

Cynthia Brian's October Gardening Tips

DISCOUNTED grass seed. October is the month to plant or refurbish your lawn. Since my favorite lawn seed is not sold in California, I have arranged for a special discount for my clients, readers, and radio listeners. Save 20 percent on Grass seed through Oct. 10, with code STAR20. Enjoy!

SPIDER WEBS strangling your plants? You might have spider mites. They make a spider web-like netting to protect themselves and their eggs and are almost impossible to see with the naked eye. Put a piece of white paper under the leaves of a plant and shake the plant. If a pepper-like substance falls on the paper you have spider mites. You can spray with a strong stream of water, use beneficial insects such as ladybugs or lacewings, or spray with NEEM oil. A chemical pesticide is not recommended as it kills the beneficials and not the spider mites.

RAKE leaves as they fall. As long as the leaves are not diseased, add them to your compost pile or to an area of your garden that could use extra mulch.

BUY spring bulbs now. Refrigerate tulips, hyacinths, crocus, and muscari for four to six weeks. Place in a mesh bag in the refrigerator away from any fruits that could emit ethylene gas, which will stunt blooms. Ranunculus and anemones do not need pre-chilling.

PLANT cool season vegetables including beets, carrots, lettuce, arugula, kale, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, peas, and onions.

CONTINUE picking tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and squash for your meals.

HARVEST pumpkins, Indian corn, and gourds for Halloween and autumn décor.

DIVIDE clumps of daylilies, bearded iris, and clivia as they don't like to be crowded. Once divided, they will bloom more profusely.

GIVE new perennials a chance to settle in for a spring bloom by planting in October.

REDUCE irrigation as the weather cools. Reset timers or turn them off completely.

CHECK out fall colored deciduous trees and shrubs to add to your garden.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.
Cynthia Brian



An abandoned 4-wheeler in a wet field of buttercups.



Sprouting in the amazing formations of lava.