

# THE EL DORADO NURSERY AND GARDEN NEWSLETTER

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## Summer 2023



### GARDEN CALENDAR



#### What to do in June

- Rebuild watering basins around trees and shrubs for deep watering. –
- Protect ripening fruit with bird netting or scare tactics such as reflective tape, plastic owls, old CDs, plastic snakes, old neck ties, or wind chimes. Put up just as fruit ripens so the birds don't become too familiar with the devices.
- Remove spent flowers on annuals for re-bloom.
- Feed azaleas, camellias, gardenias, & rhododendrons with azalea food. Try out our G&B organic fertilizer.
- Feed lawns with Endure 16-16-16, or G&B organic lawn fertilizer. –
- Feed perennials and shrubs that have extensive bloom times with 16-16-16 or all purpose G&B. –
- Plant a batch of herbs near the kitchen door for easy access to instant flavor. –
- Prune spring blooming shrubs after flowering, like lilacs. –
- Annual checkup on mowers and trimmers. Dull or dirty blades spread disease and cause stress. –
- Trim hedges so that the base is wider than the top by pruning down the sides. The foliage will flush out over that woody base. –
- Use Tangle Foot or Terro Ant Traps on fruit trees to prevent crawling insects, like ants, from damaging fruit. –
- Plant summer vegetable seeds or starts. –
- Whitewash fruit tree trunks to prevent sunburn. Use a light colored interior latex paint mixed with 50% water or we sell Tree Trunk White. Paint up to 40" or the first set of branches.

#### What to do in July

- July 4th (Tues) - Happy Independence Day! We're closed in honor of the holiday. –
- Harvest vegetables regularly. Old fruit left on the plant will inhibit production. –
- Water early in the day to prevent disease. Mulch to maintain moisture. Keep mulch 6" from the trunks. –
- Renew flowering ground covers & perennials; shear and fertilize with an all purpose or Rose and Flower food. -Spray caterpillars with Take Down, BT, or Monterey Spinosad, all available at the Nursery. –
- Feed lawns. If water is limited, skip feeding.
- Check sprinkler and irrigation systems for problems.

#### What to do in August

- Herbs should be harvested in the morning for the freshest flavor. –
- Plan your fall garden. Start fall vegetables indoors (broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, etc). –
- Plant second wave of beets, carrots, radishes, etc. -Set melons and pumpkins on a board to prevent rot. –
- Clean up around fruit trees. Old fruit may harbor disease. –
- Plant perennials and feed extensive blooming plants with 16-16-16, or all purpose G&B Organic. –
- Set out bait for slugs. Keep away from children and pets. Try Sluggo or Sluggo Plus, which are safe around pets and available at the Nursery. –
- Deep-water trees and large shrubs.

- Give houseplants a bath outside. Keep them in the shade.

## What to do in September

- Prune old berry vines to the ground when they finish fruiting. Train up new canes.
- Visit the Nursery for spring blooming bulbs. Dig up and divide overgrown clumps of spring flowering bulbs.
- Amend the soil (with compost), add bulb food, & replant.
- Plant snapdragons, pansies, peas, lettuce, cole crops, and root crops.
- Divide and plant perennials. Add bone meal or starter fertilizer and compost to the soil before replanting.
- Fertilize fruit trees with 16-16-16, or G&B Organic Fruit
- Tree fertilizer before leaf drop (early fall growth will have time to harden off before it gets cold). See our website for a [fertilizer calender](#).
- Give annuals and roses a last shot of fertilizer. G&B Rose & Flower Food is great.
- Now is the time to control your Poa Annua (Annual Bluegrass) and other weeds. Apply a pre-emergent.

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

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### Around the Nursery:



# Mosquito Prevention

If you were plagued by mosquitoes this spring (and still are), here are a few facts to help you learn more about these pesky bloodsuckers.

## Mosquito Facts

- Only female mosquitoes bite. They require a “blood meal” in order to develop eggs. Most females lay their eggs on standing water (even a few tablespoons of water in a flower pot will work).
- After the eggs hatch, they become swimming larvae, and then mature into adults. Mosquito larvae are an important source of food for some fish, birds, and bats.
- Twenty-four hours after hatching, the females fly off in search of a meal. They are attracted to body warmth, odor, moisture, and the carbon dioxide we exhale.
- When the female bites, she injects a bit of saliva that slows coagulation so blood flows freely. Your body’s allergic reaction cause the itchy bite later on.

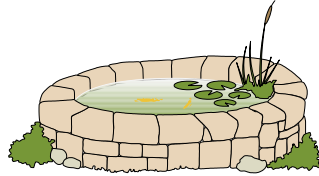


## Plants that attract or deter mosquitos

- Mosquitos can also feed on nectar, hence will be **attracted to floral smells**. Plants such as Jasmine may attract the little buggers.
- **Plants that may repel them –**
- **Basil**– If you’re a whiz in the kitchen, you’ll love having fresh basil around. This is the perfect mosquito repellent for pesto lovers! There are a lot of different kinds of basil, but we recommend using lemon basil and cinnamon basil because they have the strongest fragrances.
- **Lavender**– Humans find it calming, but mosquitoes can’t stand it. These purple plants make a great addition to a flower bed or garden and can even be grown inside to help your home smell nice and keep mosquitoes out.
- **Rosemary**– If you cook lamb, steak, or fish, then you’re familiar with this plant. It’s incredibly easy to grow as it doesn’t require a lot of water. The woody scent that some of us love is what keeps mosquitoes at bay. As an added bonus, rosemary plants are easily pruned and make great borders for gardens, flower beds, or the edge of your landscape.
- **Lemon Balm**– You can chuck that citronella candle – the leaves of this plant, also known as Horsemint, contain citronella compounds in large amounts. Lemon balm is best grown in a planter, as it’s fast-growing, drought-resistant, and reseeds itself quickly.
- **Marigold**– This might be the most effective plant to repel mosquitoes, and it’s certainly the loveliest. You can put potted marigolds near doors and windows so mosquitoes don’t come inside, or plant them outdoors in a flower bed to add to your landscape’s beauty. Marigolds work so well to repel mosquitoes because they contain Pyrethrum, an ingredient found in most bug repellents.
- **Catnip**– Attract the neighborhood cats and get rid of pesky mosquitoes all at once. Catnip has been proven to be more effective in repelling mosquitoes than DEET, the product found in many bug repellents.
- **Ageratums**– Another name for ageratums is floss flowers. Ageratums have coumarin, which is an ingredient in many commercial mosquito repellents. Most ageratums flowers are blue, but they can also be found in violet, pink, and white blooms. Ageratums don’t need a lot of sunlight or rich soil and are usually found in rock gardens to add color.

### What you can do

- Look for places where rainwater collects and stands. Fill all holes and depressions. Drain flower pots, children's pools and toys. Flush birdbaths weekly. Clean gutters and drains, and cover cesspools. Remove debris like cans, bottles, and old car tires.
- When you can't flush or drain stagnant areas, use a Bt product like Mosquito Dunks. Bt is a live bacteria that is deadly to mosquito larvae but harmless to other living things
- Stock ponds with fish. Goldfish and freshwater minnows will eat mosquito larvae.
- Mosquitoes can carry canine heartworm so make sure your dogs get a heartworm pill once a month.



## Plant Signs & Signals

Sorry, this isn't an article about how to communicate with plants using sign language, but it is about how to read plants before they become another casualty in your garden cemetery (don't worry, we all have them). Plants don't typically just die overnight, they usually send out signals or signs first. Here are some clues to look for:

**Change in leaf color.** A change from a normal green to a pale green or yellow often indicates a deficiency of nutrients or minerals. This can happen from a lack of nutrients in the soil or from over watering. Too much water in certain plants can kill the feeder roots and the plant cannot absorb the necessary nutrients. Adding compost on a regular basis, fertilizing, and watering deeply but infrequently are good practices. Daily watering often kills more plants than insects and diseases do.

**Change in shape of foliage.** Leaves that curl in from the edges indicate stress. The plant is trying to fold up its leaves to cut back on water loss. You may be going too long between watering or not applying enough water to completely soak the root area. Curled leaves also can indicate aphids or a fungus such as Peach Leaf Curl.

**Lack of significant growth in a season.** This is usually caused by insufficient fertilizer or by planting into heavy clay soil without amending it first. Be sure to fertilize your plants regularly, and check to see if they might need a special type of fertilizer, such as an acidic one for rhododendrons. If you know you have clay soil (which most of us do in El Dorado County), amend it with products like Soil Building Compost (SBC) or rice hulls. Do a soil test to see the pH levels and what minerals or nutrients your soil might be lacking.

Sometimes there may be more than one problem occurring when a plant is dying. The key is recognizing a stressed plant before it is completely dead or beyond help. If you need help identifying a problem, bring a sample of your plant into the Nursery. Take note of when you first noticed the problem, how the plant has been treated recently (fertilized, etc), and how much water it receives. If the person working can't identify the problem, we keep it and call you back with possible answers and solutions.

And remember, the best fertilizer for the garden is the Gardener's Shadow!

