



July Gardening Chores

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"The Hill Country Gardener"

www.thehillcountrygardener.com



Work outside early in the morning or late in the evening so you can avoid loss of water in your body. Drink cool or cold water before, during and after working outside and sweating. Use sunscreen and work in the shade as much as possible.

Watering by hand is good therapy after coming home from work, but is the WORST thing you can do to your plants.

Birds and Wildlife

- Keep birdbaths full and clean.
- Butterflies are attracted to overripe fruit, blooms, and mud.
- Hummingbirds will reward you with their antics if you keep plenty of sugar water in feeders for them.

Color

- Keep rose bushes cleaned out.
- Fertilize caladiums with slow-release lawn fertilizer at the rate of 1/3 - 1/2 lb. per 100 square feet of bed.
- Deadhead spent flowers on annuals and perennials.
- Plant zinnias.
- To brighten a landscape in the heat of the summer plant lantana, bougainvillea, mandevilla vine, allamanda, hibiscus, salvia, periwinkle, marigold, zinnia, portulaca, purslane, copper plant, and Bush morning glory.
- Mulch heavily.
- Water plants by hand when needed and

not according to the calendar or day of the week.

Fruits and Nuts

- Water fruit trees with one inch of water over the drip line per week until the fruit are harvested.
- Take out the old canes in the blackberries.

Ornamentals

- Iron deficiency (chlorosis) can show up in landscape and garden plants at this time of year. Look for yellowed leaves with darker green veins. Frequent applications of iron sulfate (Copperas) as a foliar spray or applications to mulching materials may be needed. Green sand can also be used and is effective.

Shade Trees and Shrubs

- It's safe to prune oak trees in July and August. Be sure to paint with latex-based paint all the cuts.
- This is NOT a good time to plant trees and shrubs. It's too hot.

Turf Grass

- Set your lawnmower height at the highest level while it's hot. 3 ½ - 4 inches for St. Augustine in the sun and 4 - 5 inches in the shade.

July Gardening Chores, Cont.

- If you see dead areas in the St. Augustine, check for grubs and chinch bugs.
- Mow the lawn before you leave on vacation.
- You can plant new lawns in the heat as long as you keep it watered at least twice per day. Do not let the seeds dry out.

Vegetables

- It's time to start over in the vegetable garden.
- Install a drip irrigation system in your gardens to make watering more efficient and less time-consuming.
- Prepare for fall gardening. Add 2 - 3 inches of compost and 1 - 2 cups of 19-5-9 slow release fertilizer per 100 square feet.
- Plant your pumpkins for Halloween this month.

Questions?

Write: gardener@gvtx.com.

