

## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

*No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees, no fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds - November! ~Thomas Hood, "No!"*

November is not as dire as Thomas Hood writes, yet, with the falling leaves, the chilly winds, and shorter days of sun light, we understand that Mother Nature is bedding down for the upcoming winter. Whether you build a big bonfire on the driveway, play croquet on the lawn, or listen to the sighing of the soil, be a humble pilgrim while experiencing a grateful gathering with friends and family on Thanksgiving Day.

- **ATTRACT** lizards by raking leaves and brush into a pile. The shelter invites these helpful reptiles to your garden.
- **ALLOW** a smattering of spent rose blooms to develop rose hips. Excellent for tea as a vitamin C booster.
- **DEADHEAD** the rest of your roses as the petals fade to maintain a steady stream of colorful, fragrant bouquet through the New Year.
- **COLOR** your world by planting bushes that boast fall and winter berries such as cotoneaster, holly, and pyracantha. Robins may get drunk on the red berries, while migratory birds are grateful for the nutritious fuel.
- **MULCH** by shredding the raked leaves from the deciduous trees adding grass clippings, dried plants stems, and trimmings all which provide water conservation, better drainage, and nutrients to the soil.
- **DECORATE** your front door with a wreath made from gourds, tiny pumpkins, and autumn leaves. Add a witch or goblin for a spooky Halloween, then, for Thanksgiving switch to a wood cut out of pilgrims or turkeys plus Indian corn, apples, and nuts. One arrangement doubles as a star cornucopia for fall fun.
- **DISCOVER** trees that tickle your fancy with their brilliant fall foliage at your local nurseries. When you see trees dressed in their full autumn attire, it's easier to choose ones that best suit your garden. Make sure to consider size, sun, and spread when buying a tree.
- **ADD** texture, color, and all season interest to your landscape by planting low maintenance ornamental grasses such as purple fountaingrass, arching maidengrass, blue fescue, or the popular, upright feather reedgrass.
- **STAY ALERT** for brush fire danger. As you cut branches and rake leaves, keep them far from your home and other burnable structures. Despite recent rains, fires happen when the winds kick up. Clean your chimney before igniting your wood burning fireplaces. Twenty years ago at this time in 1991, the East Bay hills witnessed one of the most devastating late season fires in history.
- **PLANT** your spring blooming bulbs now including daffodils, crocus, tulips, and other favorites. You'll be able to continue planting bulbs through January. Mark the location with plant tags or wooden paint sticks.
- **PERK** up your optimism quotient with perennials that energize, soothe, and lift your mood. It's planting time for Oriental Poppies, Peonies, and Bearded Iris.
- **LOOKING** for an extravagant gift for that special someone? You can have a rose commissioned with their name for fees beginning around \$9500. Roses are registered with the International Cultivar Registration Authority. I'd love a Starstyle® rose, but it may have to wait. Darn! If you have the bucks, visit [http://paulzimmermanroses.com/?page\\_id=1141](http://paulzimmermanroses.com/?page_id=1141).
- **PICK** up acorns that fall from the oak trees before they take root. Put them in a pile outside of your garden fence to feed the deer and the squirrels.
- **ROAST** sweet potatoes with sliced garlic, chopped hazelnuts, sprigs of rosemary tossed with olive oil and balsamic for a savory sweet treat. Top with peppery arugula and nasturtium blossoms picked from your garden.
- **CLOSE** your garage and shed doors as you enter and leave to avoid unwanted intruders such as slithering serpents and rambling rodents who are anxious to bed down for a long winters nap. (Experience on this one, most certainly!)
- **PAMPER** our feathered friends with clean nesting boxes and plenty of food. As the weather changes, they appreciate a little help from humans.
- **SUBJECT** your Christmas cactus to cold temperatures in the 50's or leave pots of them in the dark for 12 hours a day to encourage holiday blooms.
- **WINTERIZE** your patio by covering or storing furniture, pads, and accessories Move frost tender plants in pots near the house for warmth.
- **BREATHE** in the chilly air on a clear day as you savor the season's final blossoms and scented flower fragrances. Winter is drawing near.
- **GRATITUDE** works. My heartfelt thank you to all of you who read my column faithfully. Wishing you a healthy holiday and terrific Thanksgiving.

Happy Gardening to YOU!

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The Goddess Gardener  
Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com  
www.GoddessGardener.com  
925-377-7827

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