

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for July

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- **PROPAGATE** herbs such as lovage and lemon grass and edible flowers like nasturtiums and calendula for a perennial party of exotic flavors.
- **INCREASE** the amount of sunscreen you use while in the garden. Make sure to re-apply often, wear a hat, and sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- **EAT** fresh organic eggs as eggs currently sold in supermarkets are nutritionally inferior to eggs produced by hens raised on pasture. Testing has found that, compared to official U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrient data for commercial eggs, eggs from hens raised on pasture contain 1/3 less cholesterol, 1/4 less saturated fat, 2/3 more vitamin A, two times more omega-3 fatty acids, three times more vitamins, and seven times more beta carotene.
- **CLEAR** debris, leaves, limbs, dead grass, wood, reeds, and all flammable materials from around the perimeter of your home. Fire danger is high all summer.
- **PREPARE** to pay more for fresh produce at your local grocer and farmers' market if you haven't grown your own.
- **SPRINKLE** Growstone's Gnat Nix®, a non-toxic, chemical-free fungus gnat control top dressing made from recycled landfill glass on the surface of your containers and beds to reduce gnats on plants, indoors and out. www.growstone.com.
- **VOLUNTEER** in a city or community garden even if you are not a gardener. Research indicates that even a little digging in the dirt boosts serotonin levels and decreases depression.
- **LEARN** from your mistakes. Don't get frazzled when something you planted doesn't grow in a particular spot. Plants wither and die. Plant something else.
- **CUT** back alliums after they are dry to encourage new growth and naturalization.
- **CHECK** yourself for ticks every time you come in from the outdoors. Ticks will jump on your body during hiking, gardening, or just strolling. (I've had four hitchhike so far this season!)
- **WALK** around your garden daily to observe what is new, what needs attention, and to admire your artistry.



Red and white cyclamen, blue lobelia, white perennial alyssum paired with variegated society garlic makes a festive moveable display.



Uncle Sam rides happily amidst a plethora of potted plants.



The delicate blue Nigella flower makes a wonderful cut flower, and next month the pod will be the star.