

# THE EL DORADO NURSERY AND GARDEN NEWSLETTER

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www.eldoradonursery.com



## Feb/Mar/Apr/May 2023



### GARDEN CALENDAR



#### What to do in February

- Apply third and final dormant spray on fruit trees (just before bud break).
- Fertilize annuals and perennials with a low nitrogen starter fertilizer or rose & flower food.
- Prune roses and fruit trees as needed.
- Plant summer blooming bulbs.
- Fertilize trees planted this year just after bloom.
- Apply iron to yellowing Gardenias, Azaleas, other acid-loving plants, and Citrus.
- Sow seeds indoors for spring planting later on.
- Start roses on a fungus prevention spray schedule.
- Spread wood ashes lightly around lilacs to benefit growth and aid blooming.

#### **Japanese Maple Pruning and Care Clinic (FREE)**

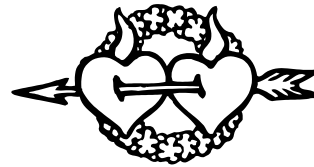
at 10:00 am on the following dates: (unless rained out):

Sat, Feb. 11th; and Mon, Feb. 13th.

#### **Rose Pruning and Care Clinic (FREE)**

at 12:00 pm on the following dates (unless rained out):

Sat, Feb. 11th; and Mon, Feb. 13th.



#### What to do in March

- Put yellow jacket traps out early to trap the Queen.
- Plant cool season vegetables. Sow warm season veggies indoors. See us for a planting guide.
- Rototill gardens and add organic matter. Do a soil test to see what nutrients you need to add. We have soil test kits available.
- Fertilize roses, evergreens, fruit trees, and berries.
- Prepare new lawn beds 6" deep.
- Shop for summer blooming bulbs and spring blooming shrubs.
- Spray roses with fungicide to prevent black spot and powdery mildew.
- Hoe or pick spring weeds. Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to prevent weeds.



#### **Pest Management Best Practices (FREE)**

10AM – 11:30AM Saturday March 4 with Julie Barbour from *Our Water Our World*

Learn what chemicals and methods to use for common pest problems.

#### What to do in April

- April 15<sup>th</sup> is the estimated last frost date for the Placerville area; El Dorado Hills estimated date is April 1<sup>st</sup>; and Pollock Pines is May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Plant or divide perennials.
- Sow annual flowers and warm season vegetables outdoors after the last frost.
- Sow seeds of cold hardy perennials such as Veronica, Columbine, & Coral bells after the last frost.
- Spray for oak worms. See us for spray options.
- Set out traps for earwigs and snails. Traps can be homemade or bought. See us for products and ideas.
- Fertilize spring blooming shrubs, ground covers, and conifers.

- Prune spring blooming shrubs (lilacs, forsythia, etc.) immediately after bloom.
- Rototill gardens and add organic matter. Do a soil test to see what nutrients you need to add. We have soil test kits available.
- Thin fruit trees and fertilize. See us for products.
- Set out codling moth traps in your apple trees.
- Apply borer spray and whitewash trunks on fruit trees and flowering cherries.
- April 9<sup>th</sup> is Easter. Happy Easter! We will be closed Easter Sunday.



## What to do in May

- Plant warm season vegetable seeds or starts.
- Prune spring blooming shrubs immediately after bloom.
- Check roses for aphids! Hose off plants and feed roses with systemic fertilizer if needed.
- Start new lawn from seed or sod.
- Thin fruit set on fruit trees (leave 6" between the ones you want to ripen). Prune for size control as needed.
- Mow lawns, removing less than 1/3rd the height.
- Plant summer annual flowers and perennials.
- Fertilize container plants with time-release fertilizer.
- Thin over-abundant seedlings in vegetable beds.
- Check and repair irrigation systems
- May 14<sup>th</sup> is Mothers Day. Gift Certificates to the Nursery make a great gift!



More like this: [Full year in the garden](#)

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## Spring(almost) Around the Nursery:



**New Roses will be here in**

# April, as well as Citrus

## *Keeping up the landscaping*



With the rising prices of gas and other economic factors, many consumers are worrying further about their precious dollars. Some may think that plants and landscaping fall into the “luxury” category, but we disagree. There are many reasons to plant this spring:

- 1) **Landscaping can reduce energy costs:** properly placed trees and shrubs provide cooling benefits in the summer (shade trees) and help to keep your home warmer in the winter (a deciduous tree that allows the sun to warm the house), keeping you from having to run that expensive furnace or air conditioner.
- 2) **Plants help to keep the air clean** by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen which can help you breathe better and improve your health.
- 3) **Landscaping increases home values**, as much as 13%. If you are planning to sell your home, or apply for a home equity line, landscaping can raise the dollar value of your home.
- 4) **Plants for mental health:** behavioral studies have shown that landscaped spaces benefit areas such as self-discipline, self-esteem, concentration, and the ability to cope (study by the University of Illinois – see [www.lhhl.uiuc.edu](http://www.lhhl.uiuc.edu) for more info on the study).
- 5) **Flowers help our moods.** A study by Harvard Medical School showed that people exposed to cut flowers experienced less anxiety and feelings of



depression and frustration. They had greater feelings of compassion, more enthusiasm and energy – giving reason to start your own cut flower garden (see [www.flowerwellness.com](http://www.flowerwellness.com) for more on this study).

- 6) **Gardening as a hobby.** For many of us that just love plants, gardening is simply a pastime that we enjoy, and let's face it, it's often cheaper than other hobbies like sports, wine tasting (if you buy what you taste), or cooking (if you make exotic dishes). And you often reap the benefits of a beautiful landscape or garden for many years to come.



## PERENNIAL GARDEN



Perennials are plants that, when grown in the proper zone, will continue to grow and flower for three or more years.

Within this framework there are several categories. The first group is the perennials that die back to the ground at the end of their growing season and then re-appear the following spring. With these plants, it is very important to clear away the dead leaves and stalks to prevent future fungi and disease. Hostas and Echinacea are typical examples of this group. The second group of perennials goes through the winter as low tufts of foliage and when the weather warms, begin their growing season. Finally, for most of our zones are the evergreen perennials such as Heather, Bergenia, Saxifrage, Dwarf mondo grass, and Liriope. These plants' foliage goes nearly unchanged throughout the winter.

When choosing plants for your garden, not only is it vital to remember sun requirements but also to take into account hardiness, growth patterns, soil preferences and moisture needs. The most important difference is the season of flowering. Although most perennials flower in summer, there are a substantial amount of perennials that bloom in spring, followed by a lesser amount for fall and even a few to cheer your winter garden. Choose your perennials discriminately. Be mindful of the bloom time or you will have erratic flowering that conflicts with your garden design.

With perennials, designing a colorful tapestry for your garden has many possibilities. Colors and shapes blend to create the visual mood you desire. In composing your floral painting always consider the total plant. Only focusing on color will get you into heaps of trouble. The following elements all work in conjunction with color to give each plant its unique contribution to your garden.

- 1.) **SIZE:** Most of the taller plants should be to the back and the shorter ones to the front. The placement of a few tall plants among the shorter ones in the foreground will act as an accent to enliven a too flat foreground. Avoid over planting. Too many small plants can look fussy or blurred and too many large plants can appear crowded and overbearing.
- 2.) **TEXTURE:** Leaf size, leaf shape, and plant density all lend themselves to produce an overall visual texture. You can have a fine textured but dense perennial, such as Moonbeam Coreopsis, or a bold-textured plant such as the Southern Belle Hardy Hibiscus.
- 3.) **FORM:** Form means basic shape (spreading, vertical, rounded, vasetype, etc.). It is important to remember that many perennials change their form when flowering. It is also good to note the flower forms and the arrangement of flowers on the stem when considering overall composition.

Remember that perennials can be divided or moved. Although your garden design requires thoughtful consideration, it is something that often takes several years of experimentation and play to achieve the desired effect.

And if you ever need help designing, Juliet makes housecalls! ( for a nominal fee)

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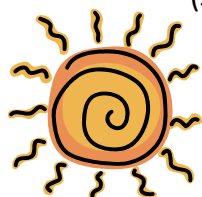
## Growing Those Frustrating Green Beans!

Every summer it seems we get customers in July and August asking why their green beans aren't producing. That got me thinking, I really didn't know why that was – mine weren't doing much either, and that had me stumped. A fresh bean is a ready-made garden snack, and one of the best moments of walking into your veggie garden: to perform this daily task and grab a bean on the way to munch while you work. When your beans won't produce a single decent pod all summer, well, you just feel cheated.

After some research I think I have enough info to address the issue. Beans don't like really high summer heat – they won't die, but they won't grow and will drop their flowers. They especially do this with hot nights, and if you exercise some patience and wait to pull them out they'll start producing as soon as it cools down a bit, like in September.

Our intense summer heat seems to affect pole beans a bit more dramatically than bush beans; frustrating again, because I like to go vertical to save space with some of my veggies. And, if you've ever successfully grown pole beans you'll know that they produce for a much longer season than bush beans. Here's the rub: beans like to germinate in warm soil, so getting that head start early in the spring frequently leads to failure with beans, so we usually recommend late May or early June to start them. It seems you really have to pay attention to temperatures with this vegetable, and perhaps use some tricks to start your plants: indoor pre-sprouting seeds

(soak them and then lay them between moist layers of paper towels until they sprout), row covers or cloches (individual plant covers) for the young plants to keep them toasty at night, and consider a late summer sowing. I started some in late August last year and was harvesting beans in October.



Cow peas -what a tempting name- are traditionally grown in the south (think Black-Eyed Peas), and I hear there are a lot of really good varieties to try for those seed searchers among us. They are a pole type of bean. The most available of those around here are Asparagus or Yard Long Beans, most frequently seen in Chinese cooking. I've grown these several times and can tell you:

- 1) they're quite easy to grow
- 2) they're quite tasty when cooked
- 3) they are pretty close to a traditional green bean when cooked (or even better), although they are about 18" long, but...

Some types of plants considered green beans (but really aren't) do better with the heat.

4)don't look to them for a quick garden snack, they taste better when cooked. Personally, I grow these every year.

Soybeans can be easier to grow, they grow like bush beans. Make sure to get the "edamame" type that are more tender and less oily than the livestock feed soybeans. Plant more than you think you need for a regular harvest of edamame. They will produce continuously for several weeks – pick them when the pods are about 2" long and plump up. Boil them for five to ten minutes for easy digestion, then freeze or eat them! Consider planting another late crop with this bean also.

All legume types truly will benefit from a legume inoculant at planting time, especially if you're growing the beans in a new location. The inoculant improves plant vigor, yield, and resistance to disease. As for pests, beans can get aphids, spider mites, and sometimes lace bugs. With any of these pests, getting them early is the key. Keep your eyes on the plants, and at the first sign of bugs spray them off with soapy water – if you keep after them for a few weeks they shouldn't be a big problem later. Also, the bug problems on my beans seem to come with that hot weather...so just stay vigilant and you should be rewarded. A freshly picked green bean is a joy, keep planting them!

