

Published June 5th, 2024

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



View of the meadow garden after weeding.
Photos Cynthia Brian

"Once the relation between poetry and the soil is established in the mind, all growing things are endowed with more than material beauty." Elizabeth Lawrence

□ Have you ever wandered your garden and realized the growing landscape is poetry in motion? As you've read in my recent columns, I have been occupied with aggressive hand-weeding on my land these past several months. Under the masses of foxtails, thistles, spurge, bindweed, black medic, pelargonium robertianum, hemlock, and wild grasses, fields of flowers awaited the sunshine. With only three garden rooms left in my quest to purge the pernicious invaders, my first round of weeding is almost at an end.

□ The plant poetry has begun. My orchard meadow is glorious with swaths of wildflowers, including golden poppies, sprouted seeds of calendula, nigella, seafoam static, nasturtiums, blooming cornflowers, iris, geranium, roses, chamomile, lilies, acanthus, strawberry, bougainvillea, and more. My orchard is brimming with

fruit trees that will ripen throughout the season. Apricots, cherries, peaches, plums, prunes, mulberries, apples, Asian Pears, elderberries, persimmons, pomegranates, guavas, loquats, figs, and vines of grapes provide edible delights for our household and the wildlife who frequent the meadow. I recently planted a banana tree and two avocados, keeping my fingers crossed that they will bear fruit in a few years. Footsteps away is my citrus grove, with tangerines, oranges, tangelos, lemons, and kumquats. The hillside is a vibrant, pollinator paradise. Bees and bumblebees especially favor the blue nigella, buzzing from blossom to blossom, savoring the sweet nectar. Butterflies and birds flutter and fly through this heavenly fragrant celebration of color, scale, and texture. When I view photos from a month ago -- when this area was blanketed in suffocating weeds -- I am grateful for the miracle of nature, this poetic painting abundant with stunning flowers.

□ The paths are filled with gravel and lined with recycled redwood planks rescued from a renewed deck - both a clever, sustainable, and frugal option. Like the balance of a colorful poem, this design is wild yet civilized, celebrating the quirks of nature.

□ Another poetic surprise in my garden this week was the blooming of my cordyline, also known as the Ti plant. One day when I went out for my daily garden walk, iridescent shoots had sprung out of the top of this good-luck tree, glittering in the morning sun. I also harvested the first of my zucchini, which was exciting because last summer my plants were eaten by critters. Cascading over the raised bed in my vegetable garden, edible and tangy nasturtium in red, yellow, and orange shades reminds me of my Nonna's garden. Not to be outdone, my Bonica rose bush drapes over the mailbox with voluminous baby pink blooms flanked by fluorescent fuchsia corn flags, creating a mesmerizing entrance.

□ Each day promises something new and exciting. Plant poetry is indeed endowed with more than material beauty.

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□ Cynthia Brian's Goddess Gardener Guide for June

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□ It is time to remove the dried leaves from daffodils, naked ladies, woodland hyacinths, freesias, and other spring-blooming bulbs. A quick tug of the dried leaves is all you need to do. If you must pull hard, the leaves are not ready to be removed. I know they look unsightly in your garden, but if you remove the leaves before they have had the chance to provide nutrients to the bulb you won't have any flowers next spring.

□ Apply snail bait to plants susceptible to snail and slug damage. They come out of hiding at night to nibble your new shoots and because of the rains are an abundant nuisance.

□ Monitor water needs for your landscape. Water infrequently but deeply. Containers lose moisture more quickly and will need additional attention.

□ Clean and arrange patio furniture, pads, and outdoor gear. With summer on the horizon, get prepared to party.

□ Plant summer-blooming bulbs and scatter seeds to surprise you with their brilliance.

□ Deadhead rose blossoms as they fade to keep your bushes healthy and blooming until the end of the year. I have over 200 rose bushes and deadheading is a daily chore, albeit one that yields huge rewards. Wear protective gloves!

□ If you haven't finished cutting tall grass, clearing debris, maintaining a fuel break, and preparing for wildfires, do it this week. Be vigilant and a good neighbor!

□ Create a vibrant garden masterpiece in your backyard with prolonged performance perennials and annuals available at your favorite nursery.

□ Celebrate graduations, birthdays, Father's Day, and more with a kaleidoscope of plant poetry.

□ Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy June!



A gravel path outlines a border of seafoam statice and calendulas. Photos Cynthia Brian



Before weeding only a few plants can be seen in the meadow. Photos Cynthia Brian



View of the meadow garden after weeding. Photos Cynthia Brian



Bumblebees on the blue nigella. Photos Cynthia Brian



Cordyline blooms.



Corn flags and a Bonica rose bush are pretty in pink.



Cynthia Brian admires her poetic garden.

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!r 501 c3 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyler Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available for discounted pre-sales at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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