

# *Gardening Almanac for the Plateau*

## September

### **Weather** – Average Rainfall and Temperatures:

The average rainfall for September is 3.93 inches. The average maximum temperature is 78 degrees F., and the average minimum is 54 degrees F.

### **Activities:**

- If your soil has not been tested within the past 3 – 5 years, this is a good time to have it done. Please contact the local Agricultural Extension office 931-484-6743 for further information on this procedure.
- Around the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, you should apply no more than 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn area. If your soil has been tested, the results will indicate how much phosphorus and potassium are needed. If your soil has not been tested, you should apply a complete fertilizer, such as 20-10-10.
- September is an ideal month for establishing cool season lawn grasses, with the window for cool season lawn establishment being August 15 through October 15. Fescue, which comes in numerous varieties, is the foremost recommended cool season grass seed.
- If your holiday cacti have been outside for the summer, it's time to start conditioning them for inside. About September 1<sup>st</sup>, reduce the frequency of watering the cacti by one half, and fertilize only every 6 to 8 weeks. Keep the plants outside through about October 15<sup>th</sup> to allow flower promotion to begin. If frost is predicted, protect them with a paper bag or a pillowcase. In mid-October, bring the plant back indoors and place near a sunny window.
- This is a good time to divide perennials, such as peonies, iris and day lilies. Gently remove the plant clump from the ground and gently pry the clump apart into 2 pieces. Remove any dead or woody parts from the plant and clip back about half of the foliage. Plant the divisions immediately and also return the main plant to its spot in the garden. Water, fertilize and mulch these plants and continue to water them until heavy frost.
- This is bulb-planting time for spring blooms. Make your bulb selections according to color, height, and available garden space. Remember that lots of pests (including deer) love tulips but typically leave daffodils alone.
- Consider adding non-plants to your garden, such as arches, benches, statues, reflecting balls, etc.
- The fall is not a recommended time period for pruning. The only fall pruning appropriate would be: Cutting away dead or diseased wood from shrubs and trees before leaves fall; Cut suckers away from shrubs and make hardwood cuttings; prune roots of trees that you intend to move during the winter or next spring; Clip or trim formal hedges that need it before winter; and after leaves fall. When in doubt, don't prune, wait till spring.
- Don't plant peaches, plums or cherries in the fall – they do better plant in the spring. Apples, pears and quinces do well when planted in the fall.
- This is an excellent time to transplant evergreens – dig with good earth balls, keep well watered and shielded from drying winds and sun, mulch carefully after they are in place.

### **Wildlife:**

In September, you may see these birds in the Crossville area:

Red bellied woodpecker, Red headed woodpecker, Hairy woodpecker, Downy woodpecker, Pileated woodpecker (one resident reported a Pileated on his birdfeeder!), Muscovy duck, Canada goose, American goldfinch, Carolina wren, Tufted titmouse, Crested titmouse, White breasted nuthatch, Mourning dove, Carolina chickadee, Wild turkey, Eastern bluebird, Blue jay, American crow, Northern cardinal, American robin, Long-eared owl, Great blue heron, Gray catbird, Ruby throat hummingbird, Kingfisher, Whip-poor-will, Common bobwhite, Turkey vulture, Mocking bird, Eastern screech owl and Red tailed hawk.

### **Flowers:**

Flowers you may see in September include:

Wild ageratum, Sunflower, Joe Pye weed, Solidago (Golden rod), Chrysanthemum, Mullein, Butterfly weed, Butterfly plant, Thistle, Tall Ironweed, Beggar Ticks, Autumn Joy Sedum, Rose, Pansy, Phlox, Vinca, Impatiens, Coleus, Geranium, Rose of Sharon, Beauty berry bush, Mediterranean white heather, Miscanthus (grass), Snap dragon, Dinner-plate hibiscus, Hollyhock, Rhododendron, Encore azalea, Aster, Forget-me-not, Wild potato vine, Farewell to Summer (aster), Hearts-a-bursting, Blue gentian, White gentian, Buddlia, Marigold, Zinnia, Tick-seed and Hollyhock.