

THINGS TO DO – SEPTEMBER 2017

PRUNING – Cut back poinsettias to increase new bracts. Stop pruning them by Sept 15th for Christmas color. Roses and bougainvilleas can be shaped up now. Pinch back coleuses to help them remain bushy.

PROPAGATION – Root coleus cuttings in water on the window sill. Repot plants that have outgrown their pots. Use pots that are one to two inches larger. Divide and replant perennials and bulbs that need it.

INSECTS – Watch for beetles eating the lychee and canistel trees. Heavy rains bring insects inside the house. A chemical barrier around the foundation and inside will discourage them.

WATERING – Water only when you see plants that are wilted in the morning. Check your sprinkler system to see if it needs adjusting to morning hours only. Plants take up water when the sun is out. Watch for brown patches in your lawn from fungus. Chinch bugs eat the roots of the grass. Then the weeds take over.

FEEDING – Use low-nitrogen fertilizer on bougainvilleas and poinsettias. Fertilize citrus now or in October. I use cow manure around my fruit trees to give them a little boost after all this rain. Add organic matter and soil to new planting areas; don't forget your kitchen scraps and coffee grounds. Prepare your pots for your fall vegetables. Place weed block under the pots so the bugs can't get up in them. Palms need Lesco Palm Food. More palms die from nutritional deficiencies than ever die from diseases. Read the directions on the bag. Caladium bulbs can be fed ½ strength liquid fertilizers now.

PLANTING

BULBS – Amaryllis, rain, calla, and Easter lily, alocasia, and grosiosa can be planted now.

ANNUALS – Plant pollen and nectar plants for butterflies and bees, such as wax begonia, calendula, snap dragon, tithonia, marigold, torenia, gaillardia, verbena and penta.

HERBS – Plant herbs that tolerate warm temperatures. Keep parsley, mints, rosemary and basil in semi-shade for now.

END OF THE MONTH – Plant broccoli, cabbage, collards, eggplant, endive, lettuce, lima, pole and bush beans, okra, onions, peppers, squash and tomatoes. Put black plastic over your ground and pots to stop the weeds from growing. If you are planting in pots, use the 15 gallon size and place them in 6 hours of sun a day. Planting by seed lets you plant more varieties, but using transplants from the Garden Centers gets you off to a good, healthy start. For seeds, use Pro Mix, 3B Mix or Micro Start 323. For starter plants, use organic soil or Miracle Gro potting soil in your pots with a little perlite for better drainage. To amend an area, mix Miracle Gro garden soil and Black Kow manure.

FRUIT RIPENING – Harvest banana, Barbados cherry, carambola, egg fruit, fig, guava, jaboticaba, jack fruit, karanda, Key lime, lemon, mamey, sapote, mango, miracle fruit, muntingia, natal plum, papaya, passion fruit, pineapple, rose apple, sapodilla, seagrape and sugar apple.

BLOOMING – Enjoy the flowers of allamanda, bougainvillea, bridal bouquet, geiger tree, mussaenda, ixora, orchids, shrimp plant, penta, periwinkle, marigold, begonia, Mexican bluebell, buttercup, crossandra, crown-of-thorns, firespike, frangipani, passion vine, Tahitian gardenia, portulaca, ginger, salvia, thryallis, desert rose, cassia, zinnia, silk floss, lance pod, golden rain, yellow elder, and queen crape myrtle.

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