



# July in the Garden

Sources: Texas Garden Almanac Dr. Doug Welsh, Professor & Horticulturist, Texas A&M University, "Texas Gardener" Magazine, Chris S. Corby, Editor, Fort Bend County

Master Gardeners, ([www.fgmg.com](http://www.fgmg.com))

## Garden Tasks



\*Keep a watchful eye on now plentiful insects. Spider mites like dry, dusty surfaces and can't stand being wet. Spray top and bottom of leaves with water once a week. Insecticidal soap will also help eliminate spider mites and aphids. Sprays containing Bt will help control caterpillars if they are caught when young and actively feeding. Spinosad and Neem products can be used to control beetles.

\*DFW (no, not the airport) stands for Deadhead, Fertilize and Water. This is your mantra for July, so be diligent about all three!

\*Mulch, mulch, mulch! Have you noticed that this is pretty much a monthly task during our Texas summers?

\*Container grown plants will need daily watering. Add mulch to container plants to help conserve moisture.

\*Check flowerbeds often to determine the plants' need for water. Depending on soil type and location (sun/shade) some beds may need more water while other areas in the garden may need less. Soil should be moist down to 2 inches. If not, water.

\*Flowering plants will need some fertilizer this month. Alfalfa pellets work well or other high nitrogen fertilizer.

\*Keep fruit trees well watered. Those that are finished producing this year are now setting buds for next year's harvest.

\*Deadhead spent crepe myrtle blossoms to encourage continued blooming and avoid seed production.

\*Take advantage of this month's heat and humidity and the speedy decomposition of organic matter. Add leaves, manure and other organic matter to your compost heap. If you have a vegetable bed that is unplanted, add organic matter to it as well. The material will decompose quickly enriching the soil for fall planting.

## What to Plant



\*Believe it or not, in our area fall vegetable planting begins this month. Plant tomatoes, eggplant and peppers. Provide the new transplants some afternoon shade for the first week or two. Water every day for the first week and every other day for the second week. Plant corn and pumpkin seeds now for a late October harvest.

\*There are still several flowering plants that can be added to your flower beds this month. Examples are:

-For shady areas plant impatiens, balsam and coleus.

-For partial shade plant torenia, pentas, nicotiana, phlox, wax begonia and angelonia (look for the Serena series which is a Texas superstar).

-For sunny areas plant zinnias, marigolds, tithonia, morning glory, sunflowers, gazania, cockscomb, Madagascar periwinkle (often called annual vinca), purslane, moss rose, cupheas, plumbago and pride of Barbados.

-For foliage that adds color plant copper plant, caricature plant, beefsteak plant, Persian shield, caladiums, various cannas and artemisia.

Watch these new plants carefully for heat stress. Be sure soil stays moist o 2 inches. Provide a little shade in the afternoon for the plants in full sun.