

Gardening in August

Plant:

- Warm-season lawngrasses. Water morning and evening daily for first two or three weeks.
- Perennials such as chrysanthemums, fall asters, Mexican bush sage, Mexican mint marigold as they come into nurseries.
- Flowering bulbs such as spider lilies, naked lady lily, fall crocus, and oxblood lily.
- Acid-treated bluebonnet seeds and other sprint wildflowers.

Fall vegetables first week, beans, cucumbers, squash, corn. Middle of the month, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts. Late in the month leafy and root vegetables such as lettuce spinach, carrots, beets, radishes.

Prune:

- Pinch coleus, impatiens, begonias, geraniums and copper plants to encourage new growth.
- Trim autumn sage by one-third.
- Bush roses - prune by one-third for new growth for fall blooms.
- Prune out dead wood on trees and shrubs but save major pruning for the fall or winter.

Fertilize:

- Lawn and landscape plants with good-quality nitrogen fertilizer, half or more in slow-release form, to clay soils and high nitrogen food to sandy soils. Wait till September to fertilize St. Augustine.
- Container plants. Apply a diluted, water-soluble, high-nitrogen food weekly.

Troubleshooting:

- Look for aphids on crape myrtles. Apply appropriate insecticide. Strong spray of water will wash aphids off leaves.
- Chinch bugs in St. Augustine turf. Look for patches in sunniest areas that do not revive after watering. Look for BB-sized black insects with irregular white diamonds on their wings. Apply labeled insecticide.
- Pecan trees — Hickory shuck worms and pecan weevils invade shucks and nuts this month. Apply with appropriate insecticide early in month. Repeat the last week of the month. You will need a power sprayer for good coverage.
- Water deeply instead of frequently. Check soil to see if it is moist 1" or more below the surface.
- Mulching flowers and vegetables helps retain moisture and keeps the soil cooler to reduce stress on the plants. Make sure irrigation has penetrated the mulch and gone into the soil.

Garden Tips:

- Do a garden assessment to determine what plants did well and which did not, which plants needs to be replaced or moved to a more appropriate spot.
- Place orders for spring-flowering bulbs.