

PLANT PICK



It's usually love at first sight when people witness the low clumps of whirling grey foliage. Allium 'Glaucum' does best in full sun, is low maintenance and deer resistant.

Top Tips

The large flowers of Peonies are always pulling the stems over. Try placing light weight chicken wire on the ground as the stems emerge from the soil. The plant will raise the wire off the ground as it grows, holding the stems upright.

Please send newsletter requests, questions and topics to designingeden@charter.net. To receive this newsletter send one box of milk chocolate (Nuts and caramels only, no creams) with your contact information to the address listed above.

Garden Calendar

April:

Now is the time to divide ornamental grasses.

Continue spring cleanup of lawn and gardens.

Set out plant supports for top heavy perennials to allow plants to grow through them.

Apply pre-emergent weed control to plant beds if you've had past weed problems.

Apply crabgrass control to lawns if you had a problem last year. Apply first application when forsythia are in bloom. Ultimately the best defense against weeds is a thick, healthy lawn. Look into slice seeding or core aerating in August.

May:

Plant annuals after the last expected frost, usually the last week of May. If you plant annuals any earlier, be sure to have sheets or burlap handy to protect plants from frost.

Prune spring flowering shrubs right after flowering before next years flower buds form.

June:

Perennials that are too tall for their space or tend to flop over mid season can be cut back to 6". Doing this will decrease the overall size of the plant and push back bloom time by 2-3 weeks.

Deadhead spent flowers to promote reblooming.



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Greetings from Richard



Hello! Happy Spring! It's that great time of year when all of us are excited to be outside again. Plants are coming back to life and people become more active after a long hibernation.

I recently read a press release in the local paper about a company celebrating their 10 year anniversary. That got me thinking about Designing Eden. For most companies, the year they started in business is cut and dry. For Designing Eden it's not so easy. I received my first weekly lawn account when I was 12. I cut that lawn for 2 years and then went on hiatus for 2 years until I got my driver's license in 1985. At that point I was cutting about 15 lawns a week after school and performing other odd jobs during the summer. You could also consider 1992 an official anniversary, the year I graduated college and was thrown into the green industry full time. Since I've never actually chosen an official anniversary, my marketing material incorporates multiple start dates which must confuse the heck out of potential clients. The website has one date and then I hand new clients a fact sheet that has a different date. No one has ever questioned me but I really should pick a date because I've missed some important anniversaries, not to mention celebrations. Anyway, whether it's my 15th, 22nd or 26th year in business it would not have been possible without you. People like the Izzo and Ogallager families who I've worked for since 1985 and to all the other families who have followed. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Schipul

What will spring bring? The effects of a warm winter

Although the cold and snow arrived a little later than usual, December and January were some of the warmest on record. In January I saw cherry trees flowering and daffodil growth of four inches. So what can we expect this spring? The short answer is not much.

You would think warm weather would be good for plants. But just as extremely cold weather can wreak havoc on plants, so can an abnormally warm winter.

The good news is nothing serious should have occurred to affect the long term health of your plants. The bad news is that spring flower displays shouldn't be as showy as they typically are.

Plants have evolved over time to deal with temporary, unseasonal weather. It's hard to imagine but studies have shown that plants have an internal clock. Temperature and day length play a factor in when a plant breaks dormancy. We can have warm winter weather but if the day isn't the right length a plant will remain dormant a little later than if the day is the right length, no matter what the temperature. Some plants will also rely on other factors besides temperature and day length. Some plants have the capability to track cold days and will be slow to break dormancy unless the winter season's cold requirement has been met. For instance, a plant in an unusually warm January will be slower to break dormancy if the cold requirement has not been met than the same plant in March which has met that requirement. This internal clock monitors weather and will regulate dormancy whether the winter temperature is 60 degrees or ten below.

What to look for in the coming months?

For one, you will see a lack of spring flowers. A lot of spring flower buds in both trees and shrubs began to swell and then were damaged by the false sense of spring followed by our normal February cold.

Warm winter days followed by nights below freezing can wreak havoc on thin barked trees such as cherries. On warm winter days sap begins to flow and then quickly freezes as night time temperatures drop below freezing. The sap freezes, then expands to the point where it splits the bark, causing Frost Crack. There is nothing that can be done once the split occurs besides giving the tree time to heal. Frost Crack isn't detrimental to tree health but it does diminish the look of the tree.

Bulbs, such as daffodils, which broke dormancy in January should be fine. Even though these bulbs have expended essential energy for the false spring, a healthy bulb should have enough reserve energy to push growth for a second time.

This spring, holding back on any spring pruning until a plant is fully leafed out might be a good idea considering some plants might break dormancy a little later. Branches that might look dead may still be sleeping. A sure fire way to check for life is to cut off a small branch or rub off some bark with a finger nail. If green tissue exists, the tree is fine.

Spring fertilization could prove beneficial if a lot of buds were damaged or there is some winter dieback.

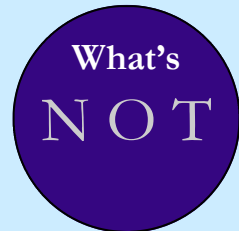
One good thing that will come out of this is the late fall encouraged root growth in all plants including turf which will help fight insect, disease and drought.



2007

Cottage gardens.
Fussy plants.
Just flowers. More emphasis on foliage.
Water gardening

Container gardening.
Outdoor living. It's 'in' to be 'out'. Entertainment areas with kitchens, bars and even TV's continues to be big.
Big, bold foliage and accents.
Small fountains and fireplaces.
Multitasking gardens. Mixing ornamentals and edibles.
Fire Pits



Source: Garden Media Group

"When you have only two pennies left in the world, buy a loaf of bread with one, and a lily with the other"
Chinese Proverb

Reminder

Anyone needing a lawn renovation needs to call now! Once soil temperatures get above 60 degrees it's a lot harder to establish a lawn.

Visit us at www.DesigningEden.com