

## *How Does Your Garden Grow?...*

# **PRACTISE CARE-FUL LAWN CARE**

*It is possible to have a healthy lawn without using synthetic chemicals simply by practicing “CARE-ful” lawn care. The principles are the same as those followed throughout the green garden: maintaining soil health and vitality, watering wisely and recycling nutrients.*

- ❁ To maintain soil health, top-dress with a fine sprinkling of compost a few times during the growing season.
- ❁ Lawns require approximately 1 inch of water a week. If rain doesn't provide enough water, you may need to do some supplementary watering. This should be done in the early morning on a windless day (too much water is lost to evaporation by the sun during the middle of the day or on windy days).
- ❁ Place a small can by the sprinkler to see how long it takes for an inch of water to accumulate.
- ❁ Set your lawn mower blades at 3 inches. This is the ideal height for grass to shade out weeds and to keep the soil cool and moist.
- ❁ Cut no more than a third of the grass' height in one cutting and make sure your mower blades are sharp.
- ❁ Leave grass clippings on the lawn to slowly decompose and return their nutrients to the soil. A mulching mower/blade will distribute clippings evenly throughout the lawn.
- ❁ Gently remove thatch build-up in your lawn using a stiff rake. Compost the accumulated debris.
- ❁ Aerate compacted soil in the spring or fall.
- ❁ Leave any clover that appears in your lawn - clover fixes nitrogen in the soil and thus improves soil fertility.
- ❁ Hand-pull weeds before they go to seed - this will prevent them from spreading in the garden.