

## December Gardening Chores

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### December

*Gardening doesn't stop in Texas in December, but it does slow down considerably. Use the time to catch up on your note-taking and get some "catalog" time in.*

*Mulch, mulch, mulch. Sometimes it's the only way to protect cold-tender plants.*

*Spider mites thrive in warmth. Be sure to check your indoor plants for mites and take appropriate action.*

#### Birds and Wildlife

- Suet is available in easy-to-use blocks that attract the woodpeckers, chickadees and titmice.
- Use weight-sensitive metal feeders.

#### Color

- After they freeze back, you can cut lantana, mallow hibiscus, esperanza and other cold sensitive plants to the ground.
- Get those spring-flowering bulbs in the ground this month.
- Plastic cups sunk in the ground and filled with beer attract and drown slugs and snails. They like Budweiser best.
- It is not too late to plant pansies.
- December is a good time to transplant roses

#### Fruits and Nuts

- This is a good month to plant bare root fruit and pecan trees
- Wait until January to do any major fruit tree pruning.
- Collect pecans as they fall to the ground.

#### Shade Trees and Shrubs

- Mulch the fallen leaves with your lawn mower.
  - Eliminate the mistletoe (a parasite) from your trees after the leaves fall.
  - It's OK to plant trees in December...even bare-root trees.
  - Consider a living Christmas tree. Arizona cypress or Italian Stone pines do well.
  - December is a good month to prune oak trees. Avoid topping.
  - Plant fruit trees on 8' x 8' raised beds with drip irrigation.
- Turf Grass
- St. Augustine that is dry is very susceptible to freeze damage.

#### Vegetables

- Side-dress your cole crops and onions with a cup of slow-release lawn fertilizer or ammonium sulphate per 10 feet of row.
- If tomatoes are full sized, but not showing any color, pick them and bring them into the house. They'll ripen on the counter.

