

## Rod Hill's Gardening Tips

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What have your eyes been seeing as you walk around your garden, or when you visit a friend's home or even a National Trust property? Have you noticed the way the buds are breaking out and forming a brand new leaf that no one else has seen? As I ponder this thought, "I stand amazed "

My Acer trees are coming into leaf, and flower buds are showing on the blue berries. If we do not get any high winds that blow off the forming fruit buds then we might get a good crop this year.

I have to be honest the blue berries did not get a feed of Vitax Q4 back in January / February when we were experiencing that long spell of heavy rain. If you want to give the Blue berries a good mulch then go to a local saw mill and get some pine sawdust, you can never give them too much.

I notice my winter flowering Heathers are now going over, so this is the time to give them a good prune and get them back into shape. Have you ever given thought to growing three different Winter Heathers together? Why not bear it in mind when you are able to buy them at a Garden Centre.

As a rule of Thumb, when shrubs have finished flowering you can think of pruning.

If your conifer hedge was not cut last September it needs cutting now. Without cutting into the bare wood it can be cut tight as the sap is rising and giving the hedge energy. The first week of June is ideal for cutting a privet hedge in half if that should be necessary.

I have been very busy making a new compost heap, this I have done out of old pallets. My experience has been over the years to make it as large as possible. There are four things that I use. Firstly a layer of cut grass [without any weed killer] Secondly, a layer of wet leaves such as Oak or Beech, this is where your worms come from. Thirdly, a layer of horse manure and fourthly, a layer of shredded wood from my tree surgeon friend.

It is important to put on the compost heap things that are damp and wet and nothing bone dry. Put a cover on top such as an old carpet or polythene and weigh it down so that it generates heat. Don't be afraid to turn it over with the fork every six to eight weeks. In a twelve months time you will have the best compost for your Taters, I mean Potatoes, Rhubarb, Rasberries besides the vegetable plot.

Happy Gardening

From Rodders