

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

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Soaker hoses will be great assets for water conservation in my vegetable and herb gardens. I will only be planting a smattering of color spots with specimens I am certain can withstand less moisture. Any extra water used for washing or rinsing dishes and bodies is collected and used in my patio pots. What are your plans to keep your garden alive through the forthcoming hot weather while conserving H2O?

CHECK your irrigation system and consider investing in newer drip or weather based controllers.

START seeds in any recycled container from plastic cups to coconut hulls. Drill a hole in the bottom, add good potting soil, and you are ready to roll. If you plant in orange rind halves, you can plant the entire "container" in the ground.

SAVE water by placing a bowl under your colander when washing greens and vegetables in the sink. Dump the water in the garden.

SCRUB your outdoor furniture and organize your patio. Spring is here and it's time to start the party planning.

FRESHEN your curb appeal with fragrant flowering plants such as star jasmine that will welcome guests with their heady spring perfume.

EMPTY any standing water in saucers, old tires, buckets, gutters or barrels. Mosquitoes are already on the prowl. If you have a pond and want free mosquito fish, contact Vector Control at (925) 685-9301. Vector Control is also your resource for problems with skunks or yellow jackets.

WATCH for holes of voles in your lawn and garden. Voles are extremely destructive and non-discriminating when it comes to eating everything and anything growing. For major infestations, call in the professional eradicators.

BRIGHTEN your garden with drought tolerant succulents. With so many shapes, sizes, textures and colors, you'll be able to create a palette of striking performance that requires minimal moisture.

CUT and turn into the soil any cover crops you planted last fall to add nitrogen and nutrients. Clover, mustard and fava beans are ready to be tilled.

CASCADE lantana from retaining walls and containers for long-lasting color that attracts beneficial bees and butterflies.

TRELLIS thornless lady banksia roses or purple wisteria for a glorious spring mix that will continue to delight year after year.

VISIT the Moraga Gardens plant sale from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through April 19 for a wide variety of home-grown-from-seed vegetables, herbs and other plants. Each four-inch pot is only \$3. Address is 1370 Moraga Way, Moraga.

SHEAR and shape conifers, removing any dead or diseased branches.

FERTILIZE roses, lawns and all perennials.

DIVIDE, transplant or share iris, delphinium, daylily, and chrysanthemum with friends.

RE-SEED lawns with clover or high quality grass seed for a thicker, lush mat.

TAKE any moveable houseplants outdoors to give them a good shower and thorough drink. Put them on your lawn when you wash and water them, giving your grass a bath as well.



Purple lantana cascades over a container.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Mustard flowers and leaves are delicious in salads and the entire plant is good for the ground.



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SPRING IS IN THE AIR

Spring is here – it's time for spring cleaning but for your landscape! The trees and plants in the yard need to be inspected for water damage, remove dead or dying branches which may have been injured by disease/severe insect infestation or storm damage.

We also want to prune for improved plant appearance, tree and plant size to ensure all around health for your landscape.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to make your yard a summer STAYCATION.





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