

The Gardener's Calendar

for the Coastal Northwest

1990



SeattleGardenClub

The **SeattleGardenClub** presents

The Gardener's Calendar

for the Coastal Northwest

The Intelligent Gardener's Guide to Survival in a Horticultural Eden:
being an encouraging collection of tips, reminders, and efficiencies
for the enjoyment of the garden.

The Calendar:

The seasons and the weather are truly the Gardener's guide, not the divisions of the calendar. We have included for each month both specific and seasonal information, for use whenever time and conditions permit.

The Gardener's Calendar is divided into days and weeks so that you can note the dates of your efforts and the progress of your garden.



Helleborus niger
Christmas rose

January

Pruning

The occasional warm, sunny days in January and February are ideal for pruning deciduous ornamentals; plants are dormant and their branch structure clearly visible. The dead wood may not be so obvious as in summer, but the suckers, the crossing branches, the shoots headed where you don't want them, are laid out like a map. Your overall purpose is to open up the branch structure so that light and air can reach the interior of the plant. Take your time and remember to look for the direction the buds are facing: cut just after you find one going the right way.

Remember the prime principle behind pruning: the greater the cut, the greater the growth. The plant tries to compensate for what you take away. If you don't want suckers next year, don't prune heavily this year (see June notes on summer pruning).

Gradual pruning over a span of several years is the ideal way to cut back an old, sprawling shrub.

For a vigorous shrub, being pruned is simply a challenge; for a delicate plant, a $\frac{1}{3}$ pruning is the equivalent of a good feeding. A related warning: don't fertilize after a heavy pruning, for at least a year.

When pruning plants with large, coarse foliage like laurel or with massive branch structure like old conifers, cut back into the mass of leaves to a crotch in the branch. Leave the surrounding branches to cover the hole. Move along a foot or two and repeat, giving each cut some protection with neighboring branches. Next year you can return and take out some of the branches you left this year. Your plants will mysteriously become smaller, without gaping holes or naked stumps.

Roses, Lilacs, Perennials:

Fertilize with organics like bonemeal or compost whenever weather permits. Alkali lovers, like most perennials, bulbs, roses, wisteria, hellebores and lilacs can take generous helpings of raw bonemeal: 2 handfuls to 2 ft of height. Sprinkle enough to powder the ground white; rake it in before the wind blows it away or the dogs lick it up. If you use a mulch that's not fully decomposed, sprinkle high nitrogen fertilizer on top to avoid leaching. Always water when fertilizing with inorganics.

Lawns:

Lime at 100 lbs to 2000 sq ft for moss, or feed: ½-1 lb actual nitrogen per 1000 sq ft (read label for %).

Fruit trees & ornamentals:

When the temperature goes above 40°, spray with volck oil (dormant spray).

Stored bulbs/tubers:

Check for signs of rot. Throw out rotting bulbs (although dahlia tubers can be trimmed, pared, and dusted with sulphur. Store infected bulbs separately).

Cold frames:

You can sow seeds of frost-tolerant perennials: delphiniums, veronicas, violas, etc.

Vegetable/cutting beds:

Spade roughly, mix in lime, ashes, compost. This is the time to incorporate garden waste not yet fully decayed; it will decompose by the time you are ready to plant.

Dry days:

Bare root perennials, vegetable and ornamental, can be planted now: asparagus, primroses, artichokes, roses. After planting, mulch against the coming cold.

Slugs:

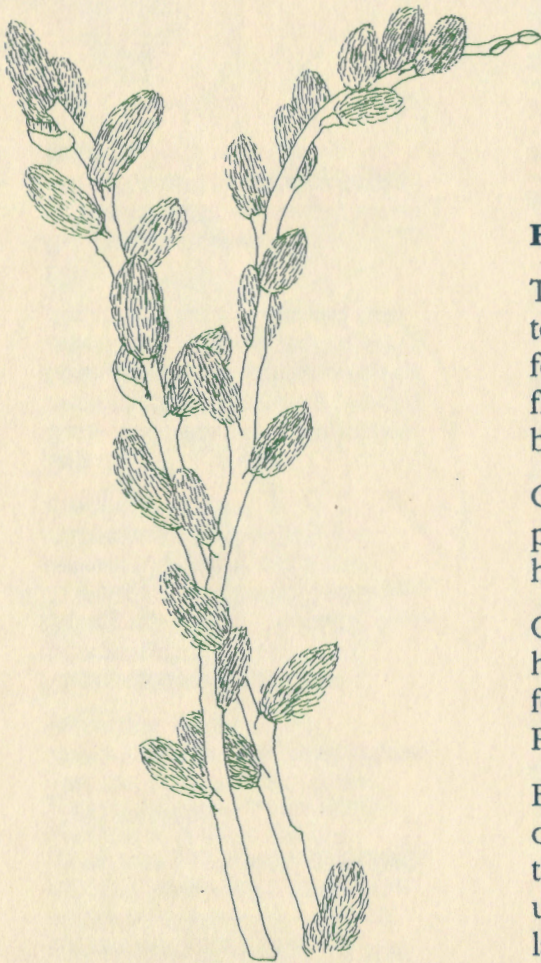
Bait begun now will pay dividends later, especially when the bulbs and primroses begin to show.

January

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Monday • New Year's Day |
| 2 | Tuesday |
| 3 | Wednesday |
| 4 | Thursday |
| 5 | Friday |
| 6 | Saturday |
| 7 | Sunday |
| 8 | Monday |
| 9 | Tuesday |
| 10 | Wednesday |
| 11 | Thursday |
| 12 | Friday |
| 13 | Saturday |
| 14 | Sunday |
| 15 | Monday • Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| 16 | Tuesday |
| 17 | Wednesday |
| 18 | Thursday |
| 19 | Friday |
| 20 | Saturday |
| 21 | Sunday |
| 22 | Monday |
| 23 | Tuesday |
| 24 | Wednesday |
| 25 | Thursday |
| 26 | Friday |
| 27 | Saturday |
| 28 | Sunday |
| 29 | Monday |
| 30 | Tuesday |
| 31 | Wednesday |

Salix species
Pussywillow

February



Fertilizer: General Principles

The heavier the bloomer or the greater the harvest, the more a plant needs fertilizer to maintain its rush of production. Plants grown primarily for foliage need far less feeding, are often better without. Even heavy bloomers like rhodies, with a single flowering season, need less than roses which can be coaxed into a second blush of bloom.

Gear your fertilizing program to the blossom/fruit production of your garden: plants about to form buds will produce more after a rich meal, while a plant that has just produced a bountiful crop (of flowers or fruit) may need a boost.

Of the three primary nutrients in fertilizer – nitrogen, phosphate and potash – the heavy flower producer needs phosphate. Phosphate is the main ingredient in fertilizers with suggestive names like Bloom, and formulas like 5-15-10 or 10-18-10. Phosphate also strengthens limp, spindly stems.

Ericaceae need acid soil, but acidity can be carried too far. Acid tends to remain in our soil for years without leaching out, particularly with thickly matted roots like those of rhododendrons. Repeated fertilizing over the years can build up acidity until lime is actually needed. The same syndrome appears to be at work in our lawns, as well as being a suspect in many a mysterious malaise, otherwise inexplicable. A leading rhododendron expert limes his plants every year, and fertilizes only when there are clear signs of deficiency.

When fertilizing woody shrubs and trees, look at each plant's growth pattern. All plants differ to some degree—rhododendrons grow about 5-7 inches a year, firs as much as 2 feet, some alpine a fraction of an inch. But it's easy to see if a plant grew as much as the previous year. Each year's growth is clearly marked for you on the stem, in the distance between leaf bracts. General Rule: if it's growing well, you probably don't need to help it. Remember not to feed shrubs that thrive on poor soil; manzanita, pine, escallonia, choisya.

Budding branches:

Quince, forsythia, pussy willow, early rhodies. Bring into a warm, dark room for forcing. Once opened, take into light. Forced branches and bulbs keep longer if you move them to a cool spot at night.

Warm days:

Your last chance for dormant spray.

Houseplants:

The growing season is starting inside too. Begin to water more freely. Near the end of the month start the first feeding of the year.

Hydrangeas:

Prune and fertilize. If you want stronger blues next summer, apply aluminum sulphate now.

Ranunculi, Anenomes:

Plant ranunculus bulbs and St. Brigid anenomes now, rather than in the fall, to avoid mildew.

Bulbs, Iris, Primroses:

Green tips will be up any minute: the slugs are waiting and ravenous.

Transplanting:

February is a good time to transplant most evergreens, and new plants can be set out on dry days. But this month is the last moment for moving deciduous plants.

Planting beds:

Spade in manure/compost for the summer's flowering annuals, vegetables, perennials.

Sword ferns:

Last chance to hack back the old browning fronds with abandon. By the end of March you will have to prune carefully to avoid beheading new fronds.

February

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| 1 | Thursday |
| 2 | Friday |
| 3 | Saturday |
| 4 | Sunday |
| 5 | Monday |
| 6 | Tuesday |
| 7 | Wednesday |
| 8 | Thursday |
| 9 | Friday |
| 10 | Saturday |
| 11 | Sunday |
| 12 | Monday |
| 13 | Tuesday |
| 14 | Wednesday • Valentine's Day |
| 15 | Thursday |
| 16 | Friday |
| 17 | Saturday |
| 18 | Sunday |
| 19 | Monday • Presidents' Day |
| 20 | Tuesday |
| 21 | Wednesday |
| 22 | Thursday |
| 23 | Friday |
| 24 | Saturday |
| 25 | Sunday |
| 26 | Monday |
| 27 | Tuesday |
| 28 | Wednesday |

March

Trillium grandiflorum
Trillium



Getting a Headstart

Exotic gourmet salad greens, like limestone lettuce and radicchio, can be started indoors this month, as well as many seeds from January catalogs. Starting seeds inside can be tricky. Your greatest enemies are invisible: damping-off fungi, a single day's drought, and warm nights in the house. There are lots of ways to complicate the starting of seedlings inside: we give you a simple, fairly reliable, no-frills method.

Don't consider starting seeds indoors unless you have a way to keep them cool at night. Warmth while the seeds are germinating is fine, but once sprouted, new seedlings will grow spindly and weak if kept consistently warm. If you can crack a window at night, or carry them on a tray to the garage, they will grow sturdy little stems and their own immune systems.

Use the sterile commercial potting soil labeled for seeds, and be sure your container is sterile as well. Clorox solution and a stiff brush work well.

When you've put in the potting soil, tap the pot a few times, firm it gently with a block. Sprinkle the seeds on the surface. Remember that you're going to hate thinning them out. Sift a layer of soil on top, according to the directions for each kind of seed. Sink the container up to its neck in water until the moisture has risen to seed level. To retain the moisture, tie clear plastic around it.

After seedlings are up and started, your main care is to keep them watered, in bright-but-not-sun light, and cool at night. When the second set of true leaves has developed, you can plant them in place outdoors if weather permits.

Pot culture:

The old practice of putting gravel or broken crockery in the bottom of the pot to improve drainage has been shown to have the opposite effect. It is now recommended that you simply fill with good potting soil, all the way. Some soil may wash out at the bottom, but soon stabilizes.

Shotgun weeds, etc:

Already they're here. If you cut them at soil surface (or just below) with a scuffle hoe before they go to flower, you can leave them in the dirt as compost.

Roses:

Mary Ryan prunes her roses the fifteenth of March. Enough said. Time to feed them too; they are about to put out a great surge of growth and bloom.

Evergreens:

March is the month to fertilize evergreens (see Feb. notes).

Lawns:

It's a good time to overseed the bald patches. If you can remember, try to use the same mix of seed that's already growing there.

The Edible Garden:

March is probably the last month you can plant the handsome architectural edibles like artichokes, rhubarb, ferny asparagus. Lettuce can be sown in a cold frame or under a cloche now.

Dormant spray:

One last, last chance.

Perennials:

Summer/autumn bloomers should be divided now.

Seeds:

As directed on the packages. With late frosts still a possibility, emergency protection like a sheet of plastic has the advantage of being easily removed the moment danger is past.

Slugs:

Eternal vigilance begins today.

March

- 1 Thursday
- 2 Friday
- 3 Saturday
- 4 Sunday
- 5 Monday
- 6 Tuesday
- 7 Wednesday
- 8 Thursday
- 9 Friday
- 10 Saturday
- 11 Sunday
- 12 Monday
- 13 Tuesday
- 14 Wednesday
- 15 Thursday
- 16 Friday
- 17 Saturday • St. Patrick's Day
- 18 Sunday
- 19 Monday
- 20 Tuesday
- 21 Wednesday
- 22 Thursday
- 23 Friday
- 24 Saturday
- 25 Sunday
- 26 Monday
- 27 Tuesday
- 28 Wednesday
- 29 Thursday
- 30 Friday
- 31 Saturday



Cornus species
Dogwood

April

Mulching & The Compost Pile

Mulch is the gardener's secret to time management. If you can mulch 3 inches deep, you will have virtually no weeding to do the rest of the year, and your soil will improve each season. Of course, you can't smother tiny plants with mulch; new seedlings need the warmth of bare soil; woody shrubs like roses need to have mulch pulled away from the base. But for most planting beds, there is no gardening practice so effective as mulching.

No one ever has enough mulch. We all need a compost pile. The most common reason for not having a compost pile is that the small garden has no place to hide one. However, most homes have some inconspicuous utility space for the family garbage cans, etc. If you can incorporate a compost bin/pit/drum into it, you'll find it a great efficiency.

You need heat, moisture, bacteria, and earthworms. If you can wait a year for the material to decompose, you need do nothing but pile on the clippings: eventually it will all gently decompose by itself. For a faster turnaround from waste to leafmold, you need to turn it occasionally, like batter, to redistribute the moisture and interior heat. Monthly turning with a pitchfork or in one of the composting drums now on the market will yield amazing returns.

To hasten decomposition even more, you can add some of the bacterial compounds from the nursery. Even better, drop an earthworm in whenever you find one; earthworms don't seem to mind either pitchforks or rotating.

If you buy your mulch, we recommend Steerco: it has manure mixed in with the rotted sawdust. It's expensive, but if you buy the less expensive sludge-based products you will be adding potentially toxic heavy metals to your soil.

Azaleas, Rhododendrons, Camellias:

If you fertilize this year (see Feb. notes) apply soon after the blossoms fall. Cottonseed meal, old manure or compost are among the better choices, since all are organic and not overly rich. If you use inorganics, make a weak solution and be sure to water.



Evergreens:

Last call to transplant.

Lawns:

Many gardeners fertilize this month (see June notes). If you do, this is a good time to weed-and-feed; water well.

Seeds, seedlings:

It's a fine time to plant the fall bloomers. Pinch out the growing tips if you want compact plants in September. Nursery seedlings with flower buds on them have been forced; it's important to harden your heart and pinch them all off. Watch for surprise frosts.

Root weevils:

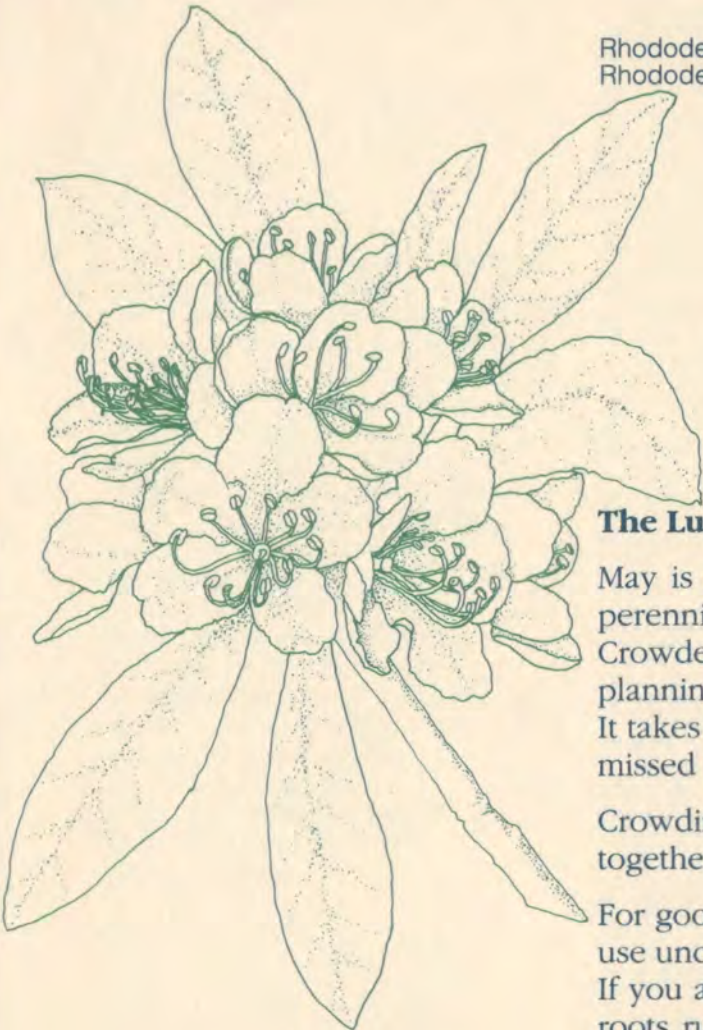
Orthene is effective, as is Diazinon, Malathion or Sevin. The important thing to remember is that once is not enough. Malathion disappears in 5 days, Diazinon in 2 weeks, and Sevin in a month. A new generation of root weevils will start all over again if you don't repeat at regular intervals. To make a dent in the population, spray every other week through April, May and June (see August notes). Consolation: Root weevils are ugly but seldom fatal. Insects are troublesome on tender young leaves. Your first line of defense is to culture your plants to near perfection: watch the foliage to discover nutritional needs and be generous with water during new growth periods. That means NOW.

Slugs:

Keep baiting.

April

- | | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Sunday • April Fools' Day |
| 2 | Monday |
| 3 | Tuesday |
| 4 | Wednesday |
| 5 | Thursday |
| 6 | Friday |
| 7 | Saturday |
| 8 | Sunday |
| 9 | Monday |
| 10 | Tuesday • Passover |
| 11 | Wednesday |
| 12 | Thursday |
| 13 | Friday |
| 14 | Saturday |
| 15 | Sunday • Easter |
| 16 | Monday |
| 17 | Tuesday |
| 18 | Wednesday |
| 19 | Thursday |
| 20 | Friday |
| 21 | Saturday |
| 22 | Sunday |
| 23 | Monday |
| 24 | Tuesday |
| 25 | Wednesday |
| 26 | Thursday |
| 27 | Friday |
| 28 | Saturday |
| 29 | Sunday |
| 30 | Monday |



Rhododendron macrophyllum
Rhododendron

May

The Lush Pots of Summer

May is not too late to start one of the spectacular, overflowing pots of annuals/perennials often featured on Northwest terraces. The secret is maintenance. Crowded plants use incredible amounts of water and nutrients. The first step in planning is to make an inflexible schedule for daily watering and weekly feeding. It takes only one or two missed feedings to cause a general air of malaise, and one missed watering may cause severe plant stress.

Crowding is essential for the lush effect, and professional pot designers cram together many more plants than are recommended in standard garden practice.

For good nursery starters you may want to shop early, particularly if you intend to use uncommon plants. Do not buy seedlings that are more than slightly rootbound. If you absolutely cannot find what you want in good condition, prick out the little roots ruthlessly so that they can grow outward. If you do it quickly and get the roots safely into soil right away, the plant will recover.

Use potting soil that is loose and rich. To compensate for crowded lateral growth, give the roots as deep a pot as you can find. Add a planting fertilizer before you begin. Keep them shaded the first day or two, then give them as much sun as your site allows.

Don't forget that plants in pots need twice as much water as plants in the ground. Crowded plants need twice as much food as plants with room all around them. Vary the food from week to week: Alaska Fish, 20-20-20, Bloom, etc.

Deadheading should be consistent, as with any grooming.

Seeds:

Everything can be planted this month: annuals, perennials, vegetables. Get them in early so they'll have a reasonably long season of growth.

Spring bloomers:

Do your pruning soon after blossoms drop so you can direct the new growth that's about to burgeon out (deadhead at the same time). Greedy spring bloomers like lilacs and peonies are renewed by a light feeding after flowering. Use any of the high phosphate fertilizers. From full bloom onward, feed heavy bloomers twice a month with half-strength fertilizer.

Lawns:

You will be mowing regularly from now on. Ideally, mow often enough so that you never cut more than 1½ inch at a time. In the Northwest once a week usually works well.

Watering:

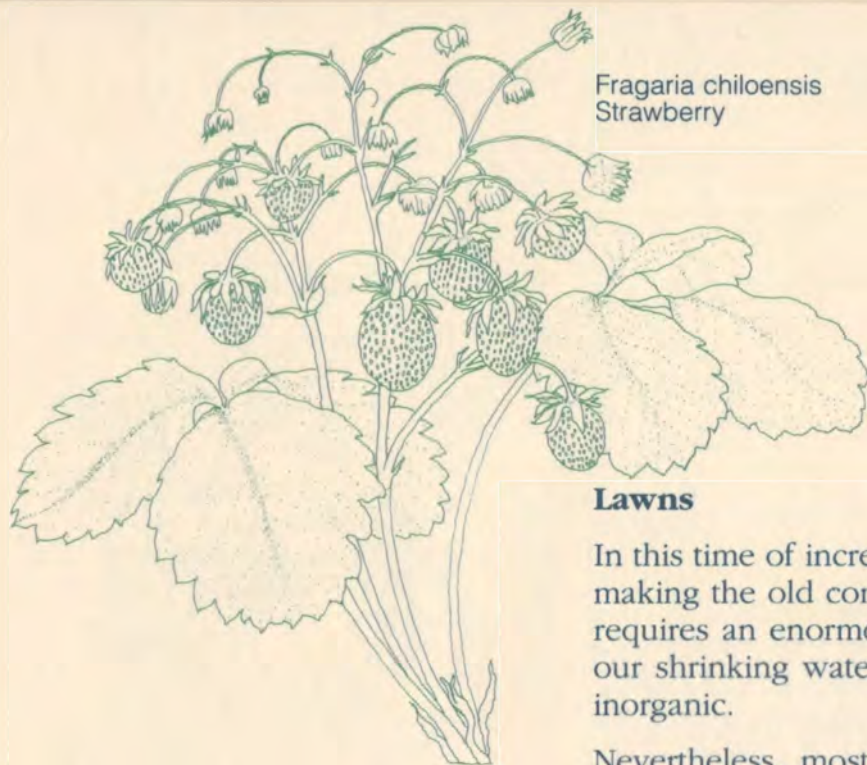
May often has dry spells that go unnoticed amid all the flower production. Watch particularly for new seedlings and first-year plants.

Slugs:

Keep baiting.

May

- 1 Tuesday • May Day
- 2 Wednesday
- 3 Thursday
- 4 Friday
- 5 Saturday
- 6 Sunday
- 7 Monday
- 8 Tuesday
- 9 Wednesday
- 10 Thursday
- 11 Friday
- 12 Saturday
- 13 Sunday • Mother's Day
- 14 Monday
- 15 Tuesday
- 16 Wednesday
- 17 Thursday
- 18 Friday
- 19 Saturday
- 20 Sunday
- 21 Monday
- 22 Tuesday
- 23 Wednesday
- 24 Thursday
- 25 Friday
- 26 Saturday
- 27 Sunday
- 28 Monday • Memorial Day
- 29 Tuesday
- 30 Wednesday
- 31 Thursday



Fragaria chiloensis
Strawberry

June

Lawns

In this time of increased environmental awareness, fewer gardeners these days are making the old commitment to the once inevitable lush green lawn. Maintenance requires an enormous percentage of the gardener's effort, more than its share of our shrinking water supply, and huge quantities of fertilizers that are inexorably inorganic.

Nevertheless, most gardeners want at least some lawn. What we aim for is a maintenance program requiring less effort, less water, and fewer feedings. We need to be less ambitious for perfection, more tolerant of dandelions and seasonal browned areas.

Program for the reasonably maintained, unambitious lawn:

Feed in spring (April, May). Include a broadleaf weed killer if you must. Begin mowing in April at weekly intervals. Try to cut no more than an inch and a half at a time: grass blades should be about the same height. Leave clippings on the lawn as mulch.

Pay attention to the weather; don't automatically water every week. In some rainy weeks watering is counterproductive. The Northwest statistically is in drought throughout August and September, but don't water more than once a week in any case. Water in the evenings to lessen evaporation (unless you have plants nearby that are susceptible to mildew; i.e. roses, certain perennials and fruit trees).

And be aware that a brown lawn nearly always recovers. Meanwhile, it requires lots less mowing.

Feed in late fall, and add a soil sweetener.

Houseplants:

Take them outdoors for the summer: they'll be stronger and more disease-free next winter. Be sure they're in complete shade at least a week before moving into stronger light.

Fertilize the big producers:

Bedding plants, roses (after first flush of bloom), your display pots, vegetables.

Your own seeds:

Plant perennial/annual seeds from your mature flowers as soon as they ripen and begin to fall.

Pruning:

June is a good month to prune the hedge. Leave the base slightly broader than the top, so light can reach the lower leaves. 'Summer pruning' is gardening efficiency. It just means rubbing off with your thumb all emerging suckers while they're still tiny, before you or the plant put much energy into them. The same is true of pinching off soft tips of new growth headed the wrong way.

Annuals:

You can still plant annuals for late summer & fall bloom, and to renew crowded flower pots.

1st year plantings:

When planting from nursery containers, water the foliage for the first day or two (unless the leaves are in direct sun).

The most vulnerable time in a tree's life is the first spring/summer after it's transplanted into the garden. When you water, water deeply. If it's a very dry summer, consider a slow soak for a couple of days. Don't let it soak longer than that, or you might be trading rot for drought. And if no amount of watering seems to really revive a first year transplant, check the drainage.

June

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|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Friday |
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| 5 | Tuesday |
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| 9 | Saturday |
| 10 | Sunday |
| 11 | Monday |
| 12 | Tuesday |
| 13 | Wednesday |
| 14 | Thursday |
| 15 | Friday |
| 16 | Saturday |
| 17 | Sunday • Father's Day |
| 18 | Monday |
| 19 | Tuesday |
| 20 | Wednesday |
| 21 | Thursday |
| 22 | Friday |
| 23 | Saturday |
| 24 | Sunday |
| 25 | Monday |
| 26 | Tuesday |
| 27 | Wednesday |
| 28 | Thursday |
| 29 | Friday |
| 30 | Saturday |



Nicotiana glauca
Tobacco plant

July

Summer Cuttings

For most plants, July is the best month to take summer cuttings. Experts will tell you that timing is even more important than technique. Check the stems for firmness: they should snap off crisply, not just bend. If the wood is limp or very pliable, it is not ready. Wait until August for these.

You will need:

1. A razor and a cutting board. 2. A rooting hormone. The garden center has several forms: take your pick. 3. Pots filled with a fine, gritty soil. Even pure sand will do, because nutrients are not important until roots are formed. But sand is heavy, and you'll have better luck if you add peat, perlite, or fine soil to lighten it. 4. Clear plastic bags, rubber bands, and coat hangers to hold up the plastic.

Choose branch ends. Strip the stems, leaving only 2-3 leaves at the tip. Lay the stem on the wood block and with your razor make a clean, diagonal slice, just below a bud. Your cutting should be no more than 3-5 inches long. Scarify the base very lightly with the razor, dip it into the rooting compound, shake off the excess. The hormone should remain on the stem surface after planting, so, instead of jamming the stalk into the soil, make a hole with a pencil to the right depth and insert the stem carefully down inside. Press the soil gently around it so as not to rub the hormone off. Water from the bottom; i.e. sit the pot in an inch or two of water until the moisture rises through the soil to the top.

Lastly, to insure that the cutting stays moist, make a tiny greenhouse over the pot with the plastic bag. You won't want the plastic to touch the leaves inside, so with coat hangers (or small sticks) make a little framework to hold up the plastic bag. A rubber band around the base will make it all airtight.

Cuttings:

When breaking off the twig you'll use for your cutting, try to get the heel as well. It's not always necessary but has an excellent success rate. Trim it cleanly and proceed as usual. Be sure to remove any flowers or buds.

Maintenance:

Keep up the basics: watering, deadheading, compost aerating, baiting for slugs, etc.

Bud grafting:

An easy way to expand your collection of choice plants. Bud grafting can be done this month and next, as long as the bark separates cleanly and buds are mature. Using a razor-sharp knife, cut the bark of the host branch just above a bud. Try to cut only into the cambian layer. Cut the new scion bud into a wedge, just big enough to fit into the slit. Bend back the host branch until the slit widens enough to accept the scion. Slide it in, wrap in plastic, seal with masking tape.

Fertilizing:

Keep feeding and deadheading the heavy bloomers for continued high productivity.

Berries:

At the end of the month when raspberries and blackberries are finished, cut the canes that bore fruit to the ground. The new young canes will bear next year's fruit: they need all the plant's energy.

Mulching:

Mulching continues to be the most efficient of gardening activities.

Moles:

There are many folk remedies for the mole problem, but other than trapping them or driving them into the neighbor's yard, the only solution we know is mutual tolerance.

Slugs:

They're still out there.

July

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|----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Sunday |
| 2 | Monday |
| 3 | Tuesday |
| 4 | Wednesday • Independence Day |
| 5 | Thursday |
| 6 | Friday |
| 7 | Saturday |
| 8 | Sunday |
| 9 | Monday |
| 10 | Tuesday |
| 11 | Wednesday |
| 12 | Thursday |
| 13 | Friday |
| 14 | Saturday |
| 15 | Sunday |
| 16 | Monday |
| 17 | Tuesday |
| 18 | Wednesday |
| 19 | Thursday |
| 20 | Friday |
| 21 | Saturday |
| 22 | Sunday |
| 23 | Monday |
| 24 | Tuesday |
| 25 | Wednesday |
| 26 | Thursday |
| 27 | Friday |
| 28 | Saturday |
| 29 | Sunday |
| 30 | Monday |
| 31 | Tuesday |

Geranium pratense
Meadow cranesbill



Almost nothing to do. Just watering, mowing, deadheading, feeding the current bloomers, and

Cuttings:

You're not too late to take cuttings of some woody shrubs. See notes from last month.

August

Summer Transplanting

If you absolutely must transplant something in midsummer, plan to keep it in full shade for a week, either with shadecloth or some other temporary screening. If that's not possible, you will have to move it to a full-shade part of the garden and let it stay there, with frequent foliage watering, until all wilting is past, about 7-8 days. Then move it to its permanent home. Still determined? Then grit your teeth and try these techniques:

1. Water deeply the day before. Prepare the new hole.
2. Spray foliage with anti-dessicant.
3. Dig before 9:00 A.M. Summer morning transplants have proven twice as successful as those attempted later in the day.
4. Take largest possible root ball, wrap in burlap or an old sheet.
5. Water both root ball and foliage. Repeat often, at least daily. If plant appears to be in deep shock, try to hook up a misting system that will come on more frequently.

As with all transplants, keep well watered throughout the entire first year.

Oriental poppies:

If you love these brief beauties and have wanted them in your garden, this is the month to set them out. Cuttings, divisions, or seeds, they'll blossom for you next May.

Primroses:

Divide crowded primrose clumps now. Water consistently until fall rains take over.

Bulbs:

Early bloomers, like winter aconite, erythronium, chionodoxa, even colchicum can be set out now. Even more interesting, you can sow seeds of hardy cyclamen in flats: it may be your only way to get a big show of them.

Iris:

August is the month to dig up, divide, and replant crowded rhizomes. Don't move natives until the new foliage comes out, usually late September.

Delphiniums:

Now is the time to plant seed for next summer. They need rich soil and good drainage, and a way to stake the tall ones. Most other perennials can be seeded out this month too.

Insects:

Root weevils have become obvious. Make a consistent, weekly effort to spray before they go underground for the winter. It's best done at night, and concentrate on the undersides of leaves (see April notes).

August

- 1 Wednesday
- 2 Thursday
- 3 Friday
- 4 Saturday
- 5 Sunday
- 6 Monday
- 7 Tuesday
- 8 Wednesday
- 9 Thursday
- 10 Friday
- 11 Saturday
- 12 Sunday
- 13 Monday
- 14 Tuesday
- 15 Wednesday
- 16 Thursday
- 17 Friday
- 18 Saturday
- 19 Sunday
- 20 Monday
- 21 Tuesday
- 22 Wednesday
- 23 Thursday
- 24 Friday
- 25 Saturday
- 26 Sunday
- 27 Monday
- 28 Tuesday
- 29 Wednesday
- 30 Thursday
- 31 Friday

Cyclamen species
Cyclamen



September

Winter Flowers

As the summer season of bloom slows down, you might think about some plants that will blossom this winter. Winter flowers have a special charm of their own, indoor or out, fragrant or even foetidus. For everyday pleasure from them, place them near an entrance or window.

For the most choice and unusual varieties, refer to the Discriminating Gardener Series, compiled by the Seattle Garden Club. Meanwhile, some reminders of well-loved garden plants for winter blossom:

Hamamelis mollis
Jasminum nudiflorum
Helleborus niger
Camellia sasanqua

Prunus autumnalis
Viburnum tinus
Sarcococa humilis
Daphne odora

Annuals, perennials, wildflowers:

To get a headstart on summer bloomers next year, you can sow seeds of almost everything this month. For the Cavalier Gardener, just throw seeds out on the ground; you will get some return. For the Dedicated Gardener, spading in and raking both compost and fertilizer will naturally get you a much better dividend.

Forcing Bulbs

The secret to getting midwinter pleasure from indoor forced bulbs is to buy low growing, compact varieties. Then, when they bloom in your warm rooms, you won't be concerned with propping them up or disguising the mechanisms. Croci work well, as do the miniatures of all the species. Amaryllis and hyacinth are really the only bulbs whose stems are staunch enough to carry the heads erect. Tulips, daffodils, freesias will come to blossom, but your pleasure will be tempered by the collars or racks you'll need to keep them upright.

All indoor forcings will last longer if they cool off at night. Not in freezing air, but in the range of 40-60°: in the garage if it's not frosty, an unheated back hall, etc.

Groundcovers:

Set out this month, groundcovers will make a great spread next year. They'll have the winter to stabilize and send out new roots. By spring they'll be ready to take off.

Lawns:

If you can be certain to maintain a close watering schedule until the rains come, September is a good month to overseed bald or thin spots. Try to use seed of the same kind of grass.

Heather:

Shear heaths and heathers right after bloom to keep them compact and groomed. If you wait on this chore you'll find you're trimming off new buds as well.

Canker, anthracnose:

Spray diseased dogwood and fruit trees with Bordeaux mixture late in the month. Any diseased leaves within reach should be removed.

Ornamentals:

September is a good month to plant new perennials and shrubs. The rains will soon relieve you of your most important chore, roots will acclimatize during the winter, and spring will give you a fine spurt of new growth.

Water:

In spite of cooler weather, September in the Northwest is usually still in the drought range. Watering is doubly important now that many buds are forming.

September

- 1 Saturday
- 2 Sunday
- 3 Monday • Labor Day
- 4 Tuesday
- 5 Wednesday
- 6 Thursday
- 7 Friday
- 8 Saturday
- 9 Sunday
- 10 Monday
- 11 Tuesday
- 12 Wednesday
- 13 Thursday
- 14 Friday
- 15 Saturday
- 16 Sunday
- 17 Monday
- 18 Tuesday
- 19 Wednesday
- 20 Thursday
- 21 Friday
- 22 Saturday
- 23 Sunday
- 24 Monday
- 25 Tuesday
- 26 Wednesday
- 27 Thursday • Rosh Hashannah
- 28 Friday
- 29 Saturday
- 30 Sunday

Veronica species
Veronica

October



Transplanting

Fall months are best for planting/transplanting. Most plants are dormant now: our normal winter cold will not effect them, the roots can recover from shock over the winter, and may even make some underground growth during warm spells. Best of all, the rain does most of the watering for you.

However, beware the easy assumption that you can just forget about watering; even in the Northwest we sometimes have dry periods in winter. And if you hear warning of coming heavy freezes, give your new transplants a deep watering, both for insulation and to insure that the plant is not cut off from moisture if the ground surface freezes.

Always dig the new hole first, before you uproot the plant from its old setting. Roots can go right into the new hole without waiting in the open air. Dig the hole twice as deep and wide as the root ball. Good drainage is essential. If you're digging in hardpan, doublecheck the runoff before you plant.

Research has shown that roots tend not to grow into soil with a very different texture from their own. If a plant has been growing in dense, hardpacked soil, its roots will not grow easily into very loose, light soil, and vice versa. So, if you want to improve the soil around the plant when you move it, try to make the change a gradual one.

Transplanting:

Remember the added warmth of a mulch blanket. Don't use fresh sawdust or manure.

Of course, if you're planting a bare-rooted shrub from the nursery, plant it in the best rich loose soil you can make. Experts recommend liberal amounts of compost, old manure, 'planting' (non-burning) fertilizer, even peat moss or vermiculite.

Roses:

Groom roses for the winter. As you deadhead, leave a few hips on each plant. The presence of hips will slow growth and encourage dormancy, so that an early frost will be less likely to cause damage.

Perennials:

Divide perennials and plant new ones this month for a good headstart on spring. The best part about fall planting is that rain takes care of nearly all the work.

Tender plants:

Time to dig up and store all those tender exotics that have to overwinter in the garage. Get the house plants in too. From now on, the occasional freeze may come any time.

Lawns:

Fall fertilizing pays big dividends. Use a low nitrogen, high phosphorus/potash formula for this feeding to stimulate deep roots rather than top growth.

Bulbs:


If you regretted last spring that you hadn't planted more bulbs the previous fall, it's time now to avoid regret next year. Take one morning to shop for them, and an afternoon to plant. Next spring you'll congratulate yourself.

The rank growers:

Overly vigorous plants can be pruned as soon as the leaves fall. With evergreens, wait until several frosty nights have stopped the sap flow.

October

- 1 Monday
- 2 Tuesday
- 3 Wednesday
- 4 Thursday
- 5 Friday
- 6 Saturday • Yom Kippur
- 7 Sunday
- 8 Monday
- 9 Tuesday
- 10 Wednesday
- 11 Thursday
- 12 Friday
- 13 Saturday
- 14 Sunday
- 15 Monday
- 16 Tuesday
- 17 Wednesday
- 18 Thursday
- 19 Friday
- 20 Saturday
- 21 Sunday
- 22 Monday
- 23 Tuesday
- 24 Wednesday
- 25 Thursday
- 26 Friday
- 27 Saturday
- 28 Sunday
- 29 Monday
- 30 Tuesday
- 31 Wednesday • Halloween



Viburnum tinus
Laurustinas

November

Mulch

Whatever weeding-cum-mulching you do now will pay off during winter months. You'll be smothering the tiny weeds that need only one or two warm days in winter to start a whole population going, and you'll be laying a warm protective blanket around shrubs and perennials. If, in spite of all your good intentions, your compost pile never quite made it to the luscious dark leafmold stage, be of good heart. Dump what's there onto your cleaned perennial beds, and spade it roughly in. You'll find next spring that it has been at work all winter amending your soil.

Hardwood Cuttings

November is an easy time to make hardwood cuttings of deciduous shrubs and trees. Winter cuttings are usually longer than the softwood cuttings of July, often 8-12 inches long. Strip the side leaves as usual, use a rooting hormone if you have it, and shake off the excess. Bury the cuttings in loose soil in a cold frame, or even out in the garden if you can find an inconspicuous spot. Cover with a wooden box. Spread 2-3 inches of mulch around/over the top to protect from rapid changes in temperature and humidity. Don't forget to remove the cover when spring comes!

Birds

You are asked not to provide food for the birds if you cannot do it consistently all winter, or if you plan to be away for long periods. Better to let them forage for themselves from natural sources. If you plan to be home all winter, birds are attracted to small bundles of mixed grains/single seeds in suet and/or peanut butter. And during a hard freeze, remember birds may need drinking water when all else is frozen hard.

Clean-Up:

Rake up and throw out dead leaves/stalks/berries. Over the winter they shelter disease and fungi and, yes, slugs.

Lilies:

Time to plant lily bulbs in rich soil, well drained and out of the wind. Insert the stake now to support the stalk next summer. If you wait till it begins to topple next July, you may drive the stake right through the bulb. This is the time to cut old clumps apart and replant. Give each a handful of bonemeal.

Lawns:

After most of the leaves are down, mow the grass, rake up the cuttings and add them to the compost heap. In one stroke you have groomed the lawn and chopped up the matted leaves into the best texture for rotting in your compost cooker. Next, spread lime. It can take months for lime to change the soil PH, so broadcast liberally now. By the time spring fertilizer goes down, the soil will be sweeter.

Camellias:

The early sasanquas are blooming now, so you can see what you're buying. But don't plant until flowering is over, and never plant in mud. Wait for soil to dry out a little, even if you must hold off until early spring.

Peonies:

Plant herbaceous peonies with the eyes about two inches under the soil. Tree peonies should be planted several inches deeper than they sit in the can. All peonies need loose, composted soil.

Bulbs:

It's still not too late. Remember bonemeal.

November

1	Thursday
2	Friday
3	Saturday
4	Sunday
5	Monday
6	Tuesday
7	Wednesday
8	Thursday
9	Friday
10	Saturday
11	Sunday
12	Monday
13	Tuesday
14	Wednesday
15	Thursday
16	Friday
17	Saturday
18	Sunday
19	Monday
20	Tuesday
21	Wednesday
22	Thursday • Thanksgiving
23	Friday
24	Saturday
25	Sunday
26	Monday
27	Tuesday
28	Wednesday
29	Thursday
30	Friday



Arbutus unedo
Strawberry tree

December

When the holidays are over and leisure returns to your life, perhaps you'd like to spend the unaccustomed quiet with a catalogue or two:

BULBS

Von Bourgondien Bros.

P.O. Box A 245
Farmingdale Road, Rte. 109
Babylon, N.Y. 11702

Fine selection, some good buys.
Catalog free.

West Shore Acres

956 Downey Rd.
Mt. Vernon, Wa. 98273

Good selection & quality.
Catalog free.

Our Christmas present to you: we can think of nothing that has to be done this month in the garden.

If you can find the right moment, you might be surprised at what you find out in the garden on a warm day.

But, if you have nothing else to do . . .

You could cut greens for decorating.

You could shop for camellias.

You could rotate your houseplants.

You could propagate hardwoods.

You could layer evergreens.

You could just rest.

That's what we're going to do.

McClure & Zimmerman

1422 W. Thorndale
Chicago, Ill 60660

Unusual bulbs, some rare.
Catalog free. Considered pricey.

SEEDS**Thompson & Morgan**

Dept. 7
Jackson, NJ 08527

A huge selection, both rare &
unusual. Catalog free.

**Abundant Life Seed
Foundation**

P.O. Box 772
Port Townsend, Wa. 98368

NW natives, flowers, herbs.
Catalog \$1.

Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery

2568 Jackson Highway
Chehalis, Wa. 98532

Alpines, hostas, primroses,
Send a self-addressed
stamped envelope for catalog.

PLANTS**Aitken's Salmon Creek
Garden**

608 NW 119th St.
Vancouver, Wa. 98685

Natives, hybrids, unusual iris.
Send self-addressed,
stamped envelope.

Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery

Dept. 72
2825 Cummings Rd.
Medford, Ore. 97501

Everything you could ask for,
good prices. Catalog \$2.

December

- 1 Saturday
- 2 Sunday
- 3 Monday
- 4 Tuesday
- 5 Wednesday
- 6 Thursday
- 7 Friday
- 8 Saturday
- 9 Sunday
- 10 Monday
- 11 Tuesday
- 12 Wednesday
- 13 Thursday
- 14 Friday
- 15 Saturday
- 16 Sunday
- 17 Monday
- 18 Tuesday
- 19 Wednesday • Hannakah
- 20 Thursday
- 21 Friday
- 22 Saturday
- 23 Sunday
- 24 Monday
- 25 Tuesday • Christmas
- 26 Wednesday
- 27 Thursday
- 28 Friday
- 29 Saturday
- 30 Sunday
- 31 Monday