

Digging Deep

The Magic of May

By Cynthia Brian

"Harmony makes small things grow. Lack of it makes big things decay." — Sallust*Sweet jasmine climbs a palm tree filling the air with perfume.*

Photos Cynthia Brian

By mid-May Mother Nature has waved her magical wand sprinkling glitter and glory among her growing children. No matter where you look, shrubs, trees and landscapes showcase a beauty and harmony that set this month apart from the remaining 11.

Herbaceous peonies are budding and will bloom for weeks offering outstanding companionship to mixed perennial gardens. Glorious bouquets of roses decorate pathways and arbors. Fields of bearded iris brighten the most mundane areas with their multitude of colors, gentle fragrance and graceful arches. Horse chestnut, buckeye and locust trees are overflowing with grapelike bunches of blooms. Get up close to examine the intricacies of their flowers.

The warmer weather has sped up the blooming season while only a month earlier the cooler weather slowed it down. My waves of bright blue forget-me-nots have settled into a sea of seeds that attach to any clothing that ventures near, easily spreading the flowers to places unplanned. Along the creek beds, even the poisonous hemlock weeds sprouted several feet taller than in previous years with attractive clusters of flowers resembling Queen

Anne's lace. Tiny Alpine strawberries are red, ripe, and delicious as snacks or in salads. Better to eat these than any store-bought strawberry. Thanks to the unparalleled Pearl's Premium grass seeds, my lawn has never looked so lush and lovely. If you want turf that is tough, drought resistant, low maintenance and beautiful, start thinking now about preparing your ground for an autumn seeding of Pearl's Premium (www.PearlsPremium.com).

The Old Farmer's Almanac recently contacted a colleague garden writer asking about what tools, products, and plants gardeners sought most this year. She posted a request for suggestions on our member community site and I reveled in the answers that I believe resonate with you, my garden guide readers. Here's my abbreviated version of what we gardeners want.

1. We crave information that we can use on a daily basis.
2. We want to grow our own food for better nutrition and first-rate freshness.
3. We want to save money.
4. We want to bring pollinators into our gardens for an organically friendly habitat. We are putting out the welcome mat for birds, bees, butterflies and bats.
5. We want to reduce waste by composting more.
6. We want tools that are sturdy, long lasting, yet not exorbitantly expensive.
7. We want to explore simpler to use, more environmentally friendly power tools that are battery powered and strong.
8. We want space saving ideas including container and vertical gardening techniques.
9. We want to learn to prune properly.
10. We want low-maintenance, native alternatives, and drought resistant plants.
11. We want to ENJOY our garden rooms!

The wants of the national garden community echo locally as well. My promise to you is to continue to bring you the latest tools, tips, and tricks that will make your garden experience extraordinary.

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*Green, lush Pearl's Premium grass and colorful landscaping is a tribute to May magic.*