

The Master Gardener's Corner

Things to do in your garden each month, taken from the Ontario Master Gardener Calendar by John Hethrington, Past President, Master Gardeners of Ontario. For more information, call 519-599-5846.

Things to do in your garden in – August 2021.

The cool, dry May and June, followed now by a thundering rain has made the weeds incredible and added a few items to the August garden chore list.

This month is mostly about maintaining your gardens, but Master Gardener John Hethrington also recommends a few planning tasks to make sure the spring garden is bright and cheery.

Since fall approaches (sorry) you'll also get the chance to add mums and asters to make sure the garden will still be blooming in the autumn.

Here's a list of tips from Hethrington for the month of August:

- Keep adding mulch as it starts to work into the soil. Keep it at least two inches deep. It works to suppress weeds, keeps the soil cool and damp and protects the rain we get.
- Sow vegetable seeds for a fall harvest e.g. spinach and some varieties of lettuce.
- Tidy up plants and shrubs with a little judicious pruning, but early in the month.
- Stake tall perennials against the wind.
- Cut your grass at least 2" high to combat drying out. Water well when needed, or when it is allowed.
- Check out bulb catalogues and order before they are sold out (try www.botanus.com from BC for lots of unique varieties).
- Order spring-flowering bulbs now for planting in October.
- Fill in gaps in your flower garden with fall-flowering perennials, like mums and asters.
- Start drying flowers and herbs.
- Start to divide daylilies, iris and peonies later in the month.
- Collect seeds that have matured but not fallen from the plant. Once they have completely dried, store them in airtight containers in a cool location.
- Take a hard look at your garden and decide where there are empty spaces for new plants this fall. Identify any plants that have not performed well and plan to replace them with a fall planting program of shrubs and perennials.
- Early fall is a great time to sow grass seed and plant perennials, trees, and shrubs. You'll get a big jump on next Spring!