



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article April 3, 2017

April Garden To-Do by Lydia Holley

Usually, blooms galore show up in the April garden. Now is the time to take a day or two to enjoy your garden, smell the roses, listen to the birds chirping, cut a bouquet, and appreciate the work you have done to enhance the beauty of your space. Gardeners are so busy with garden chores, they often forget to enjoy the garden they have created. April is a great month to enjoy the fruits of your labor - for a little while. Then, of course, it is back to work on those garden chores.



There are a number of vegetables you can plant in April. Eggplant, southern peas, pepper plants, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, winter squash, okra and watermelon can all be planted in April.

If you are adding new perennials or shrubs to your garden, you will probably want to get most of them planted this month, before hot weather sets in. Be certain to keep any new plantings watered due to their limited root size. Annuals can also be planted now, as there is no danger of frost.

Weeding seems like a never ending chore, but if you get unwanted plants out of your garden beds before they set seed, you will have won half the battle.

You may also cut back spring-flowering shrubs after they have bloomed.

Plants are growing rapidly now, and aphids are drawn to young, tender growth. There are many types of aphids, so keep a watchful eye on all your plants. Aphids multiply rapidly because they are born live, and most do not need to mate in order to produce offspring. They can reproduce as early as seven days after being born, and may give birth to 80 aphids in one week.

One easy way to control most aphids is to simply use a stream of water to knock them off your plants. Spray water on the top of the plants as well as the undersides of the leaves. There are also several natural predators of aphids. Should you decide your garden needs an extra boost of protection from aphids, you may wish to consider purchasing green lacewing eggs.

To make certain growth is not vulnerable to aphids due to too much nitrogen in your soil, you may wish to do a soil test. Soil test kits will be available at the HCMGA booth on Saturday, April 8, at the Community Farmers Market located on the northwest corner of Pinkerton and West Corsicana behind Prosperity Bank and Henderson County Courthouse Annex. Stop by, say hello, ask questions, and tell us how you are enjoying your spring garden.

One more thing to do this month is visit the HCMGA Dream Garden located inside the East Texas Arboretum. The plant of the month is Philadelphus, commonly known as mock orange because of its sweet fragrance. It is also referred to as English dogwood because of the bloom's resemblance to the dogwood tree's blooms. Master Gardener Linda Singleton remarked how enchanting the blooms would look as a backdrop to a bridal photo. Couples, children, individuals, or groups are also welcome to have their photo taken with these blooms.

HCMGA would like to thank all attendees and sponsors of HCMGA's 17th annual Spring Conference which was held March 30. The support of the community and local businesses is very much appreciated.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com or visit www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org.

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