

Garden Calendar

January

- 1.1 If it snows appreciably, you can tie the limbs of your columnar evergreens to prevent breakage from ice or snow, or wrap with frost cloth.
- 1.2 If there hasn't been much rain or snow, check to see if you need to water shrubs and trees to avoid desiccation.
- 1.3 Avoid walking on the lawn if it's frozen to avoid damaging the turf.
- 1.4 Design your vegetable garden with consideration of mature plant sizes.
- 1.5 Begin planning for your garden and prepare seed planting calendar.
- 1.6 Spray orchard trees and bushes with dormant oil spray, weather permitting
- 1.7 Clean house plant leaves using a damp sponge or cloth.

February

- 2.1 Repair winter damage to trees and shrubs.
- 2.2 Inspect and prune fruit trees of cankered, or overhanging limbs.
- 2.3 Prune and train raspberries.
- 2.4 Prune mature Russian Sage while dormant to within 18 inches of the ground or back to old wood. Prune before new growth starts to pop out.
- 2.5 Make a cold frame for starting early plants.
- 2.6 Apply dormant oil spray first or second application to fruit trees or deciduous trees and shrubs
- 2.7 Order perennial seed packages and review for seed starting dates.
- 2.8 Start seeds indoors depending on germination dates and set out dates. Use a seed starting mix because regular potting soil may be too heavy for some seeds.
- 2.9 Prune seed stems of ornamental grasses before new growth pushes out.

March

- 3.1 If you are seeing snow mold in the lawn, gently rake it off, and lift up the matted grass. Reseed next month if needed.
- 3.2 Research and reserve fruit trees. Apples, Asian pears and plums are successful here. Bare root trees are a bargain, but be sure to pot them up or get them in the ground while they are dormant for best results.
- 3.3 Purchase annual and vegetable seeds with maturity dates of 65 – 80 days, allowing extra consideration for the germination days.
- 3.4 Plant seed flats for cold crops including broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and brussel sprouts in a greenhouse or under protection.
- 3.5 Stock up on season extenders such as row covers, and walls of water.
- 3.6 Use a soil thermometer to begin monitoring for consistent 40 degree soil temperatures to plant out the cool season vegetables. Some varieties include beets, carrots, lettuce, peas, radishes and spinach.

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- 3.7 Early spring, before blooms begin to form is a good time to take lavender cuttings for propagations. Start them in a moistened medium.
- 3.8 Repair, clean, sharpen, sanitize and maintain your gardening tools. Don't forget the lawnmower blades.
- 3.9 Rake or blow fallen leaves and needles from your trees, shrubs and perennials. Leaves do not decompose quickly enough and can smother the plants if left on.
- 3.10 Prune summer flowering shrubs and vines, such as Butterfly bush, Spireas, Red Twig dogwood, Hibiscus and Rose of Sharon, Wisteria, Clematis, Virginia Creeper, Trumpet vine and Silver Lace vine.

April

- 4.1 Fertilize your bulbs if you haven't already. Use a number that is high in phosphorous. (The second number on the bag, e.g. 10-46-10.
- 4.2 Prepare garden soil for planting by adding organic matter. (Compost and rotting manures,) If using horse or cow manure, be sure it is herbicide residue free and aged so it does not burn the crop.
- 4.3 Direct seed cold hardy vegetables, such as broccoli, chard, kale, beets, lettuce, peas, radishes, oregano, chives and thyme.
- 4.4 Transplant your seedlings of broccoli, cabbage and onions, using frost protection such as a row cover.
- 4.5 Continue to prune your deciduous trees and shrubs. Do **not** prune lilacs, blueberries and other plants that bloom on last year's growth. Okay to prune lilacs after bloom.
- 4.6 If you wish to take cuttings of lilacs for propagation, during the bloom is the best time to start them. Remove the flower and start in a moist soil mix.
- 4.7 April to May is a good time to give your trees, shrubs and perennials a good dose of organic fertilizer. 10-6-4 or 20-10-5 on standard fertilizer packages works well. A slow release fertilizer works well for these.
- 4.8 This is a good time to plant or transplant evergreens in the landscape. It's important to do it while the plant is still dormant, enhancing root development.
- 4.9 If the weather is mild, check your lawn to see if it needs a good mowing, using a high setting on the mower to give longer blades than later in the summer.
- 4.10 April/May is a good time to aerate and dethatch your lawn. You can rent the equipment from a local rental shop. Once you have pulled up and removed the thatch, it's a good time to fertilize to stimulate rapid recovery.
- 4.11 You can fertilize the lawn later in May or early June, providing it hasn't heated up too much. Fertilize using 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet using soluble or mixed soluble - slow release nitrogen fertilizers with ratios for N-P-K ratings ranging from 3-1-2 to 6-1-4. You can also use complete fertilizers.

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- 4.12 If you have a greenhouse, start your annual ornamental baskets. Some nurseries sell plugs and starts. If you get them in now, you can begin fertilizing for rapid growth and put them out when the weather allows. For best results, use clean potting soil.
- 4.13 Plant tender summer flowering bulbs and tubers. Even dahlias, glads and cannas.
- 4.14 If you have a pond with fish, remember the fish cannot digest most fish food until the water temperature rises considerably.
- 4.15 Check for early weeds and cheat grass. If you use a pre-emergent weed preventer, apply now and again in 6 months depending on the package directions.

May

- 5.1 Start tender vegetable seeds inside to be ready to plant outside in June.
- 5.2 Cut back any perennials that were left over the winter now, removing all dead foliage to make way for new growth.
- 5.3 Check your sprinkler system to make sure all the heads are working property, make repairs as necessary.
- 5.4 Direct seed your carrots, chard, kohlrabi and potatoes.
- 5.5 Plant asparagus crowns or transplants in mid to late May.
- 5.6 Transplant Brussel sprouts, cauliflower, leeks and peppers.
- 5.7 Fertilize your ornamentals if you have not already.
- 5.8 Monitor forecast nightly temperatures and apply row cover as needed until the average daily temperatures are above 38 degrees.
- 5.9 Manage weeds while they are young and before they go to seed. Once the plant has gone to bud, herbicides are less effective.
- 5.10 Prune lilacs and forsythia after the flowers fade. If new growth has started, do not prune and wait until after bloom is done next year. These shrubs produce blooms only on old wood.

June

- 6.1 Water flower gardens and vegetable gardens early in the mornings. With warmer weather, this will become a part of the daily routine.
- 6.2 In the vegetable garden, you can begin planting the short-season crops such as melons, tomatoes and cucumbers. Keep frost protection handy!
- 6.3 Plant flowers to attract pollinators to your garden, e.g. native plants that have blue, yellow, red or violet flowers).
- 6.4 Water your lawn 4 - 6 inches per month, approx. 1.5 inches per week. Water deeply every other day to encourage a healthier root system. If it doesn't spring back after you step on it, it needs a good drink.

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- 6.5 Turf maintenance for June and July follows. Most turf grasses in central Oregon are a mixture of Kentucky bluegrass, perennial rye grass and fine fescues, and prefer a mowing height of 1.5 to 2.5 inches for optimal health. You should plan on mowing 4 - 6 times per month at this time.
- 6.6 If you haven't already, fertilize your lawn. See 4.10 above.
- 6.7 If you have trees in or near the lawn, which rely solely upon the sprinklers for the turf, you need to water them longer and deeper on a regular basis. Test the soil about 6 inches deep. Turf watering is not sufficient for trees.
- 6.8 Prune rhododendrons and azaleas after blooms fade. You can pinch them off with your thumb.
- 6.9 As the long, hot days of summer are upon us, consider the use of mulches around your landscape plants to conserve water. Don't pile them up around the trunk. Give it some air.
- 6.10 Plant trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals anytime during the growing season. Be sure to water them well at planting and regularly throughout the first year to get good root establishment. Even drought-tolerant plants need watering to get established.
- 6.11 Harvest strawberries and cane berries.

July

- 7.1 Pinch back annuals and deadhead perennials to promote more blooms
- 7.2 Deep water trees, shrubs and perennials every 5 - 7 days.
- 7.3 Protect your berry crops with bird netting.
- 7.4 Stake your tall plants; delphiniums, hollyhocks, fox gloves, etc.
- 7.5 Protect your vegetable garden from flying insects using row covers and tunnels.
- 7.6 Plant seed beans.
- 7.7 Keep your potatoes and tomatoes consistently moist by watering thoroughly.
- 7.8 Time to harvest broccoli, peas, lettuce, radishes, beets, carrots, leeks and kohlrabi.
- 7.9 Time to fertilize warm season grasses such as: Blue grama, switchgrass, miscanthus, and fountain grass. Water the fertilizer in thoroughly.

August

- 8.1 Water is critical in these hot months. Monitor your plants carefully and give them additional water if needed.
- 8.2 Harvest potatoes when the tops die down. Store in a cool, dark location until use.
- 8.3 Clean up leaves and fertilize strawberry fields.
- 8.4 Prune away excessive vegetation, and selectively remove new blossoms on tomatoes to promote quality, flavor and size of the existing fruit.
- 8.5 Fertilize cucumbers, summer squash and broccoli while harvesting to maintain production.

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- 8.6 Check leafy vegetables for caterpillars. Control manually or use *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt).
- 8.7 Spider mites love a hot dry environment and August promotes their spread. They target ornamental shrubs such as arborvitae and holly hocks. You can jet spray them with water on hardy plants to knock them off or control with a miticide.
- 8.8 End of August to September is the time to fertilize your fruit trees again.
- 8.9 Late summer is a good time to divide bearded iris.
- 8.10 Check raspberry and other cane plants for holes made by crown borers near the soil line and remove infested canes. Do not put them on the compost pile! Adults emerge in mid-August.
- 8.11 Continue deadheading annuals and perennials. Watch out for hollyhock weevils. They come out at night. If you have an infestation, remove the spent blooms because the weevils pupate in the spent seeds. Throw the spent seed heads in the trash or burn them rapidly. To remove weevils from the plant, hand pick them at night or place a cloth under the plant and shake it. Drop any live weevils into soapy water to drown.
- 8.12 Start cold weather crops from seed such as lettuce, beets, carrots, broccoli, kale, radish, spinach, bok choy. They require warmth to germinate, but cooler temperatures to mature without bolting.
- 8.13 After harvest, consider planting a cover crop to build soil for next year.

September

- 9.1 Wait until mid-September to fertilize cold season ornamental grasses such as feather reed grass, blue oat grass and fescue.
- 9.2 Harvest plums, pears, Asian pears and apples when ready. To test pears, press thumb into the flesh near the stem. The fruit should be firm but the top will be softer. Pick them and place them in the refrigerator for a few days before eating. Without refrigeration, the pears ripen too soon.
- 9.3 Harvest and store apples at about 40 degrees.
If you missed the spring aerating and dethatching, you can do it in September. It is best to do both processes every other year in spring or fall.
- 9.4 September is a good month to plant spring flowering bulbs. Work phosphorus into the soil below the bulbs.

October

- 10.1 Pick tomatoes before a heavy frost gets them. You can ripen mature tomatoes off the vine. Mature tomatoes are light green with a reddish tinge on the blossom end. Do not let them touch while ripening.

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- 10.2 If you see webbing in your trees or shrubs in fall, it could be fall webworm. For small infestations, you can prune out the nest of larvae and webbing. For larger populations, you can use Bt.
- 10.3 Continue to water and mow the lawn. Need for mowing should be reducing.
- 10.4 In late October or November, blow out your automatic sprinkler systems for winterization.
- 10.5 At the end of the month, put down a winterizer fertilizer on your lawn at a rate of 2 lbs. of nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. using a soluble or mixed-soluble slow release nitrogen fertilizer. A common winter fertilizer has an N-P-K of 10 - 5 - 14. With this ratio, you will need 10 lbs. of product per 1,000 sq. ft.
- 10.6 Save seeds from the flower garden, dry and store.
- 10.7 Save seeds from heritage vegetables, dry and store.
- 10.8 Cut back perennials spent flower stems and dry leaves to 2 inches above ground. Mulch the roots on tender perennials such as veronica, scabiosa, (pincushion flower) and lavender.

November

- 11.1 Take down hanging baskets, removing frosted annuals.
- 11.2 Zonal geraniums can be overwintered inside a garage or cooler room with a window, by cutting them back by two thirds. Water minimally throughout the winter months to keep the roots from drying out. In February or March, increase watering and add fertilizer to stimulate new growth. Bring it outside to the greenhouse or protected area as it warms, and outside as temperatures permit. Sweet potato vine tubers can be dug and brought indoors to grow on for the next season.
- 11.3 Rake leaves and needles, saving for a compost pile or disposing. Some can be left as mulch on tree and shrubs, but should not bury small groundcovers.
- 11.4 Save a pile of twigs, needles and leaves in a remote location of your yard to provide shelter for native bees and insects year round.
- 11.5 Place mulch around berries for winter protection.
- 11.6 Store fertilizers in a safe, dry place, out of reach of children.
- 11.7 Wrap the trunks of young, thick barked trees with paper tree wrap to prevent sunscald. (Aspen, Maple, Ash). Remove the wrap in spring, by April.
- 11.8 November is a good time to remove and dispose of paper wasp nests from your eaves. The wasps have likely abandoned them by now. Remove them at dusk when activity is at a minimum.

December

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- 12.1 Winter months (November through February) are the best times to prune pine trees to prevent damage from the Sequoia Pitch Moth. They are attracted to pitch, and lay eggs in open pruning cuts, causing damage to the trees. Damage causes large pitch masses on the trunk and branches. The moths are not active in winter.
- 12.2 Make sure your landscape plants, especially new ones do not dry out or desiccate this winter. If we have plenty of rain or snow, you can enjoy the view from inside. If we have a 3 - 6 week dry spell, especially with hard winds or sunshine, and the ground has warmed up, you should drag out the hose and give your plants a good soaking. If dry conditions persist, water every 6 - 8 weeks.
- 12.3 Make holiday decorations from conifer trees, shrubs, and ornamental berries from the landscape. If you don't have enough plant material, you can obtain a free permit to gather reasonable quantities from the National Park Service offices.
- 12.4 If you wish to use a live Christmas tree, here are some tips:
 - a They can remain indoors for 3 - 5 days without breaking dormancy.
 - b Trees go dormant once per year, if dormancy is broken, the tree will likely not survive the freezing temperatures of winter once it is returned outside.
 - c It is best to plant the live tree as soon as possible after the holiday as possible. You can pre-dig a hole in the fall if you plan ahead. Or dig a hole and place the tree, pot and all into the hole and temporarily place soil around it to protect it during the winter. Come back in spring, remove the tree and container, and plant the tree permanently.