



February – the bridge to spring

Time to prune, transplant and spruce up

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2013

Although the expected date of the last frost in The Woodlands is around the middle of this month, the last part of February actually marks the beginning of spring here and time to get waterwise gardens in order. Developing waterwise habits in your gardens, whether they are floral or vegetable, is necessary for healthy, vigorous plants.

Vegetable gardens

- Decide what vegetables to plant in your garden and plan where each variety will go. Prepare beds by adding compost and organic fertilizer.
- If you do have a cold-weather garden, fertilize the vegetables now. A low nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer is best.

Check irrigation systems

Sprinkler systems should have been used sparingly if at all during the late fall and winter. Now's the time, however, to check them. Do a couple of trial runs to see if your sprinklers and your drip irrigation system works properly. The Woodlands Joint Power Agency offers a free program for residents which allows irrigation system checks. The web address is www.vepollc.com/wise_request_gis.aspx?wid=10



- Although this is a good time to prune crepe myrtles, don't commit the sin of what many horticulturalists call "crepe murder" by cutting the branches down to the "knuckle" of the tree. This treatment weakens the tree and shortens its life.

Other plants which can be pruned now:

- ✂ Rose of Sharon (Althea)
- ✂ Buddleia (Butterfly bush)
- ✂ Vitex

Transplant

Want to move that bush or shrub? Transplant it now. They're probably still dormant and getting it in the ground at this time will get it acclimated in time for spring growth.

Lawns

- Check your lawnmower. Start it up now to determine whether or not it needs a tune up.



Pruning roses, summer blooming perennials and shade trees

- Around Valentine's Day is generally the best time to prune roses. Prune suckers and dead or diseased limbs. Antique roses only require minimal attention and should only be pruned sparingly if at all.
- Because of the drought, be very careful about pruning shade trees. If you're sure an area or a limb is diseased or dead, you may want to prune now. For deciduous trees especially, wait until the areas "bud out" in spring, although it's much better to wait until next year if we don't have another forecast drought.

“Probably more pests can be controlled in an armchair in front of a February fire with a garden notebook and a seed catalog than can ever be knocked out in hand-to-hand combat in the garden.”

- Neely Turner

Upcoming Free Events

Identifying Backyard Snakes

Thursday, February 7, 2013, at 7:30 p.m.
Mike Howlett, Herpetologist, Project Manager Spring Greenway
Nancy Bock Auditorium, McCullough Junior High, The Woodlands TX, 77381
No reservations 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
Reservations required.

How to Have The Best Little Vegetable Garden in Texas

Saturday, March 2, 2013, 9 a.m. – noon
Tom LeRoy, Horticulturalist, author, lecturer
Town Hall Chambers, 2801 Technology Forest Boulevard, The Woodlands TX 77381
Reservations required.

Free Compost Class

Saturday, March 2, 2013, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.,
Montgomery County Master Gardeners,
Outdoor Classroom, 8203 Millennium Forest Boulevard, The Woodlands TX 77381
No reservations required.

Where Have All The Hummingbirds Gone?

Thursday, March 7, 2013, 7:30 p.m.
Mark Klym, Coordinator of Texas Hummingbird Roundup, TPWD Program LGI Lecture Hall, McCullough Junior High
The Woodlands TX 77381
No reservations required.