



Dogs are more prone to injuries when they are outdoors, so have a first aid kit handy for them. (Mark Rackay/Special to the MDP)

First aid for your dog

My wife of many years accuses me of being a cynic. I guess that might be true to a point, but I assure you that I was not born that way. Something in life or my chosen career has made me a cynic. While I don't go around shining a light in people's faces, looking for an honest man, as Diogenes the Cynic once did, I do subscribe to some of his beliefs and teachings.

Diogenes was a Greek philosopher who lived from 412 BC to 323 BC and was considered one of the founders of cynic philosophy. Alexander the Great met Diogenes once, introducing himself as "I am Alexander the Great King."

Diogenes responded, "I am Diogenes the dog."

When Alexander asked what he had done to be called a dog, he said, "I fawn on those who give me anything, I yelp at those who refuse, and I set my teeth in rascals."

This pretty much sums up my dogs. We have dogs, always have and always will. Like many of you outdoor folks, we love our dogs. Our dogs make great companions in the outdoors, on hikes, fishing or hunting trips, and camping.

We need to keep some basics in mind whenever we recreate with our dogs because their entire safety and well-being rests in your hands. Leashes are very important, and the dogs should be always controlled. I know that



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

freedom and running around is something a dog loves to do, but there are far too many risks outdoors to our dogs.

Wild animals are everywhere outdoors, and we don't want our pup to have any encounters. Dogs will go after a skunk or porcupine, and you will have your hands full. Dogs will also chase deer, which is illegal, but can run off and become lost.

Social media is full of people looking for help finding lost dogs in the woods, so please, keep the dogs close to you and under control.

There are times when dogs can't be leashed, such as hunting dogs for ducks, geese, or gamebirds like pheasants and quail. These dogs are usually specially trained to whistles, commands or shock collars. Generally, they are kept leashed or crated when not hunting for the dog's safety.

Anyone who does recreate

with their dogs should be certain to bring plenty of food and water for them. You should also carry a first aid kit, geared to your dog, along with you. Dogs are a lot closer to the ground than we are and subject to injuries that require special attention.

The general first aid kit that we carry with us for our own use will cover much of the emergency needs for your dog. Most kits already contain things like gauze pads, alcohol pads, tweezers, iodine prep pads, and other general first aid items. These will be fine for injuries like small cuts or abrasions. The tweezers are great for removing stingers, in case your pup gets stung.

Most of the time, a dog getting stung by an insect is no big deal. Remove the stinger and spray a little Benadryl on the site. If the dog has difficulty breathing or starts to vomit or have diarrhea, better beat feet to the vet right away.

Strains and sprains can be a real concern for dogs as they bounce around on the rough terrain of a trail. Check the foot pads for any injury or sticker before assuming a sprain. If there is swelling, limping or carrying the leg off the ground completely, it is best to take it easy and head for home. If you can't carry the dogs, at least take the shortest way out possible, and move slowly. At least a dog has three other legs to move with.

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Wrapping up the gardening season

Who doesn't love autumn? It's been so pretty and downright pleasant. All of a sudden "working" in the garden seems like pleasure instead of another thing to check off of a to-do list.

So here are a few fall pointers for those of you wanting to be out there enjoying your landscape every chance you get.

You may be tired of mowing the grass, but keeping it mowed to a height of 2.5 to 3 inches will help keep your lawn healthy. Long turf will matt down over the winter months, leading to lawn problems next summer. On the other hand, short, "scalped" grass will dehydrate during the winter months.

If you dread the annual fall leaf-raking ritual, why not try mowing the leaves from the grass instead of raking. This will give you a perfect mixture of grass clippings and leaves that can be used in compost, or as mulch in perennial beds. You can even add it to your vegetable garden and work it into the soil for a great start to next season's garden.

Whatever you choose to do, don't let the leaves lay thick and matted on the grass or flower beds during the winter. This can suffocate and kill your lawn and perennials.

There are a few species of insects that will over winter in those piles of fallen leaves so there's a good reason to rake them up. Disease can also overwinter in fallen leaves, especially those around the base of a plant that had disease problems this summer.

I like to leave ornamental grasses to sway in the breeze and add interest to the winter garden. If you want to encourage wildlife, leave seed



Gardening from A to Z

By Linda Corwine McIntosh

pods, berries and rose hips on plants. A water source is also appreciated.

I imagine your irrigation systems will be getting blown out within the next few weeks. Before that happens give your lawn, trees, shrubs and perennials a good soaking. Keep your hoses handy because you may need to water around Thanksgiving, or sooner. You never know what the weather will be like from year to year.

Fall is the most important time of year to fertilize your lawn! This will help ensure a healthier, greener, lush lawn next summer. The fertilizer needs to be watered in, so be sure to do this before you shut off the irrigation for the season. One to two pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet is recommended. You may also want to consider core aerating the lawn if it has thatch, disease, or is compacted.

If your irises have grown into large clumps, but haven't produced blooms like they used to, or if they've started to lift out of the soil, they probably need to be divided. Trim leaves to about 4-6 inches above the bulb before moving and dividing them.

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This purple dome aster, aster novi-belgii, has been turning heads all over town as the beauty of fall covers the landscape. (Linda Corwine McIntosh/Special to the MDP)

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DOG

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If it is a foot pad injury, having a roll of vet tape along is helpful. You can wrap up the injured foot after washing the area with clean water. If the dog favors the foot, again, move slowly and save the long hike for another day.

Dogs have a higher core temperature than humans. Add to that a fur coat and the inability to sweat, and you have a recipe for heat exhaustion or heatstroke. This is better to prevent, by not hiking on hot days, or hike during the cooler mornings and evenings. Once again, bring along plenty of water.

If your dog becomes listless or a reluctance to continue hiking, and has excessive panting or salivation, better move the dog to a cool spot in the shade immediately. Cool the dog with water by applying it to the neck and abdomen. Do not submerge the dog or use ice as this may make it worse. You can also fan the dog. Best to head for home and if possible, carry the dog out.

Ticks can be a problem during the warmer months, especially if you hike in the brush and grassy areas. Use tweezers to pull the tick out and clean the area with an alcohol wipe. Ticks carry diseases so you want to comb out your dog regularly and be aware of ticks. You may consider speaking with your vet about oral medications that may help with ticks, especially if your dog spends a lot of time outdoors.

It seems my dogs are always getting something in their eyes. Dirt, small seeds or pieces of dried plant debris are always a problem. We carry a bottle of saline solution with us to flush out the eye. Clean water will work in a pinch, but saline is easier on the eye.

A common injury is to have a toenail ripped off or partially torn. For this, we carry a small set of nail clippers to cut off any damaged nail left dangling. We also have a small container of corn starch to plug up the injured nail and help stop the bleeding. When you get home, wash the injured nail out with soap and water to prevent any infections.

I carry an Israeli Bandage in my first aid kit for severe injuries. This is like a big absorbent bandage with an Ace elastic bandage built into it. It stops bleeding and provides pressure. I have found these work well on humans and dogs, so keep one of these in your kit.

After Alexander the Great left Diogenes, he remarked, “If I were not Alexander, I would want to be Diogenes.” I don’t think I would want to be Diogenes, but I wouldn’t mind being one of our dogs. They sure have a good life at our house and rule the roost.

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Kids drink in the scent of plants at the Hotchkiss K8 farm-to-school gardens. (Grace McVey/Americorps)

Get your nose into nature

The sound of leaves crunching as you walk through the forest, the feeling of the warm sun on your face, the sight of a mule deer, the smell of a nearby campfire, and the taste of a freshly picked tart apple engage our five senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Together these senses help us get a clear picture of what is happening around us.

Have you ever taken a whiff of some smell that transported you back to a childhood memory?

Maybe the smell of basil makes you think of your grandmother’s garden, or the smell of a campfire makes you think of a memorable camping trip.

Does the smell of freshly cut grass or alfalfa confirm that summer is here?

What smells remind you of autumn – the pungent organic smell of decomposing leaves in the forest, the fresh, moist scent of an oncoming snowstorm or the smell of roasted chili peppers?

Smell is an intriguing sense because of its wiring in our brains. Scents stimulate our olfactory cells, travel on a fast track through our brain’s super-highway of connectivity, and bypass the brain’s switchboard (the thalamus).

Smell stimuli go directly to the region of our brain (hypothalamus) involved in detecting threats and stress responses, and hormones are quickly issued to the appropriate places. By going directly to this brain region, our body responds faster to smells, according to Johan Lundström, a neuropsychologist at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden (The Scientist: exploring science and inspiring innovation). Certain

Friends of Youth and Nature

By Anne Janik and

Lauren Hall Ruddell

smells can quickly trigger a physical reaction within us. For instance, smells can make us feel sick or warn us of danger (fire), or can make us feel hungry if we smell something yummy.

Smell signals also go directly to another region of the brain called the hippocampus, which is responsible for forming and recalling memories.

A sense of smell is the only fully developed sense a fetus has in the womb, and it is the one that is the most developed in a child until the age of around 10, when sight takes over.

A prominent aroma researcher explained that because smell and emotion are stored as one memory, childhood tends to be the period in which you create the basis for smells you will love or hate for the rest of your life.

And, like so many things in life, the sense of smell is impacted by aging. Although the cells that make up the olfactory system are replaced as they age and die, just like any cell, the rate of replacement slows after 50. To keep that keen sense of smell as you age, your olfactory cells need regular workouts, in terms of exposure and variety. It’s a “use it or lose it” kind of thing.

Have you ever felt more calm or relaxed when you breathed in the wonderful smells of a pine forest or the fragrant smells of a flower garden? Studies have also shown that the smells of nature are linked

to lower physiological stress (The Scientist: Exploring Life, Inspiring innovation).

Even though the sense of smell for adults often operates in the background behind other senses, natural odor stimuli has a swift and direct effect on our parasympathetic system, the processes that allow us to rest and digest. It has the greatest impact on lowering blood pressure and other physiological stress reduction factors.

Our noses can distinguish more than 1 trillion scents, according to new research by the National Institute of Health. The findings show that our sense of smell is far more sensitive than previously thought.

You and your children take in many different smells every single second of every single day. How often do you really consider what you smell, especially while you are exploring the great outdoors with your children?

Here are a few suggestions on how to get your kids to use their noses in nature:

- Smell a tree. Walk up to any tree and see if you can detect a smell. If you live near ponderosa pine trees, make sure to give their bark a sniff. They smell like vanilla or butterscotch and it is truly delightful. All trees have some sort of smell.
- Complete a nature-smelling scavenger hunt. You can use literally any nature scavenger hunt and smell the nature objects. Try to smell every item on your list and describe the way each item smells. Maybe even rank them from best to worst smelling.
- Put your nose to the ground. Investigate how different ground cover smells. How does grass

smell compared to dirt? What about a ground covered in wet leaves, snow, sand, moss, a rocky riverbank, a muddy puddle, or any other walkable surface? They all have distinct smells and can be explored to your child’s heart’s content—or until they are thoroughly wet and muddy!

• Stop and smell the roses, or any other flower you see. All flowers smell different, and sniffing them is an easy way to pass the time in the spring and summer months. If wildflowers are not easily found, try visiting a flower shop or nursery to smell the flowers there.

• Play a guessing game by scent. This is an easy way to use your nose to explore nature even in your own backyard! Gather a few nature items, like pinecones, grass, leaves, sticks, rocks, dirt, flowers, fragrant herbs, etc. and with your eyes blindfolded try to guess the items based on smell.

Our sense of smell is an incredibly important part of our body and plays a role in how we perceive the world around us even as we age. Next time, you are out with your children exploring nature, focus some of your observations on your sense of smell, particularly those smells associated with each season. You will be surprised at the lasting memories you can make!

Friends of Youth and Nature (FOYAN) is a non-profit that promotes opportunities for youth and families to get outside, experience outdoor activities, and explore nature. Follow our outdoor news blog and receive monthly tips on connecting your children to nature. Learn more at: www.friendsofyouthandnature.org

SEASON

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Bulbs, such as dahlias, cannas, gladiola, and tuberous begonias should be dug and stored in a cool dry location. They can be left in the ground until frost has darkened the top foliage. However, you’ll want to dig them before the rhizome or tubers freeze. Spring and summer blooming plants like daylilies, daisies, and oriental poppies can also be divided and transplanted any time from now until the ground freezes. On the flip side, wait to divide fall-bloomers, like mums, asters and ornamental grasses, until the spring.

If your houseplants spent a summer vacation outside, it’s time to bring them in for the winter. I line up

all my plants, out of direct sun, and give them a nice shower with the garden hose before bringing them indoors.

I also usually trim them a bit and take off any damaged leaves. You may want to treat them with a systemic pesticide watered into the soil before returning them to the house to ensure any “hitchhikers” won’t become a problem during the winter.

Pruning shrubs and roses in the fall can cause them to dehydrate more during the winter months. This is especially true for arborvitae and junipers. So limit the amount you want to remove when making the plant look good for winter. Long rose canes can be trimmed to prevent them from breaking but don’t get carried away.

Newly planted dark-col-

ored bark trees should be wrapped with tree wrap. This will prevent the intense winter sun from burning the bark, which can cause problems and even the death of the tree.

Start at the base of the tree and wrap the trunk to just below the first lower branch and secure it with electrical or duct tape. Be sure to remove the wrap in the spring. This crepe paper-like wrap is available in garden centers.

Bindweed and other hard to kill perennial weeds should be sprayed during the fall. An herbicide applied now will help move the herbicide into the root system. Products such as vinegar will only kill the top portion of the plant and will not be effective.

Be sure to have your irrigation system blown

out for the winter! You don’t want it to freeze and break.

I bet you’ve noticed, there are some great values on trees and shrubs in the garden centers, and fall is a great time to plant. Just keep in mind that these plants will need to be watered about once a month if we have a dry winter.

A lot of people are worried that their evergreen trees are dying because the needles towards the inside of the tree have turned brown. Rest assured, your tree is probably just fine.

Pine trees will shed their inner needles, or older needles, about every three to five years. Spruce hold their needles for five to years and aren’t as conspicuous as pines during the needle drop season.

Depending on the amount of stress that the trees have gone through, it might be more noticeable some years. When you stand back and see this browning uniformly in the interior, at this time of year it’s usually not a concern.

Brown tips of the branches or towards the top are another story. I bet if you look around your neighborhood you will probably see other evergreens that look similar to the natural browning that your trees may be experiencing.

I think just saying “enjoy your fall gardening” is my best tip. Winter will be here before you know it and we’ll all be longing to garden once again.

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