

JUNE

MAINTENANCE

- ⊙ Consider an irrigation audit now or check your irrigation systems for leaks and broken or malfunctioning parts. Check also for adequate coverage. You may need to add emitters on drip systems for maturing trees or shrubs or you may need to adjust the length of time the system runs. To gauge whether your plants are getting adequate water, check the depth of moisture in the soil the day following watering. Soil around trees and shrubs should show moisture to 12 inches and will not need water again until the top 2 to 3 inches of soil is dry.
- ⊙ Cut lawns 1 1/2 to 2 inches high; mow weekly.
- ⊙ Shear, feed, and water spent annuals to promote another round of bloom.
- ⊙ Wait to cut or tie the foliage of your spring blooming bulbs until half of the leaves begin to turn yellow or brown.
- ⊙ Care for roses by removing faded flowers and feeding plants with a complete fertilizer; water well. Mulch to conserve soil moisture and to keep the roots cool.
- ⊙ Deep-water trees and shrubs.
- ⊙ Continue to pinch back perennials and shrubs to encourage branching.
- ⊙ Prune spring-flowering shrubs and hedges now, so they'll have plenty of time to recover and set buds for next year's bloom. Spread organic mulch around plants to conserve moisture and reduce weeds.
- ⊙ Stake tall, floppy flowers like bachelor's buttons, carnations, and yarrow.
- ⊙ Protect ripening fruit crops from birds by covering trees with plastic netting.
- ⊙ While most gardeners prune their fruit trees once a year during the dormant season, a light pruning during the summer can benefit the home orchard in two ways. First, summer pruning helps to maintain the size of your trees. By reducing canopy mass at this time, trees grow at a slowed rate. Second, you can encourage secondary branching on long whips. This increases fruiting wood. In contrast, winter pruning tends to shape trees, remove dead and dying wood, and strengthen and increase fruiting wood. Finally, when the canopy is opened more light helps the fruit to ripen.
- ⊙ Grass-cycling means to leave your grass clippings on the lawn after mowing. The grass decays and disappears within three or four days and reduces fertilizer use by 30 to 50 percent.

- ⊙ Be sure to deadhead roses and perennials as blooms fade to ensure continuous bloom throughout summer.
- ⊙ In fire-prone areas, clean up brush and debris to reduce fuel volume.
- ⊙ Prune out dead and diseased wood from trees and shrubs.
- ⊙ If the tips of leaves on your Japanese maples turned brown along the edges last year, protect them from tip burn this year by spraying with the anti-transpirant Cloud Cover and mulch 2-3 inches deep. Remember to always keep mulch at least 3 inches away from tree trunks.
- ⊙ Tend container plants; they need fertilizer and mulch, too.
- ⊙ Continue to monitor pond health by removing spent flowers and controlling choking algae.
- ⊙ Monitor the water level in your pond, and, if necessary, keep the pond filled with a slowly trickling hose.

FERTILIZING

- ⊙ Feed summer flowers and vegetables throughout the growing season. Use a controlled-release fertilizer, or give frequent light feedings to all heavy flower producers.
- ⊙ Compost tea, formerly known as manure tea, is regaining popularity. You can make your own by filling a 5 gallon pail one-third full of Master Nursery Steer Manure and one-half of cup of Master Nursery Fish Emulsion. The pail is then filled with water and allowed to 'steep' for 4 to 7 days. At the end of 'steeping,' the mixture is filtered through a couple of layers of cheese cloth or an old T-shirt. The 'tea' is diluted to the color of weak tea for use by watering a gallon or so of it around each plant and spraying it on the foliage. There is some experimental evidence indicating that spraying the 'tea' on plant leaves prevents attacks by disease micro-organisms. Some people put the manure teas steepage in an old pair of tied off panty hose and use them like a teabag.

PEST/ WEED CONTROL

- ⊙ Encourage beneficial insects to visit (and reduce the use of toxic sprays) by planting cosmos, sunflowers, yarrow and lavender.
- ⊙ Check roses for rust. Hand-pick and destroy (don't compost) diseased leaves. A sulfur-based fungicide may help; otherwise, water early in the morning and avoid wetting the foliage.
- ⊙ Watch for brown patch fungus in lawns - use fungicide, if severe, following label recommendations (consult with your favorite garden center).
- ⊙ For whiteflies on tomatoes, use Safer Tomato & Vegetable spray three times at three day intervals. Consider using whitefly traps in conjunction with the sprays for more complete control and even a "Dustbuster" to vacuum up the reproductive adults.
- ⊙ Watch for katydids and cucumber beetles on roses, both of which chew on flower buds, leaving holes in flower petals. Spray as for aphids.
- ⊙ Rose weevils and curculios chew holes at the bases of rose buds then lay their eggs within. When larvae hatch, they eat their way through flower buds and petals. The only control for these pests is to disbud plants as if deadheading.

- ⊙ You may also notice activity by leaf cutter bees in your garden. These insects remove neat, semi-circular notches from the margins of leaves. Disregard this insect: these notches are harmless and the leaf cutter bee is extremely beneficial in the garden.
- ⊙ May and June mark the cut-off months for using systemic insecticides in roses. By discontinuing use as summer approaches, you reduce the risk of disfiguring flowers and foliage.
- ⊙ Azalea gall appears as swollen leaves with white powder on them. Remove by pruning; do not compost and dispose with your garden trash. Next spring, as new leaves begin to emerge, spray with copper.
- ⊙ Watch for thrips and black vine weevil on rhododendrons. Thrips damage appears as a mottling or bleaching of the upper surfaces of leaves. Undersides show small, glossy black dots. Weevils leave distinctive notches along leaf margins as they feed. Both can be controlled with Ortho Systemic Insect Killer or Orthenex.
- ⊙ Blossom blight affects the blossoms of apple, pear and their relatives by turning them brown and falling off. The trees produce little or no fruit, and there are no scorched tips. Spray as appropriate next spring.
- ⊙ The first symptoms of brown rot and bacterial canker on apricots, peaches, nectarines, cherries and plums is the same as blossom blight of apples and pears (see above). Later, there will be a dieback of and/or oozing from short fruiting spurs or branch tips and a decrease or absence of fruit production. While it is too late to spray for this disease this year, next year apply two additional sprays at pink bud and full bloom. When pruning this summer or next winter, you should remove dead or oozing wood.

PLANTING

- ⊙ Set out bedding plant seedlings.
- ⊙ Continue planting gladiolus bulbs at 2-week intervals through July for continuous bloom. Plant bulbs about 4 times the depth of the bulb. If you plant the bulbs 4-6 inches apart, the plants will support one another.
- ⊙ You can still plant warm-season crops, including beans, corn, cucumbers, eggplants, peppers, squash, and tomatoes.
- ⊙ Plant basil, chives, coriander, mint, parsley, rosemary, sage, savory, and thyme. You can start many from seed now.
- ⊙ Plant, patch, or reseed heat-loving lawns.
- ⊙ Sow more beans (bush or pole), beets, green onions and radishes.

SHOPPING

Smart buys: shade-loving plants, especially coleus, impatiens and ferns.