February can still bring bitterly cold weather and freezes. Be very careful about planting perennials at this time. If you plant seeds outside and severe weather is predicted, try to water all the plants in the yard and be sure to cover the newly emerged plants with old sheets or commercial row-cover of some type. Arm-chair gardening now will pay off well next June/July.

Birds and Wildlife

- The cedar waxwings will join the mockingbirds and other fruit-eaters in cleaning up the last of your yaupon holly, nandinas, and pyracantha berries.

Color

- Mid-February is rose-pruning time (Valentine's Day—remember?).
- Do not cut back the daffodils until the leaves turn brown.
- Divide summer-, fall-blooming perennials, including cannas, mallows, fall asters, mums, coneflowers, and perennial salvias.
- If your pansies are still blooming, be sure to fertilize with your favorite fertilizer about every 2-3 weeks.
- It's best to plant spring blooming bulbs early in the month so that they finish blooming before the weather gets hot.

Fruits and Nuts

- Pruning is the key activity for fruit trees. The trees need to be opened up to allow sun, air, and pesticides to penetrate.

Ornamentals

- Fertilize winter bedding plants such as pansies, snapdragons, calendulas, and dianthus.
- Water indoor plants only when they need it. Use water-soluble fertilizer for indoor plants.

Shade Trees and Shrubs

- This is a good month to plant trees and shrubs. Fall and winter are better.
- Prune trees and shrubs this month. Paint wounds larger than ¾ inch on oaks only.
- Use oak leaves for mulch in the gardens or add them to the compost pile.
- Use Bt or Spinosad to control caterpillars on mountain laurel.
- Prune fruit trees just before bud-break. Remember that peaches and plums need to be an open-bowl shape after pruning.
- Remove any bagworm pouches you find and either burn them or throw them in the trash.

Turf Grass

- There is a lot to do for your lawn, but fertilizing is not one of them.
- This is a good month to apply pre-emergent herbicides to prevent warm weather weeds.
- "Scalp" the lawn late in the month to remove winter-killed stubble.
- Apply broadleaf weed killer on warm days to eliminate henbit, chickweed, dandelions, clover and non-grassy weeds.

Vegetables

- "Pot-up" your tomatoes and peppers into 1-gallon pots.
- Plant radishes, spinach, beets, carrots, and onion sets this month.
- Perk up your garden with the addition of rotted manure or compost.
- February is the month to begin spring gardens.
- If you decide to plant a few tomatoes in the ground this month, don't plant all of them. Save a few in case a "blue-norther" blows through and kills those in the ground.