



January is here!

# Time for winter gardening chores

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“January is the quietest month in the garden. But just because it looks quiet doesn’t mean that nothing is happening. The soil, open to the sky, absorbs the pure rainfall while microorganisms convert tilled-under fodder into usable nutrients for the next crop of plants. The feasting earthworms tunnel along, aerating the soil and preparing it to welcome the seeds and bare roots to come.”

- Rosalie Muller Wright  
Editor of *Sunset Magazine*, January 1999

## Upcoming Free Events

**Walk in the Woods Lecture Series**  
**Identifying Backyard Snakes**  
Thursday, February 7, 2013, 7:30 p.m.  
Mike Howlett, Herpetologist,  
Project Manager, Spring Greenway  
Nancy Bock Auditorium  
McCullough Junior High  
The Woodlands, TX 77381  
Reservations not required.

**Gardening 101: Creating a Sense of Place**  
Saturday, February 16, 2013, 9 a.m.- noon  
Brenda Buest Smith “10 Commandments of Lazy Gardening”, Kathy and Gary Clark “Attracting Birds and Butterflies to Your Backyard”  
Town Hall Chambers  
2801 Technology Forest Boulevard  
The Woodlands, TX 77381  
Free, reservations required.

[www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/gardeningevents](http://www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/gardeningevents)

**W**aterwise gardening is as important in January as it is in May. Using compost and organic materials to amend the soil increases its water-holding capabilities, sometimes as much as five hundred percent. As cold weather continues, now is the time to take care of some gardening chores. It’s also time to do some planting, believe it or not.

### Designing the landscape

- Use graph paper to design or redesign the landscape.

### Order seed catalogs

- Order and peruse seed catalogs for new ideas.

### Planting trees

- Plant trees (landscape, fruit and nut trees), offered at local nurseries and through catalogs. For more information, visit [http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/lawn\\_garden/fruit\\_nut.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/lawn_garden/fruit_nut.html)

### Roses

- Plant bare-root roses.

### Preparing soils

- It might be cold, but spring comes early in Montgomery County (around the third or fourth week in February). Begin preparing soil by adding compost and other organic materials to bare beds. This will give it time to decompose for springtime plantings.



### Winter vegetable gardens

- **Transplants:** January is a good time to plant cabbage-family veggies (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts), lettuce, kohlrabi, Swiss chard, collards, mustard greens and onions. January is also a good time to put in asparagus crowns.
- **Seeds:** Plant beets, carrots, English peas, turnips.
- **Herbs:** Transplant chives, cilantro, dill, fennel, garlic, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage and thyme.



### Winter damage

- Plants damaged by winter cold can be a bit of an eyesore, but savvy gardeners know that the best time to cut off winter damage is in the spring after last frost date (generally after March 15 for our area).

### Pruning

- Now is the time to prune healthy trees for shape and health. Follow proper pruning procedures.

### Cleanup

- Remove branches, twigs, and other debris from plant beds. Debris can harbor insects, fungal infections or diseases.

### Removing dead trees

- **Pine:** If the pine needles are brown, the tree is probably dead. Call an arborist to have it removed.
- **Deciduous Trees:** It’s probably too early to tell if a deciduous tree is really dead. Deciduous trees will go dormant in a drought. Some may even shed limbs, and appear dead. The best thing to do with deciduous trees that appear dead is to wait until spring. If they sprout out with greenery in spring, then the tree is obviously not dead.

