



Riverview Garden Club Helpful Hints



May 2020

The sun is shining and many of our flowers are up and blooming. Take the time to sit and watch nature—the birds, small critters, and flowers!

PERENNIALS- Divide late summer or autumn flowering perennials that are overcrowding areas in your garden. Move to another area or give away to a friend. If delphiniums need to be divided, remove and replant the new little plants growing around the outside of the clump. Discard the hard, old heart. Pinch back growth of newly planted perennials as this will help the plants develop more flowers. Divide hostas as they come into growth. Trim lavender plants, cutting off old flower heads and about one inch of the current year's growth.

PESTS- Moles are searching for mates and also grub in your lawn. To get rid of the grubs, apply milky spore disease, a dust you can buy at your local garden center (*Bacillus popilliarum* or *Bacillus lentimorbus*). A new product called Mole-Med has castor oil as its active ingredient. Look for tent caterpillar nests in fruit trees and remove by spraying water or B.T. Be aware of insects as many bugs appear in May, including lace bugs, aphids, and bagworms. Monitor for aphids on lush new spring growth on a variety of plants. Treat aphids by spraying them with a hard stream of water or by using an insecticidal soap. Monitor newly planted vegetables for cutworm and flea beetle damage. Monitor for slugs and snails. These pests thrive in moist, cool areas of the garden and landscape, feeding on a variety of plant hosts. Now is the time to scatter those crushed eggshells that you have been saving all winter to deter slugs.

TRANSPLANTS- Watch for signs of drought in plants transplanted from containers. Apply a little water often close to each plant's stem where it will percolate down to the root ball. The larger the plant, the longer the recovery period and the more diligently you need to water. Before transplanting indoor plants, harden them off. Put in a sheltered spot during the day and bring them in at night. Then gradually increase their exposure to sun, wind, and cool temperatures. Divide warm season ornamental grasses when new growth begins to emerge.

HOUSEPLANTS- You may place houseplants outside once the nights remain above 50 degrees.

VEGETABLE GARDEN-By planting tomatoes deeper, they are able to form more roots along the stem creating a more vigorous plant. Consider planting sweet corn in the garden every other week (until early July) to extend the harvest. Thin overcrowded seedlings using a pair of scissors to avoid disturbing the young roots. Harvest asparagus spears when they are no more than 7 inches tall. Harvest rhubarb, picking only 1/3 of the total amount of stems.

MISCELLANEOUS GARDENING TIPS-Plant summer hanging baskets, adding good quality compost, slow release fertilizer and water retaining crystals to keep them in top condition. Protect them from late frost. Feed pond fish little and often. Clip evergreen hedges now. Keep a diary of which seeds you're sowing and planting to help you stay on top of things throughout the year.

Take time out from all your hard work to relax and enjoy the garden now that the warmer weather has arrived!



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