

THINGS TO DO LIST FOR SEPTEMBER, 2018

PRUNING – We are in the height of hurricane season. Prune all trees that are close to your house. Stop pruning poinsettias by Sept 15th for Christmas color. Coleus, roses and bougainvilleas can be shaped up now.

PROPAGATION – Root cuttings in water on the window sill. Repot plants that have outgrown their pots with containers that are one to two inches larger. Divide and replant perennials and bulbs that need it. Consider starting annuals and vegetables from seed. But it's better to buy the plants. You still can air-layer plants now.

INSECTS – Watch for beetles eating the lychee and canistel trees. Heavy rains are bringing insects inside the house. A chemical barrier around the foundation and ant bait trays inside will discourage them for now. The Tiki hut caterpillar, (*Simplicia cornicalis*), is feeding on thatched palm leaves. Spray at dusk with BT.

WATERING – Turn off sprinkler timers and water only when you see plants are wilted in the morning. Use a rain gauge or vegetable can to measure 1 inch of rain a week. 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 – Manures, peat and humus should be spread in planting areas. Use low-nitrogen fertilizer on bougainvilleas and poinsettias. Fertilize citrus now or in October. Palms need Lesco palm fertilizer. More palms die from nutritional deficiencies than from diseases. Put your kitchen scraps and coffee grounds around plants. Prepare your pots for fall vegetables. Place weed block under the pots so the bugs can't get in them. Feed Caladium bulbs ½ strength liquid fertilizer. Fertilize tomato plants after fruit set or you will have lush leaves only, and keep water off the leaves. Spread Miracle-Gro garden soil in planters.

PLANTING

Plant pollen and nectar plants for the butterflies and bees. It will increase your vegetable and fruit yields.

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

ANNUALS – Coleus, crossandra, gaillardia, kalanchoe, pentas, periwinkle, tropical milkweed and sage

HERBS – Keep parsley, mints, rosemary and basil in semi-shade for now.

END OF THE MONTH – Plant broccoli, cabbage, collards, eggplant, endive, lettuce, lima, snap, pole and bush beans, okra, onions, peppers, squash and tomatoes. If you are planting in pots, use the 15 gallon size and place them in at least 6 hours of sun per 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 mix in your pots with a little perlite for better drainage.

FRUIT RIPENING – Harvest banana, avocado, Barbados cherry, carambola, egg fruit, fig, guava, jaboticaba, jack fruit, 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, bromeliads, geiger tree, heliconia, mussaenda, ixora, orchids, shrimp plant, pentas, periwinkle, marigold, begonias, 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. Visit your local nurseries every month for a blooming garden year-round.

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