

August/September to-dos

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A couple of weeks ago, I submitted an article titled "Scarecrows - what happened to them?" Well, one of my readers and fellow Master Gardeners answered the question very smartly and rightly. She said they all went to Shangri La for the Scarecrow Festival that is held every October. So beware, the scarecrows will be back in force October 8 at Shangri La Botanical Gardens, 2111 West Park, Orange.

Now on to monthly to do's - what should we be doing with our gardens during these hot days? Well, besides staying inside in the cool, I have a couple of ideas you can do in the cool of the early morning or late after the sun goes down for you to think about. When you do work outside, stay well hydrated and cover up, the sun is brutal.

When you are out and about, look around and see what is still blooming and make a note of it, as you might want to add those plants to your landscape for next year.

Keep watering as needed. If you water in the early morning it is fine to get the whole plant wet but if you water in the evening, water at the soil level not wetting the plant. This will help keep fungus and disease away on the leaves. Your pot plants may need watering more often than the ones in the ground.

If your gardens are in need of mulch, it would be a good idea to add more as the mulch does help keep the soil moist and the temperature cooler.

If you use an irrigation system, check your emitters to make sure they are all working properly and replace those not.

Run hose-end sprinklers at least an hour for deep penetration, moving the sprinklers to avoid runoff.

Purchase or order spring-flowering bulbs now while they may be on sale but wait to plant them.

Wildflower seeds should be planted now, follow instructions that come with the seeds.

Apply nitrogen fertilizer to your lawn now. It is up to you if you want to go chemical or organic. Just remember chemical you have to water in and could burn if not and organic will not burn and does not have to be watered in.

Divide spring blooming bulbs such as daylilies, irises and Shasta Daisies. This should be done every 2-4 years. If they are not blooming in the spring, they need dividing.

If you are bothered with winter weeds, apply a pre-emergent herbicide to kill sprouting weed seed. Do not use this in your garden, as it will kill those seeds.

Prune off old rose and perennial blooms to keep them going until the first frost.

Keep your fruit trees watered to maintain healthy foliage as next years crop depends on this years energy that comes from photosynthesis on the leaves.

Watch for the Monarch migration coming thru on their way to Central America and Mexico for over wintering. Sometimes they lay eggs on their way and those Monarchs will head south once they have developed. Provide milkweed for the Monarchs and the caterpillars.

Purple Martins start gathering in flocks in preparation for their migration south.

And remember to always keep fresh water available for your backyard wildlife. In these dry days it is hard for them to find places to get a little sip of water.