



Riverview Garden Club Helpful Hints



April 2019

Remember April showers bring May flowers, so when it rains it is doing your garden good. Enjoy your early visits outside in your gardens.

FLOWER BEDS: Rake or remove all old mulches from your flower beds and recycle in your mulch pile. Broadcast lime or wood ashes over alkaline-loving perennials such as delphiniums and dianthus.

ROSES: Plant rosebushes before growth starts and buds swell. If you want to increase their fragrance, surround them with parsley.

FLOWERS: Plant pansies which don't mind cold nights. Routinely remove spent blossoms and keep them from getting dry to encourage constant flowering. Plant lilies of the valley, violets, and garden lillies. Divide summer and fall blooming perennials, including delphiniums, irises, chrysanthemums, daisies, and phlox. Cut back overwintered geraniums to 4-6 inches and remove the bottom leaves before planting outside or in pots.

FRUITS: When danger of frost has passed, uncover strawberry beds and keep well watered. Don't fertilize strawberries in the spring. Leaves are developing and you'll get lush growth and meager soft berries. Wait until blossoms appear and use a light hand. Plant blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, and fruit trees. If new shoots on apple trees seem blacken, you may have blight disease. Prune infected areas several inches below the damage. Dip your pruners in a weak bleach solution between pruning cuts to avoid spreading the disease to other trees. Provide adequate soil moisture to your fruit trees during April and May for good fruit size.

SEEDS: Start seeds indoors for heat loving crops such as eggplant, squash, and tomatoes. It is important to harden off transplanted seedlings by watering the seedlings less for a week prior to planting. Set the seedlings out in a wind protected place when temperatures are above 50 degrees. Avoid planting seedlings until after the last frost date.

VEGETABLES: If you planted peas last month, give them a fence for support made of chicken wire, twine or stubby branches that are at least 3 feet tall. If not planted, plant your peas as soon as you can. Don't set tomato plants

out in the garden too soon. They hate cold soil and cold nights (under 55 degrees F). Once the garden soil is workable, give it a good stirring and let it sit for several days. Then topdress with compost or well rotted manure. Plant cool season vegetables such as beets, lettuce, collards, turnips, carrots, transplanted broccoli, brussels sprouts, Swiss chard, kale, onions, parsley, parsnips, radishes and spinach.

TREES: Feed your trees as soon as the ground has thawed with a well balanced slow release fertilizer. Scatter about 6 handfuls per 10x10 foot area. If scale or aphids have become a problem, spray the branches with dormant oil when temperatures are above 40 degrees. Same with shrubs.

LAWN: Rake your lawn to remove all leaves, dead grass, and small twigs. Sow seed for a new lawn or fill in bare patches by first covering the area with compost or organic matter. Water as needed to keep the soil evenly moist until the grass seeds sprout.

PERENNIALS AND SHRUBS: Plant perennials and shrubs early in the season to make sure they are established by summer and the heat. Divide perennials that are overcrowded.

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES: Prune grasses back to a height of 6-12 inches, and higher for larger clumps. Add to your mulch pile.



Enjoy Spring. It only comes but once a year!

--Sandy