

Gardening Tips

March 2011

Now is the time to make your front yard the envy of the neighborhood. First impressions count! That's why it's a good idea to give your front landscape some extra attention this spring. Plus, a pretty well designed entry garden will always add value and beauty to your home. I've noticed many of you are out working on yours. Proud of you! For the rest, the weather is beautiful these days so lets get started.

Time to fertilize pansies since the soil is warming, use any water soluble houseplant fertilizer at least one half pint of the solution per plant.

Trim back the green foliage off liriopse with clippers or the lawn mower at the highest setting. It's time to spread lime on the lawn using 40 pounds per 1000 square feet if it's been a while. Start seed of tomatoes and annual flowers indoors for strong transplants in six weeks.

Next, you can prune your boxwood with a hand pruner making foliage "holes" in the greenery to allow light to get to the trunk of the plant. Now is the time to prune holly bushes back to a manageable size and it's ok to cut them back to eighteen inches. Don't fret, they will come back. Plant bare root roses in soil that has been thoroughly tilled and contains lots of organic matter.

For you vegetable lovers plant beets, cauliflower, mustard, radish and turnips now in your garden.

If you are planting fescue now you can't use a pre-emergent weed preventer for six weeks. You will need to divide overgrown clumps of hosta now that the leaves are appearing above ground.

Look at the back sides of euonymus and camellia leaves for scale insects and if any are there thoroughly spray with horticultural oil. Remove old camellia blooms from the bush and from the ground. By doing this, you'll prevent camellia petal blight. Last chance to prune rose bushes to about one half their size. It was a beautiful day last Sunday so I took advantage and did mine! You will need to repot houseplants before moving them outside because their roots will need more room as they grow rapidly in the sun.

I would wait to plant gladiolus, canna and caladium bulbs until about mid-April because they need warmer soil to grow.

At the end of the month the forsythia, quince and winter honeysuckle can be pruned to a smaller size after they have bloomed. It's time to fertilize your scrubs with 1 tablespoon of 10-10-10 per foot of height. Get ready for your growing lawn by sharpening your mower blade or replacing it with a new one.

Whether we're beginners or experts, we've all made mistakes in the garden. Sometimes it's a

matter of overwatering or underwatering. Sometimes we put a plant in the wrong place. Or maybe we don't amend the soil properly. Making mistakes is part of the process--it's nice to avoid them altogether. Remember we're not alone!

Happy gardening and playing in the dirt,
Ann