



# Riverview Garden Club Helpful Hints



May 2019

My temporary greenhouse is up and holding planted cuttings of coleus and plectranthus which will go into my planters. I also have seedlings of zinnia and marigolds for my front yard and around my vegetable garden to deter the deer. Lastly is *Nadina*, heavenly bamboo, that I took as seedlings from my daughter last fall as an experiment to see if I could get them to grow to adulthood—well, maybe another 2-3 years. Anyway, now is the time to get outside, see what you want to change, divide some perennials, and plant new shrubs and trees. Enjoy!

**ORNAMENTALS:** Pinch rhododendron and azaleas blossoms as they fade. Double flowered azaleas need no pinching. Fertilize azaleas after bloom using a formulation for acid loving plants. Spread a little lime or wood ashes around delphiniums and peonies.

**BULBS:** Don't remove spring bulb foliage prematurely or next year's flower production will decline. Begin planting gladiolus bulbs as the ground warms continuing at 2 week intervals. You can plant summer bulbs such as caladiums, dahlias, cannas, and elephant ears now. Bulbs can be moved or divided as the foliage dies.

**ANNUALS:** Begin planting warm season annuals. Fertilize annuals and continue at regular intervals. Pinch back growth of new annuals to help the plants develop more flowers. Watch young transplants carefully. Water them shallowly but often and close to the stem so that the water will reach roots.

**LAWNS:** Keep bluegrass cut at 1.5-2.5 inches in height, tall fescue at 2-3.5 inches, and zoysia lawns at 1.5 inches in height. Thatch zoysia lawns as new growth begins to keep the lawn vigorous and reduce disease problems. Apply post emergence broadleaf weed controls now if needed while they are still actively growing. Mow your lawn when the grass is dry. To keep a healthy lawn, never cut more than one third off the total grass height.

**VEGETABLES:** Place cutworm collars made from cardboard strips around young transplants. You should thin plantings of carrots and beets to avoid overcrowding. Control caterpillars on broccoli and cabbage plants by handpicking or use biological sprays such as B.t. Set out tomato plants as

soils warm in mid to late May and place support stakes alongside at planting time. Place a stake by seeds of squash and cucumbers when planting in hills to locate the root zone watering site after the vines have run. Watch for striped and spotted cucumber beetles as both may spread wilt and mosaic diseases to squash and cucumber plants. Sow a second crop of beets, carrots, radishes, leaf lettuce, and Swiss chard for continued harvest.

Birds eat many insect pests. Attract them to your garden by providing good nesting habitats. Take houseplants outdoors when nights remain above 50 degrees. Most prefer only direct morning sun. Indoor plants moved outside for the summer are very susceptible to sunburn and wind whipping. Acclimate plants gradually to outdoor conditions to avoid setting them back or damaging tender new growth. Scatter crushed eggshells in a thick ring around roses to deter slugs.

Get the herb garden started by putting in plants. If you include mint, plant in a large plastic tub with its bottom removed. This will help keep it from invading the rest of the garden. You can plant dill now for making pickles. Herbs planted in average soils need no extra fertilizer. Too much may reduce flavor and pungency at harvest.

If you're growing plants outdoors in containers, don't use a soilless potting mix. Be sure it contains at least half soil or make your own blend by mixing one part compost, one part garden soil, and one part builder's sand.

Have fun gardening!



--Sandy