

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for March Magic

INSPECT your irrigation system. Mud might be clogging sprinkler heads while grass or lawn may have grown over the sprinklers. Spend time to get your system working properly before the heat begins.

MOW lawns without the bag, "sin bolsa" en espanol. The lawn cuttings are filled with nitrogen and nutrition that will green up your lawn. Don't waste that free fertilizer. If you find that clumps are left behind, rake or blow them into the lawn.

SOW lawn seed now. If you want to add a bit of color that will withstand dogs and kids, isotoma called blue star creeper looks great with its tiny blue flowers. Clover is always green boasting pink or white flowers. For a real conversation piece, create a living rug with a variety of ornamental grasses including ajuga, woolly thyme, pink chintz thyme, creeping speedwell, Irish moss and brass buttons.

GROW red and golden beets for their anti-inflammatory qualities. With only six grams of sugar in the average two-inch diameter bulb, beets lower blood glucose and increase insulin sensitivity. The leaves are delicious sliced, diced, raw, or steamed. Rich in fiber, folate, potassium and vitamins A and C, beets are heart healthy, lowering blood pressure while providing plenty of antioxidants. After boiling, save the water to add to your juice or other veggies.

WASH patio furniture with a solution of water and bleach to remove mildew or mold that has grown over the winter.

CUT a few errant shoots from any budding fruit tree to add to a vase of water. You'll enjoy watching the buds burst to blossoms over several weeks.

PLAN your vegetable garden by creating a map of what you want where. Design in geometric patterns, semi-circles, and circles for whimsy and interest.

CLEAN birdbaths, fountains, bird feeders, and birdhouses to attract songbirds to reside in your garden.

CONTINUE to pick up fallen camellia blossoms until the blooming ends next month. Do not leave the dead blooms on the ground.

ADD a trellis as a focal point in your landscape for climbing blue morning glory, clematis or red runner beans.

FERTILIZE grass, trees, shrubs, and perennials.

BRING inside plants outside for a good soaking and a few hours of morning sunlight. Check for insects and wipe the exterior of the containers as well as any leaves with a damp cloth to remove the dust.

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Honeybee on rosemary.



A spectacular tulip magnolia tree (Magnolia x soulangean) along a path.