

Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

HARVEST garlic. Dig the heads out with a spade. Don't just pull on the stems. Move the garlic out of sunlight immediately to a shady, dry area such as a porch or a garage where circulation is good. (My garage smells like a delicious Italian kitchen!) Garlic cures best with the leaves on. Don't wash your garlic or scrape the dirt off of the bulb. Either lay flat or gather the stems into bunches to hang upside down to dry. Braiding works with softneck garlic. Curing will allow you to enjoy your garlic into winter. You can eat the garlic immediately as well. Save a few of your biggest heads to use as seed garlic for planting in the fall.

PLAY a lawn game that is new to you. How about the beanbag toss game or the ring toss similar to horseshoes called Quoit? If you are not too adventurous, stick to croquet and bocce!

PROLONG the life of lemons by filling a jar with water, adding the citrus, and covering tightly. The fruit will last longer than in the refrigerator and the jar makes a pretty counter display. Limes work the same except they require refrigeration.

REHYDRATE wilted vegetables by placing them for 15 minutes in a large bowl of cold water.

PICK carrots at their prime when they are still young, thin and sweet. The bigger they get, the stringier and tougher. Carrots don't need to be peeled. Scrub and go.

GATHER seeds from faded nasturtiums and four o'clocks to replant wherever you want more plants. Nasturtiums are beautiful cascading over a retaining wall or climbing a trellis while four o'clocks open their blooms in the afternoon at – surprise – 4 p.m. daily.

CUT rose rosettes to dry for a fragrant and elegant potpourri display.

WATCH for butterflies, especially yellow swallowtails. They are so intent on the flowers that they appear unafraid of the camera lens.

PICK plums and prunes. Large crops may cause branches to break. Food banks welcome fresh fruit when you have extra.

ENJOY the bounty of fruits and flowering trees and shrubs of July.

SWIM and have fun in the sun this summer. Don't forget your sunscreen!

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!



Harvest garlic. Don't wash until using.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Yellow plums



Drying roses for potpourri is easy.