

# THE EL DORADO NURSERY AND GARDEN NEWSLETTER

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## Sep/Oct 2021



GARDEN CALENDAR



### What to do in Sept/Oct

- **Reserve bareroot fruit & nut trees.** Stop by for a list of what we will be carrying or visit our website <https://www.eldoradonursery.com/bareroot-1>
- Lawn repair: rough up bare spots with a rake, scratch in grass seed, cover with mulch, and keep moist.
- Prune old berry vines to the ground when they finish fruiting. Train up new canes.
- Visit our Nursery for spring blooming bulbs. Dig up and divide overgrown clumps of spring flowering bulbs. Amend the soil (with compost), add bulb food, & replant.
- Divide and plant perennials. Add bone meal or starter fertilizer and compost to the soil before replanting.
- Fertilize fruit trees with 16-16-16, or G&B Organic Fruit Tree fertilizer before leaf drop (early fall growth will have time to harden off before it gets cold).
- Give annuals and roses a last shot of fertilizer. G&B Rose & Flower Food is great.
- Now is the time to control your Poa Annua (Annual Bluegrass) and other weeds. Apply a pre-emergent. See us for organic or synthetic solutions.
- Fertilize spring blooming shrubs, perennials, trees and bulbs with super phosphate, bone meal, or fish bone meal.
- Check for damage from deer and spray repellents as needed.
- Clean out your summer vegetables, prepare beds for fall by adding Fir Mulch or GB Planting Mix.
- Plant pansies, mums, spinach, lettuce, chard, root crops, cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and snow peas.
- Take advantage of the cooler weather and rains by planting shrubs and trees this fall. Cooler air temps and warm ground are ideal for any transplanting needs, especially natives.
- Check irrigation and reduce volume as days begin to shorten.

## Around the Nursery:



Coming up Coral Bells!



## FALL COLOR



# *Fall garden prep*

Before we realize that the weather has changed, we (and our gardens) will have survived the heat trials of yet another summer in El Dorado County. Soon, autumn will be upon us, one of the high points of a garden's year. We can do so much in the garden during the fall. Here are some tips to help take advantage of the season in your garden:

**Watering:** Make sure you keep irrigating your gardens throughout the warm fall weather. Reduce how frequently (how many times per week) you water as the weather cools - your yards will need less water, and you'll have to go out and check the soil to see how fast it's drying out. If you have citrus trees, make sure you deep soak them through warm fall weather to prevent the fruit from drying out.

**Clean-up:** As you head toward the end of October, make sure the garden is clear of plant debris to help reduce the number of sites that may harbor pests and diseases over the winter.

Clean up fallen leaves and fruit, and compost only pest-free plant debris. Pull weeds, spent annuals, and vegetables.

**Mulching:** If you make sure your mulches are in place and are at least 3"-4" thick, you'll have less weeds in those areas when the rains come. As always with mulch, make sure it isn't burying the bases of the plants - place it a few inches from the trunk.

**Lawns:** This is the season for renovating your lawns - aerating, thatching, overseeding, and fertilizing.

**Fertilize:** If you missed fertilizing your fruit trees in late August, fertilize them in September. The same is true for your shade trees and any winter vegetables you might have. Your roses can push another bloom if you fertilize them in late August or early September. Apply fall and winter fertilizer Maxsea 16-16-16 or GB Lawn Fertilizer to your lawns; fall applications with the correct fertilizer will promote healthy root growth and spring flush. For all fertilizers, follow manufacturer's directions to apply correct amounts.

Okay, so all of those tips have to do with maintenance, kind of on the same level as cleaning house. Fall is also the time when you can dive in and start making those visions of garden loveliness come true. Next come the tasks that can transform your garden.

Fall is THE BEST time to plant many different kinds of plants in El Dorado County, so prep that soil and get digging! Those plants will have nine months before their roots have to face the sear of summer. All plants but those tender to frost should do well when planted in the fall, but the following are worth extra mention: California native plants, junipers, wildflower seeds, spring flowering bulbs (tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, etc.), onion seed, carrot seed, salad/mesclun mix seed, snap pea seed, cool weather cover crop seed (such as fava beans and vetch to grow in winter and till into your veggie garden in the spring for great soil), and, of course, cool weather lawn grasses (like fescue) - seed and sod.

Another nifty thing you can do in the fall is divide many types of perennials. This means you can take one large perennial plant and make it into three or more plants, all free for the price of your sweat! By doing this you help out the parent plant (choose plants that are overgrown or no longer flowering well). Perennials for division in the fall include, but not limited to, asters, callas, daylilies, helianthus, heliopsis, rudbeckia, agapanthus, coreopsis, penstemon, iris and campanula. Use a spading fork or spade to lift entire clumps of plants; cut a clump into sections using a spade, sharp knife or pruning shears. Replant sections in amended soil with bone meal or starter fertilizer, and keep moist. Perennials planted in large groups of one type can look quite nice; when you divide your perennials, you'll have plenty of plants to make your perennial garden marvelous!

## **FALL PLANTING GUIDE**

### **Seeds to sow in September**

Vegetables: Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Pak Choi, Kale, Salad greens of all types, Endive, Onions, Spinach, and Turnips.

Flowers: Sweet Peas, Johnny Jump-Ups, Violas, Coreopsis, Black Eyed Susans, Lupine, Wildflowers, Poppies, Foxgloves, Columbine, Canterbury, Delphinium,

### **Starter sets (plants already started in 6 packs) to plant in October**

Vegetables: Broccoli, Cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, Cabbage, Chard, Salad greens, and onions.

Flowers: Johnny Jump-ups, Violas, Pansy, Snapdragons, Stock, Chrysanthemum, Coreopsis, Candytuft, Aster, Shasta daisy, Cone flower, Penstemon, Foxglove, Delphinium, & Gaillardia.



## **Fall FAQ 2021**

### ***My lawn looks terrible, what can I do to?***

Summer is hard on lawns, and fall is the time to fix them. Older lawns may need to be dethatched and aerated and over seeded as the weather cools. The warm days are perfect for seed germination. After dethatching and aerating, clean up the grass plugs, apply one inch of Gardner & Bloome Organic compost and reseed at 1 pound of seed for every 100 sq. ft. Follow that up with GB Lawn fertilizer.

### ***I water all day and my lawn still looks bad, what is wrong?***

Most people over water their lawn. A healthy lawn should survive with watering every other day. Check for irregular sprinkler coverage, run off, and soil compaction. Please see our article on lawn care. If you are watering in the morning and at night-stop it! Do not water anything after 4pm. Evening water encourages fungal diseases. I like to water at 4am and 8am, splitting the time needed between the two waterings. A lawn needs one inch of water 2-3 times a week to stay healthy. This takes some effort, but your lawn will thank you for it. Bring a sample of your lawn in for further help (a 12 inch square is perfect and easy to replant).

### ***Can I plant this time of year?***

Fall is the best time to plant, the days are warm, nights are cool, and the soil is still warm from summer. Fall planting allows the plant to establish a root system through the winter months and begin to actively grow in the spring. You will miss the spring fever by planting in the fall!

### ***I am having a party and want to brighten up my patio/yard, what can I plant?***

It is time to freshen up your containers and planters with cool season annuals like pansies, violas, poppies, flowering kale, snap dragons, and primroses. Adding fall blooming perennial like mums, asters, sedums, and grasses will make the yard beautiful. For those who want to add larger plants, crape myrtle, oak leaf hydrangeas, Japanese maples, and dogwoods all provide beautiful fall color. For more fall color suggestions-see our October Newsletter.

### ***Something is eating my plants?***

The cooler nights will bring back snails and slugs in full force. Monterey Sluggo , or Sluggo Plus will help safely kill them and protect your plants with no danger to pets and wildlife.

### ***When should I prune my summer blooming plants?***

Late fall is the time to prune your summer bloomers like hydrangea, hibiscus rose of Sharon, crape myrtle. Fall is a great time for general summer clean up and light shaping.

### ***How do I prevent all these weeds? They are everywhere- in my bark, rock/gravel areas, patio.***

Applying Pre emergents in the late fall and spring will significantly reduce the number of weeds in your planters, walkways, gravel/rock borders. Pre emergents prevent seeds from germinating, they will not control or kill established weeds. They come in granular or liquid form. After a few years of consistent usage, your weeds will be decreased by 90%. Pre emergents are safe to use around plants since they just stop seeds from germinating

### ***Can I plant my bulbs now?***

Shop now for the best selection and then...Please wait until after Thanksgiving. Then plant away- the soil is cool enough in the late fall. We do carry a selection of deer resistant bulbs too.



## Gardening Near the Wild by Shilo Nielsen

As residents of El Dorado County, many of us are blessed with beautiful views, open land nearby, and maybe a bit of undeveloped land of our own. As a gardener, this is both fabulous and challenging. Unlike decorating the interior of a house, where some paint, furniture and carpet go in and viola!, it's done; on the outside, you have to deal with Mother Nature. You plant some grass, a tree, some flowers, and tomorrow something has changed, often for better or worse. These changes are even more noticeable if you are gardening next to undeveloped areas. Nature doesn't rest much, and she is always throwing around seeds, branches, leaves, berries, etc. Before you know it, things are growing where you didn't plant them. Plants are getting broken off by debris, snow, and animals. Rocks are multiplying instead of your bulbs. So what is a gardener to do?

Learn to dance! We plant a geranium here, nature adds two toyons next to it. We plant a patch of roses there, deer reduce it to one plant. We plant a maple for fall color, and nature throws a pine right next to it. Two steps forward... one step sideways.

If your garden backs up to natural land, allow nature to improve it. Clip a toyon here, remove one over there, and let these two grow. Blur the boundaries between your plants and Nature's. Ornamental grasses such as *Miscanthus*, Switchgrass (*Panicum*) and especially natives like Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) make an excellent transition border. Many natives such as Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*) and *Ceanothus* make great hedges or screens and are drought-tolerant.



And keep moving! Gardens are a dynamic system, and must always be tweaked – weeding here, adding nutrients over there, pruning big plants, and filling holes with new plants. There is no such thing as "maintenance free" unless you just sit back and let the weeds take over. Even the natives who lived here before us managed it to some extent by burns. And that was before the settlers from Europe brought in the many exotic weeds we have today. It can be overwhelming. Even the most avid gardener gets discouraged now and then.

But don't give up! Planting the right plant in the right place with notation for mature size, sun/shade pattern, and soil type keeps maintaining them easier. Native plants also tend to have less pest problems, as well as attracting beneficial insects.

And don't forget to plant for the birds. In addition to adding movement and life to the garden, many birds such as hummingbirds and Western blue birds eat pesky bugs. Shrubs with berries and grasses with seeds will keep them coming around. Snags of dead branches are critical shelter for some species. Plant for beneficial insects too: Yarrow (*Achillea*) for butterflies and *Salvia* for bumblebees. Native California fuschia (*Zauschneria californica*) attracts humming birds, as does *Penstemon*, elderberry (*Sambucus*), redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*), monkey flower (*Mimulus*), and many others.



Fence your vegetable garden to keep deer out. That really is the best way. Bird netting over plants works but is a lot of work to keep on it correctly as they grow.

Keep in mind water requirements in groups of plantings. Unless you have all natives and/or other Mediterranean plants adapted to no summer water, you will need to irrigate. Even natives will need water the first couple summers, and many look better with monthly watering as well. Drip irrigation is the most efficient. Overhead watering can harbor fungal and bacterial diseases on many plants. Drip irrigation systems need monthly tending in the summer to make sure emitters are working and adding or changing emitters as plants grow.

And don't forget the best part, rest and enjoy your garden or landscape! Take some time out each day to sit and relax, take in the fragrance, color and textures. Listen to the music of the wind and the birds. Take a little stroll amongst the plants and stones. Take note of things that may need attention in the future, but don't do it now. Set aside a time each week when you will weed and deadhead. Knowing when it will be done makes it easier to relax in the moment.

The dance between our gardens and nature's should always be lively. Turn up the volume on your inner music, and let your garden's story unfold with a smile! 😊

