thatch buildup. It also improves soil-oxygen levels, which enhances root growth and thatch-decomposing organisms. Regular aeration (both spring and fall) will reduce water runoff and increase turf drought tolerance as well.

Fall is also the best time of year to fertilize a bluegrass lawn in Colorado. The benefits of fall fertilizing include a healthier turf before the onset of winter, a healthier root system, and a lawn that greens up earlier in the spring without excessive top growth. Fall fertilization produces dense, green lawns in spring, without the rapid growth that occurs with spring fertilization. Follow the application instructions on the fertilizer and only apply while your lawn is still green. Before fertilizing, make sure the soil is moist, so that the fertilizer will penetrate the soil.

How about adding some colorful plantings to your yard? In the late summer and early fall, many nurseries and garden centers will discount their inventory of trees and shrubs. While selection may be limited, these sales are often a fantastic opportunity to purchase plant material at reduced prices.

When planting in the fall, be sure to finish by the end of October. Deciduous trees and shrubs are your best choice for this time of year. As a rule, evergreens are more at risk when planted in the fall because their needles are exposed to the elements in the winter and more prone to desiccation. For those seeking colorful, high-visual-impact landscape additions, please consider the following three recommendations:



**Bigtooth Maple (*Acer grandidentatum*)**

A Colorado native, this tree boasts dark green foliage throughout most of the growing season, turning intense shades of orange and red in the fall. It grows to twenty-five feet in both height and spread. This tree is drought tolerant, often well suited to smaller yards, and thrives in our alkaline clay soils.



**Lead Plant (*Amorpha canescens*)**

A small native shrub, that typically occurs in open woodlands, glades, and prairies, this deer-resistant plant grows to a mature height and spread of between two and four feet. Though it may die back to the ground in the winter, it will regrow in the spring. The common name refers to the once-held belief that the plant was an indicator of lead in the ground. Showy 3" to 4" flower spikes of dense, tiny bluish-purple flowers appear in June and July and remain until the first hard freeze. It has an open growth habit with arching stems and gray-green fuzzy fern-like foliage.



**Autumn Joy Sedum (*Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy')**

A taller-growing variety of sedum, this plant is as durable as they come. Large, broccoli-like green buds turn to red or pink and mature to a bronzy-red color befitting of autumn. These flowers appear in August and last into late October/early November. The succulent stems and leaves provide winter interest and food for birds if left standing. Growing to a mature height of 36" with a spread of 24", this plant is also deer resistant.

**BOARD UPATE:**

Our water & wastewater service-integration study with the Parker Water & Sanitation District is progressing beautifully. Engineers are completing their evaluation of our Metro District's water & wastewater infrastructure inventory and have commenced evaluating various scenarios for system connectivity. If all goes as planned, we anticipate placing a responsible water and wastewater service-integration question on either the May or November 2020 election ballot. Thank you for your continued confidence and patience. We will keep you apprised.



Join us for the last two classes of our xeriscape gardening series, titled:  
**My Yard! Your Guide to Lawn & Landscape Ideas & Tips**  
**Thurs., October 3** – Fall Color in the Landscape Class - 10 to 11am  
**Thurs., October 10** – Fabulous Fruits for Front Range Gardeners Class - 10 to 11am  
**Location:** Castle Pines Library • 360 Village Square Lane, Castle Pines, 80108  
 Craig Miller can be reached at [craig@cpnmd.org](mailto:craig@cpnmd.org) and (303) 688-8550.



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