

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for November

"I don't feel like spring. I feel like a warm red autumn." – Marilyn Monroe

Are you falling for fall? For a few weeks the leaves on the trees are ablaze with their fiery finery in crimson, gold, burnt umber, and copper. The air is crisp and clean. The squirrels are busy storing acorns and nuts, the turkeys parading across our landscapes are plump, and, as we wrap a cozy scarf around our necks, we harvest the last of our year's produce. Narcissi have begun to pop their fragrant heads allowing us to perfume our interior spaces. The holiday season is on the horizon where we'll gather around the hearth with dear friends and family. But before the festivities begin, we have much to do to prepare our gardens for a long winter's sleep.

- **STORE** potatoes for winter consumption by culling any damaged tubers, then nestling the good spuds in ventilated bins, bushel baskets, or root storage boxes. Cover with newspaper to eliminate all light and keep the temperature at 35-45 degrees. Toss out green potatoes as they are inedible.
- **WASH** and cover or store patio furniture, especially pads and hammocks.
- **RAKE** fallen leaves and clean areas that could be hiding places for snails and slugs.
- **ADD** ornamental grasses as late season plantings with pretty spikes that add interest through winter. Suggestions are fountain grass, maiden grass, and switch grass.
- **MULCH** hillsides to prevent erosion and runoff as well as protect plants from frost.
- **RECYCLE** plastic pots by bringing them back to your local nursery or donating the containers to schools, Master Gardener groups, or horticultural societies to be used for plant sales.
- **GATHER** guavas that drop. It's best to put a tarp on the ground to collect the fallen fruit. Ripen indoors until skin is yellow, then refrigerate. Eat. Dehydrate to make fruit leather.
- **NATURALIZE** narcissi as soon as the ground temperature chills to around 60 degrees. Plant early, mid, and late bulbs for months of spring blooms in a variety of colors.
- **PLANT** other bulbs November through January including ranuncula, Dutch iris, anemone, crocus, and scilla. By staggering the planting dates, you'll enjoy a longer display of blooms.
- **REMOVE** and destroy any garden debris that could bring overwintering insects and diseases that cause rot.
- **SOW** seeds for early spring bloomers such as larkspur, sweet peas, lupines, and California poppies.
- **CUT** back stalks of iris to six inches from the ground which tidies the garden and reduces the surface space where the fungus leaf spot may develop with the rains.
- **PROTECT** container frost tender plants such as Birds of Paradise by moving close to house or covering with blankets or plastic.
- **CREATE** a wildlife habitat sheltered from the elements with plants that provide nourishment for birds, butterflies, and bees.
- **FILL** birdfeeders and sanitize birdhouses.
- **SET** out transplants of Iceland poppies, pansies, sweet alyssum, and kale while soil is still warm.
- **HARVEST** gourds and pumpkins to decorate your Thanksgiving table. The flesh from fresh pumpkins makes delicious pies, soups, sauces, and cookies.
- **SEED** your winter vegetable garden with radishes, cabbage, arugula, lettuces, bok choy, beets, garlic, onions, and mache.
- **ADD** structure, seasonal interest, and fragrance to your property with shrubs such as spicy viburnum, miniature lilac, long-blooming hydrangea, and the fruiting holly, winterberry.
- **SHOW** your four-legged friends some love with a shallow water garden or a ground-level fountain that bubbles fresh, running water.
- **BRING** color into your flowerbeds with edible multi-hued kale and lacy Italian parsley.
- **MARVEL** at the wild turkeys running at up to 25 miles per hour and reaching speeds of 55 miles per hour in flight. No wonder these garden visitors are not the main course on our Thanksgiving tables!

Wishing you a month of grace and gratitude. Enjoy a glorious Thanksgiving.
Happy Gardening and happy growing to you!

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PRUNING NOW PAYS LATER

The type of pruning your tree gets is critical to the health, longevity, safety and appearance. Proper care for your tree is important and pruning a healthy strong tree now will help with the prevention of storm damage.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by your local ISA Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping for all your tree care needs.

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