



Tom Harris, Ph. D., BCMG Class 13 “The Hill Country Gardener”
www.thehillcountrygardener.com

August is deep summer in San Antonio. Good xeriscape plants will make it through the month without supplemental watering; others will need conscientious watering to stay prosperous. Generally, no fertilizing or planting is done during this month.

Birds and Wildlife

- Move the hummingbird feeders to the patio.
- Change your sugar water every week. Pour the old liquid in a shallow dish for the butterflies.

Color

- It's time to plant mari-mums, zinnias and sunflowers this month. Lantanas, firebush, purslane, portulaca and periwinkles are prospering in the heat.
- Lantana bloom can be rejuvenated with a string trimmer.
- Bougainvillea loves the Texas summer heat; if they're root bound in the pot, even better.
- Prune the roses back.
- Trim back petunias and impatiens to encourage new growth.
- Thin spring-blooming bulbs.

Fruits and Nuts

- Pecan trees need 1 inch of water per week over the entire root area
- Apply borer spray to the peach trees this month.
- Early apples are ready for harvest.

Ornamentals

- Moy Grande hibiscus produces 12-inch blooms in full sun.
- Gold Star Esparanza produces fragrant yellow flowers clear up until frost.
- Stake or support larger-growing plants that have become heavy or are leaning over.

Shade Trees and Shrubs

- Shade trees can reduce the heat gain in a home by 40-80 percent.

- Cotton root rot is stimulated by hot soil temperatures.
- This is the second-best time to prune live oak trees.
- If you have scale problems on your shrubs, use light summer oil.
- Fall webworms may appear on pecan, mulberry, ash, persimmon, and other trees. Spray *Bacillus thuringiensis* (B.t).
- Windmill palm, Mexican fan palm and Sabal palm are especially well-adapted to this area.
- Mulch, mulch, mulch.
- Remember that newly-planted trees need watering once per week for the whole first season.

Turf Grass

- In August, all grasses require water to stay green.
- When you see your footprints in the grass, it's time to water.
- Grub worms eat the roots of grass plants.
- Chinch bugs do their damage in the hottest part of summer in the hottest part of the lawn
- There is still time to establish a new lawn.
- Remember when laying new sod; roll the turf to insure good soil-root contact.

Vegetables

- Early August is the best time to start planting the fall garden. Use transplants for tomatoes and peppers and direct seed corn and beans later in the month.
- Plant pumpkins in early August. Get the 90-day variety.
- Other vegetable crops to plant in August are cucumber, eggplant, lima beans, black-eye peas, peppers, and squash.
- Write me at gardener@gvtc.com to get the recommended vegetable varieties for the state of Texas.

Questions?

Email gardener@gvtc.com or visit: www.thehillcountrygardener.com and click on “Publications.”