

YEAR ROUND GARDENING

JULY GARDENDING CALENDAR

By Eileen Tully, Colorado Master Gardener

How's your garden looking now? Do you have a serious case of the 'shags' where the remains of faded spring bulbs are drooping? If so, you can gently tug out or cut back leaves of daffodil, hyacinth and tulips. Cut back the stalks of lupine and dried seed pods on candytuft as well as the crisp remains of lilacs. Cleaning up the edge of your garden, even applying some mulch touch ups will do a lot to improve the overall look of the garden. If you have some empty areas where you haven't decided what to plant permanently you can fill the area with colorful containers of annuals.

If weeds are threatening to take over, persist with hand pulling or hoeing. Only resort to chemicals if it's absolutely necessary.

Watering

If we don't get sufficient rainfall, be sure to deeply water your trees. Check the top and outer leaves of trees and shrubs for drought injury. Pine needles turning brown on the part of the branch closest to the trunk is normal; but look for browning on the tip of the branch. It's a sign the tree is in trouble.

- Lawn – water early in the morning before 9 am or after 8 pm in the evening. Check that your irrigation system is reaching all areas of the lawn and mow as often as needed keeping grass height between 2 ½ and 3 inches.

Pinching, pruning and shaping

- Prune arborvitae, junipers and boxwood once new growth has expanded the shape of the plant. When pruning, shape shrubs so light can reach all parts of the plant.
- STOP pinching fall blooming perennials such as asters and chrysanthemums. But DO pinch back petunias when they get 'leggy.' It will encourage the plant to branch and become fuller.



Photo courtesy of Debra Othitis

- Cut back delphinium and perennial salvia to encourage a second bloom.
- Roses: fertilize hybrid tea and standard roses. Remove faded flowers to encourage new blooms. Cut the stem of single flowering roses back to the first 5-leaflet leaf. Prune climbing roses *after* flowering.
- Pinch back or disbud dahlias for larger flowers. Remove at least two pair of side buds below the top bud.
- Dig and divide: bearded iris and spring blooming poppies. Divide all iris that are crowded and discard old, large or diseased rhizomes
- Deadheading, an odd word, for the process by which we snip dried flowers on perennials is essential to increase blooms and keep the garden looking neat.

Vegetable Garden –

- Harvest garlic when several of the lower leaves go brown but 5 or 6 of the top leaves are still green. Place out of direct sunlight in an area with good air circulation.
- Tomatoes need consistent watering to prevent blossom end rot and misshapen fruit.
- Harvest zucchini when the fruits are 6 to 8” long. They are at their best at that size.
- Replant leaf lettuce and sow seeds of sugar snap peas for a fall harvest.

Diseases and Pests –

- Watch for powdery mildew on garden phlox and roses. Pruning phlox and roses to keep an open vase-like shape will encourage air circulation and help prevent powdery mildew, but if you notice it on the plant use a product containing sulphur as a safe and environmentally friendly way to control the disease.
- Control pests using the least toxic measure possible. Tomato hornworms can be picked off the plant and tossed aside. Check Alberta Spruce and juniper for a sprawling white web; it’s a sign of spider mites. A strong spray of water from a hose will temporarily get rid of them. Insecticidal soap is effective controlling aphids which seem to appear overnight in the billions on lupine and other plants. Lady beetles (lady bugs) are beneficial insects and will help you control unwanted garden pests.

When you have questions, Colorado State University Extension has research based answers. Get answers to your horticulture questions by ask.extension.org. any time day or night. Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. you can phone 520-7684 or emailing CSUmg2@elpasoco.com .

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