

## APRIL TO DO LIST

- Please note, most of the information shared here was obtained from Research-based sources (see contributors acknowledgements below), and from individuals who are considered very knowledgeable on a particular subject. While some little tidbits here may be of interest, they should be taken "with-a-grain-of-salt".

*A house though otherwise beautiful, yet if it hath no Garden belonging to it,  
Is more like a Prison than a House. - William Coles (1656)*

### **1<sup>st</sup> Week:**

Yearling PURPLE MARTINS should still be arriving to colonize new breeding sites and will continue arriving for an additional 4 to 6 weeks (this means martins can be attracted to new housing through mid-May). - *PMA*

Our latest spring freezes have occurred during this week.

Stake Gladiolus as their flower spikes are forming, or grow them close together for mutual support.

BALL MOSS does not threaten oak trees, but if the appearance bothers you, control it by treating now with Kocide fungicide (baking soda is also effective). Follow label instructions.

Mow live oak leaves and let them decompose on the lawn or use them for mulch.

Junior petunia is a hardy reseeding plant for color in cool and hot weather. It can be planted now.

Plant beans, sweet corn, summer squash, radishes, carrots and beets in the organically prepared vegetable garden. Recommended tomato varieties are Merced, Celebrity, Carnival, Surefire, Jackpot, Whirlaway, Sun Master or Heatwave (some new, some discontinued).

If your pecan trees showed small leaves and few nuts last year, the trees probably need zinc. Spray it on the emerging leaves or apply a chelated zinc source to the soil.

Resist the urge to fertilize your lawn until you have mowed "lawn" grass (not annual grasses and weeds) twice. - *CF*

Some favorite shrubs: Copper plants (colorful foliage) and lantana (colorful flowers) can be planted.

Select and plant water-saving ornamental grasses to add height, texture and color to landscape. - *EO*

Spray pecan trees with fungicide to prevent pecan scab, vein spot and downy spot.

Spray pear trees with a bactericidal spray if FIRE BLIGHT has been a problem in the past. - *TAE*

Direct seed warm-season flowers such as marigold, zinnia, larkspur and moss rose in well-prepared beds.

Watch for APHIDS on new growth. Tender growth on roses is especially susceptible. Use general insecticides. For organic control, try insecticidal soap or neem oil. - *LR*

Watch Redtip photinias for ENTOMOSPORIUM FUNGAL LEAF SPOT (maroon spots, yellowish growth). Control is difficult, problem is internal. Banner or Daconil are best (infected branches should be pruned out; clean pruners with each cut to prevent spreading the infection - *me*).

Keep a look out for LEAFROLLERS on cannas, that tie leaves together, resulting in rows of holes across surfaces of leaves. Use Orthene with 1 or 2 drops of liquid detergent to hold spray on leaves. - *NS*

Keep pulling weeds- don't let them go to seed. - *AJW*

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To keep your ever-blooming roses flowering longer than any other in town, try this terrific tonic: dissolve 3 Tbsp. of brewer's yeast in 2 gal. water and soak the roots of each bush after their first blooming.

**Fast Flower Feeder Tonic:** take 2 Tbsp. of hydrogen peroxide, 2 Tbsp. of liquid dish soap (\*1 tsp., if concentrated), 4 tsp. of instant tea granules, 1 Tbsp. of clear corn syrup, 1 Tbsp. of unflavored gelatin; 1 can of beer, 2 Tbsp. of ammonia, 2 Tbsp. of whiskey, 2 gal. of warm water. Mix them all together and feed your perennials and bulbs every two weeks in the morning. Then step back and watch your blooms soar!

**Fragrant Pest Fighter Tonic:** take  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fresh tansy,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fresh lavender,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fresh sage, 1 tsp. of Murphy's Oil Soap, boiling water. Place the herbs in a 1 quart container. Fill with boiling water, cover and let set until cool. Add  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of this mix to 2 cups of water and the Murphy's Oil Soap. Pour in a handheld sprayer, mist the plants and the pest will scam.

If you snooze, you lose . . . in summer that is . . . as hungry APHIDS, WHITEFLIES and SPIDER MITES make short work out of your prized perennials. But it's quick and easy to bug-proof your beauties with my "Summer Soap-&Oil Spray". Using 1 cup of vegetable oil and 1 Tbsp. of liquid dish soap (\*). Mix them together, then add 2 tsp. of mix to 1 cup of water in a handheld sprayer. Mix well and spray away. - *JB*

Attracting Hummers & Butterflies: The following are attractive plants to hummingbirds and butterflies, experts say, and are well-suited to S. Texas landscapes because they are drought-resistant.

A) For Hummingbirds: Autumn sage, Carolina jessamine, ceniza, coral honeysuckle, lantana, red yucca, Turk's cap; also trumpet vine, flame acanthus, columbines, desert willows, coral bean, wild azaleas, brownfoot, ocotillo, and every kind of salvia, penstemon and pentas.

B) Butterflies: are attracted to masses of flat-faced flowers agarita, butterfly bush, Indian blanket, mealy cup sage, purple coneflower, summer phlox and Texas bluebonnet; also sunflowers, rosinweeds, wild ageratum, palmleaf eupatorium, monardas, verbenas, lantana, pavonia, old plainsman, spectacle pod and passionflower. But butterflies also visit tubular and spiky flowers such as salvias, bottlebush, hibiscus, Turk's cap, and Virginia sweetspire. (If you are trying to attract butterflies, please avoid using pesticides that harm caterpillars, such as "Bt", *Bacillus thuringiensis*, and others. This may sound silly, but some people don't connect the two creatures. - *me*)

All-Natural Easter Eggs - by Susan Wittig Albert (*Country Living Gardener*, April 2001)

The decorated egg, a symbol of rebirth in many pagan cultures, made its first appearance in Europe when the Crusaders brought the idea from the East. Natural dyes are fun and easy for kids to work with, and they'll learn about plants in the process. In general, the more coloring agent you use and the longer the egg remains in the dye, the darker the color will be. Arrange these pastel eggs in a basket with snips of rosemary, thyme, sage and fuzzy lamb's ear (*Stachys byzantina*) and use as a table decoration.

- 1) Red - In a large pot of water, simmer eggs for up to an hour with the skins of red onions.
- 2) Pink - Soak hard-boiled eggs overnight in cranberry or beet juice.
- 3) Yellow - Add 2 teaspoons of turmeric and 1 teaspoon vinegar to 2 cups of hot water; soak hard-boiled eggs overnight.
- 4) Brown - Add 2 tablespoons of instant coffee and 1 teaspoon of vinegar to 2 cups of hot water; soak hard-boiled eggs overnight.
- 5) Tan - In a large pot of water, simmer eggs for up to an hour with the skins of yellow

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onions.

6) Lavender - Pour hot water over violet blossoms; soak hard-boiled eggs overnight.

7) Blue - Simmer eggs for up to an hour with a few leaves of red cabbage, or soak hard-boiled eggs in grape juice.

April showers (any rain for that matter) bring nitrogen (more lightning, more nitrogen) and vitamin B-12 to the earth with the rain, that's why plants respond better to rain water than aquifer irrigation. - *me*

**In Our Rose Garden:** With the first blooms all around and rose shows just around the corner, there are duties we need to take care of to insure that our gardens are in tip-top shape. Three keys to good spring roses are watering, feeding and spraying.

A) Watering - Maintain a good moisture level in the top 6 to 8 inches of your rose bed where those important feeder roots are located. If the rains have been generous, keep tabs on the dampness of the soil in the rose beds using the best "moisture indicator" of all - your finger!

B) Feeding - Are you interested in maintaining good bush growth and having cut roses for the house and color in the yard? Then continue to feed with a dry or granular feed (this can be organic or chemical) once a month. Use one cup per plant around the drip-line of the bush. Soluble feeders need to apply your favorite feed every week giving each bush at least one gallon poured around the drip-line of the bush. With our spring rose show right around the corner, you might try giving your roses a mix of the following to add to the size, substance and color of the bloom. Two weeks prior to the show, mix in a 32 gal. garbage can: 2 cups of *Superbloom* (or similar 12-55-6 formula); 1 cup of fish emulsion; 1 cup of *Sprint 330* (or similar iron chelate). Stir well for mixing and give each bush at least one gallon of the mix. Give miniatures one quart each.

C) Spraying - Remember, prevention is the name of the game. Spraying every 5 to 7 days should keep your rose beds disease-free.

1. BLACKSPOT & MILDEW - mix *Triforine* (formerly *Funginex*) at 1 Tbsp. per gal. of spray (consider rotating your spray material every month or so with *Immunex*, or other good fungicide. Baking soda or potassium bicarbonate has shown to be very effective, as well as Neem oil for use in organic gardens). Make sure to spray the top and bottom of the foliage.

2. THRIPS - mist only the buds and opening flowers to keep your blooms clean from this culprit. Use either *Orthene liquid* @ 2 Tbsp. or *Orthene powder* @ 2 tsp. per gal. of spray mixture (*Spinosad* is labeled for use on thrips).

3. SPIDER MITES - Though mites usually aren't visible to the naked eye, their damage is. As they feed on plant tissue, the pests inject toxins into the plants, causing white or yellow dots on leaves (If infestation great enough, you might notice webbing on the underside of the lower leaves). Either water-wash the bottom side of the foliage on a 3 day interval for nine days, or spray the bottom side of the foliage with a labeled miticide following label directions (liquid seaweed is every effective against spider mites).

D) The Fine Art of Pruning - Knowing why you grow roses dictates your plan for managing the flower production. Finger pruning is the process of rubbing off unwanted new shoots so you get the shape of bush you want and the bush can be manipulated to produce a few "large" blooms or many small blooms. If you decide to do nothing, there will be an overabundance of new stems pointed in every direction with a large number of small flowers. This is perfect for the person who wants to limit their time doing rose chores if they just want lots of color in the landscape. A small amount of finger pruning and clipping (reducing

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the number of new shoots per stem) can direct the growth outward and upward developing a shapelier bush with good color and some nice, long stems for cutting. The serious exhibitor will only allow 2 or 3 new stems to develop per can to get the large, showy flowers.

New shoots that do not seem vigorous, small in diameter, short and have a brown tip rather than a bud should be removed cleanly back to the cane. These are blind shoots and will never make a flower. New shoots that are a foot long or less that form a bud should be cut in half. These types of growth will only take away precious nutrients from the other flowers, so why not recycle them to get a jump on the second cycle. \* Remember to water your bushes thoroughly before feeding or spraying! Visit their web site @ [www.sarosesociety.org](http://www.sarosesociety.org).

### **A YEAR IN THE ROSE GARDEN: - AJW**

Watch for spider mites. If you think you do not have them by the end of this month it is likely you either have sprayed, washed with water or just don't see well. If the roses are not doing as well as you think they should, take another look or maybe have a Consulting Rosarian come and look.

Watch for basal breaks. These are large vigorous shoots coming from the bud union or from within about 5 inches of it. They are easily broken off so arrange to tie them to a stake or another cane until they have hardened. They are valuable to the life and longevity of the bush, so take care of them. When they are about 2 feet high it is useful to pinch them off at the first blunt bud, thus encouraging strong branches and preventing candelabras.

Avoid cutting blooms with long stems from new bushes. Cut very short stems or snap blooms off at the peduncle and float in a bowl.

On established bushes, unless the bloom is needed for a show, take no more stem than necessary. Leave two good sets of leaves on the bush. If the bush is well grown this will provide ample stems for arranging (and if it is not well grown, the blooms should not be cut with long stems anyhow).

A quick and simple way to cut spent blooms ("dead-head" as our British and Canadian friends say), is to snap off the faded bloom at the peduncle. The roses repeat faster and seem to grow better than if we go through and cut down farther on the stems.

Remove blind shoots and leaf rosettes. A leaf rosette is a cluster of leaves, usually far down the cane, which has no bloom bud. Blind shoots are stems which come out and taper down to nothing with no bloom bud. A cane which has nothing but blind shoots should be removed at the source.

Lightly stir the mulch. Many mulches pack down and need to be fluffed up for better insulation and better water penetration.

Add to your mulch. If it is allowing weeds to grow or seems to be thin, more mulch will help kill weeds and keep the ground cooler.

**Organic Rose Program - HG** (see Feb. To Do List for complete program)

Watering: If possible, save and use rainwater. If not, add 1 Tbsp. of natural apple cider vinegar per gal. of water. If all else fails, just use tap water but, in any case don't over water. Avoid salty well water.

For best results foliar feed with Garrett Juice every 2 weeks, but at least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice is needed in the spray.

Pest Control Program: Add the following to Garrett Juice (visit his web site to get his recipe or pick it up at a local nursery) and spray as needed.

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- 1) Garlic tea or mild vinegar- 1/4cup/gal. or label directions for minor insect or disease infestations.
- 2) Potassium bicarbonate - 1 rounded tbsp. /gal. for minor diseases.
- 3) Liquid biostimulants - Use per label - Medina Soil Activator, or similar product.
- 4) Neem or plant oil products - Use per label directions for more serious insect and disease infestations.
- 5) For thrips, apply beneficial nematodes to the soil in early spring.
- 6) Fish emulsion - 2oz. /gal. for additional nutrients (may not be needed when using compost tea)

**In Our Herb Garden:** It's not too late to set out transplants of perennial herbs. \* From now and throughout the summer, plant basil, which likes the warm weather. \* Cool weather annuals planted late this month will go to seed near the end of June (examples are dill, cilantro, parsley). \* Weed and water as necessary. \* Enjoy your garden, everything is taking off! - *Herbs: A Resource Guide for San Antonio*. Visit their web site @ [www.sanantonioherbs.org](http://www.sanantonioherbs.org).

**Room for improvement** - Expert tips on how to avoid costly landscape mistakes!

By: Marsha Murray Harlow and Dr. Douglas F. Welsh (with just a little bit from *me!*), Neil Sperry's GARDENS Mag., Oct. 98.

### Top 10 Mistakes Texas Gardeners Make:

- 1) Over-watering - Over watering or improper watering encourages poor root systems and wastes water, should runoff occur. It also stresses plants, making them more susceptible to disease. Roots in waterlogged soil can't breathe; consequently, plants wilt and turn yellow as their roots rot (foliage on top mimics a thirsty plants). Eventually, they die.
- 2) Over-fertilizing - Too much of a good thing causes problems for plants as well as for gardeners. Proper fertilizing nurture healthy plants that are able to resist pests and environmental stresses. Too much fertilizer may trigger excessive new top growth, making a plant more susceptible to disease. That abundant new growth also requires more water and more mowing or pruning.
- 3) Misusing pesticides - A wise gardener knows an insect-free landscape is impossible. The goal is to control the "bad guys" of the insect world and encourage the "good guys". The key is to identify the pest and use an appropriate pesticide. Study your alternatives and only use them as a last resort, as many are nonselective, so the beneficial insects may be affected too. Please keep this in mind, when you kill a beneficial insect, you take over its job!
- 4) Improperly identifying a plant problem - Before you choose your weapon, you must know who the enemy is. Put your sleuthing skills to work to determine whether the problem is caused by an insect, disease or environmental factor.
- 5) Using plants that are unproductive and/or poorly adapted to your area - There are reasons that dogwoods and azaleas flourish in East Texas, but not in the Hill Country. Climate, rainfall, soil types and temperatures divide Texas into gardening "zones" and a smart gardener learns to appreciate what grows well in his/hers own backyard.
- 6) Planting in the wrong place - When placing a plant in your landscape, consider its mature size and its need for sunlight or shade.
- 7) Failing to prepare soil before planting - No matter what type of soil you have, your success depends on whether you amend the soil. Healthy soil is alive with nutrients and microorganisms and produces healthy plants with few problems. Keep in mind native plants

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(for your area) do not like too much help, but almost always need good drainage.

8) Failing to use mulch - This layer of organic or inorganic material on the top of the soil can work wonders. It helps soil retain moisture, moderates soil temperature, keeps weed populations down and makes hand-weeding easier. Some plants (including many native plants) could literally drown after a heavy rain if too much mulch is applied.

9) Planting at the wrong time - Timing is important when growing vegetables. Not only must you learn which are warm-weather crops, and which are cool-weather ones (don't plant broccoli in late spring, for example), you also must consider location/region (North Texas gardeners plant tomatoes later than gardeners in South Texas). Permanent landscape plants such as trees, shrubs and groundcovers should be planted in the fall in South Texas.

10) Failing to think long-term - Train yourself to plant with a vision of how your landscape will look in five years, or even ten years. That cute little rosemary plant that smells so good and came in a little 4" pot can grow up to be 5' by 5'.

Did You Know, if over applied, chemical fertilizers may make plants more susceptible to disease? The fertilizers can do this in part by killing off microorganisms that protect plants from certain diseases. Many plant diseases are controlled by antibiotic-producing bacteria or fungi that exist in the plant roots. - TGS

### 2<sup>nd</sup> WEEK:

\*\*\* Poteet Strawberry Festival \*\*\*

Continue weekly spraying of roses (see notes in "In Our Rose Garden") & other "formal" flower gardens. Set up a certain time to do it and stay with it (after a time it becomes routine and not so much a chore). Spray time does not need to be boring - it is the time for looking, planning, reflecting or just plain enjoying being out with the roses. - AJW

Aerate lawns at least once each year; use a core-extracting aerator. Top dress it with compost or a compost/sand mix to revitalize the grass.

It is time to put bougainvillea, plumeria, hibiscus and other tropical plants outside. (This would be a good time to take "all" your potted plants outside and either repot with fresh soil; or with a garden hose flush all those mineral salts from the old fertilizers out of the potting soil and start a new feeding program with them, maybe even give their leaves a little bath. - me)

Keep Easter lilies moist and in a bright room for long, indoor life. After the flowers decline, place them outside in a location with morning sun.

For color in the shade, use coleus, begonias, pentas and annual salvia.

Tomatoes can be planted in the garden now. Mulch them with leaves, cocoa shells, lawn clippings or other material to avoid blossom end rot.

Wisteria must be pruned after their flowering season, even in years when they fail to bloom.

To prune them significantly at any other time would reduce or prevent their blooms the next spring. Keep the plant's natural shape and avoid excessive cutting where necessary to control size. Apply iron/sulfur material to wisterias to combat iron deficiency caused by South Texas soils. (Carolina jessamine, spiraea, quince, Indian hawthorn and Lady Banks roses are some examples of shrubs that should also be pruned back after they have bloomed. - EO)

To increase the germination rate on Texas mountain laurel seeds, collect and plant the seeds after the pods reach full size but before they dry out (still green).

The oak blooms that are littering your yard, decomposes quickly in the compost pile. Mix

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them with the oak leaves. - *CF*

Vegetable gardens need fertilizer every 3 weeks. Use a product with a 19-5-9 (3-1-2 ratio of nutrients).

Sow seeds for sunflowers and gomphrena (bachelor buttons).

Plant okra and pumpkin seeds and sweet potato transplant (slips). - *EO*

Lightly fertilize shrubs and evergreens around their bases to encourage spring green-up.

Keep mower blades sharp. A mulching blade will eliminate the need to rake or bag grass clippings.

Rotate houseplants so each side receives its share of light. This encourages even growth and a balanced shape.

As the sun's rays strengthen and daylight hours lengthen, plants such as African violets may need to be moved from southern facing windows to prevent leaf scorch. - *TAE*

It's time to fertilize your lawn. Most soil tests in the area reveal high levels of phosphorus and potassium. If you have not tested your soil for several years and you have applied 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio fertilizers (example: 15-5-10, 16-4-8 or 19-5-9) for several years, use a high-nitrogen fertilizer such as 21-0-0 this year. (\*Do not feed Buffalo grass - *CF*) - *LR*

If you fertilize your tomato plants heavily with a nitrogen fertilizer at planting time, you will likely get very large plants but few tomatoes. Instead, wait until your plants have produced small tomatoes (about the size of a large marble) and then apply a handful or so of fertilizer to each plant every week during the growing season. You may not have 10-foot-tall plants but you should have buckets of vine-ripened fruit to enjoy and share with friends and neighbors. - *TGS*

Many people think that moon gardening works because all water is affected by the movement of the moon and plants are mostly water. Both the sun and moon affect water through their magnetic pull but the moon is much closer to the earth hence its influence is stronger.

Did you know it is possible to have a beautiful garden without a lot of fuss, and have it do good for the environment by using less water and fossil fuels, reducing use of fertilizers and pesticides that can get into the groundwater, and reducing the amount of yard waste that goes into landfills? The EPA provides green gardening information at the following Web pages:

[www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden](http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden) (green landscaping)

[www.epa.gov/region3/p2/garden.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region3/p2/garden.htm) (pollution prevention in gardening and landscaping)

[www.epa.gov/p2week/ingarden.htm](http://www.epa.gov/p2week/ingarden.htm) (pollution prevention in the garden)

[www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/green/pubs/home-gs.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/green/pubs/home-gs.pdf) (greenscaping)

[www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/garden.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/controlling/garden.htm) (controlling pests)

[www.epa.gov/osw/specials/funfacts/may.htm](http://www.epa.gov/osw/specials/funfacts/may.htm) (garden waste)

[www.epa.gov/agriculture/tcop.html](http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/tcop.html) (composting)

[www.epa.gov/owow/nps/toolbox/other/KSMO\\_buildarainbarrel.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/toolbox/other/KSMO_buildarainbarrel.pdf) (how to build your own rainbarrel)

Note: Not all information containing in the above Web pages may be appropriate for Texas gardeners. - *TGS*

The Red-Winged Blackbirds will be moving on to hoard other feeders further north, but they'll be ba-a-a-ck! - *me*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Week:**

\* \* \* FIESTA \* \* \*

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Keep an eye out for the Lyrids Meteor Shower. Check when it's due. - *THMag*

Plant basil, begonia, caladium and impatiens in prepared beds. Warm-weather annuals such as zinnias, lantana and purslane can be planted now. The semperflorens begonias (wax begonias, available at most nurseries) can be grown in sun or shade. Plant them now in sunny locations so they can put on growth before the heat arrives.

Use spinach and cole crops. All except Brussels sprouts are declining quickly from heat and aphids.

To control SQUASH VINE BORERS on melons and squash, apply thiodan dust every week at the growing point.

Perennial Daffodil foliage should be allowed to die back totally. Do not remove it while it shows any sign of green (browned tips can be trimmed).

Mulch newly planted tomatoes to conserve water and prevent blossom end rot.

Mow St. Augustine grass at 3", Bermuda at 1", Zoysia at 2" and buffalo at 4". Mowing frequently reduces weeds. Water the lawn only when it needs it (walk across the grass, if your footprint springs up, the grass has plenty of water). -CF

Control garden SLUGS, SNAILS and PILLBUGS with slug & snail baits. - *EO*

Plant annuals for instant color. Select short, compact plants (Tropical annuals such as Mexican Heather, bougainvilleas and allamandas can be planted for flowers all summer. - *LR*)

Turn your compost pile to speed decomposition.

It is time to plant okra, Southern peas and ornamental cotton.

Early May is the best time to plant caladiums in our region (resist planting them too early if the ground is moist and cool). Select caladium tubers while ample stock is available. - *TAE*

### **4<sup>th</sup> Week:**

Plant heat-tolerant perennials like China Doll, Firebush, Gingers, Lantana and Mex. Bird-of-Paradise.

Prune spring-blooming plants as the last blooms fade. An exception is Texas mountain laurels, which don't respond well to pruning; just remove any dead wood from the tree.

Harvest columbine seeds before pods open. Put the stalks in a brown paper bag so they will collect in the sack when they open.

Cyclamen declines quickly in heat. The bulbs need to be stored until next fall. An easy storage method is to turn pots on their sides in a corner of the yard. As long as the bulbs stay dry, they will not rot.

APHIDS, feasting on fresh growth, can be controlled with insecticidal soap, Malathion or other labeled insecticides. As hot days come, arrange to spray liquid fertilizers & insecticides as needed) in the morning or evenings. When the temperature gets into the 90's, almost any spray will burn.

It is time to fertilize tomatoes when the first fruits set. Spread a half-cup of slow-release lawn fertilizer around the drip line. Check stems of tomato plants just below the soil line in search of cutworms. Remove the cutworms by hand.

When onion tops fall over, it's time to harvest. Put the bulbs on the surface of the garden bed for a day to harden off, and then store them in mesh bags in a dry room.

Mow whenever grass has grown  $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 5/8" and let clippings fall into turf.

San Antonio area loquat trees have a beautiful crop of tasty fruits. Use them fresh or for preserves.

Spray peach, plum, pear and apple trees every week with an insecticide and use a fungicide every two weeks if you want blemish-free fruit.



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Arizona ash leaves may show brown spots and drop because of anthracnose. It is not a major problem. The trees will recover without spraying. - *CF*

Prune elaeagnus, pyracantha, ligature and photinias shrubs frequently if they are growing vigorously. - *EO*

Last week of male oak trees pollinating your sinuses. - *SB*

Turn the material in your compost pile to speed up decomposition. Water as needed.

If you have spring vegetable or flower seeds that were not planted, put them in a zip-lock plastic bag (wrap the seeds in a paper towel first - me) and store in the refrigerator until needed. - *TAE*

Plant watermelon and cantaloupe.

Apply iron products to correct iron chlorosis. Keep iron off of walkways and masonry because of staining.

Plant English or Algerian ivy, Asian jasmine or mondograss in deep shade where lawn grass does poorly. - *LR*

\* In updating this collections of useful tips, I have come across several comments, instructions and chemicals that are being replaced with newer techniques and materials. In some cases, I do not want to change what others have written, but I need to bring "them" up-to-date by putting a "(?)" right behind the point in question and maybe adding my own two-cent's worth. - *me*

Many thanks to my contributors for sharing their wisdom so I can learn and share it with you.

*PMA* - Purple Martin Association; visit their web site @ [www.purplemartin.org](http://www.purplemartin.org).

*CF* - Calvin Finch, (former) Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

*EO* - Edna Ortiz, (former) Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

*TAE* - Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Bexar County (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

*LR* - Lynn Rawe, (former) Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Cooperative Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News); visit their web site @ [www.bexar-tx.tamu.edu](http://www.bexar-tx.tamu.edu).

*NS* - Neil Sperry, Texas horticulturalists, Publisher "Neil Sperry's GARDENS" and contributor to S.A. Express-News. Visit his web site @ [www.neilsperry.com](http://www.neilsperry.com).

*AJW* - A.J. "Pop" Warner, Consulting Rosarian, writer of the book "A Year in the Rose Garden" and others.

*JB* - Jerry Baker, America's Master Gardener, aka "The Yardener".

*HG* - John Howard Garrett, aka the "Dirt Doctor"; visit his web site @ [www.dirtdoctor.com](http://www.dirtdoctor.com).

*THMag* - Texas Highways Magazine; visit their web site @ [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com).

*SB* - Steve Brown, meteorologist with KSAT; visit their web site @ [www.ksat.com](http://www.ksat.com).

*TGS* - Texas Gardener Seeds,

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