

# Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for February

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*A begonia cascades over the container on the patio.*

*Photos Cynthia Brian*



*It will be a great harvest for loquats this season based on the abundance of the blooms.*

**PICK** navel oranges as they are ripening. Twist the orange and when it comes off the limb easily it's ready to eat. If the orange resists, let it stay on the tree a bit longer.

**PROTECT** lettuce from aphids naturally by planting alyssum as a border.

**GROW** pansies, cyclamen, and violets as a winter pick-me-up and to attract butterflies. Pick the edible flowers to adorn salads and desserts.

**SPRINKLE** a granular organic fertilizer around fruit trees. The rainy weather will aid with the absorption of the grains.

**PROTECT** frost tender plants from the cold, especially those in containers. We have at least 45 days more of possible freezes. Frost blankets, canvas, tarps or cloth

sheets will do the trick. Don't use plastic and be especially diligent with citrus.

**DIG** a ditch to divert water from rain gutters to your garden. It's best to line the swale with pebbles, gravel, or rocks to help filter the runoff and protect against flooding. These swales look great as dry creeks during the summer months.

**HARVEST** cabbage, chard, lettuces, arugula, and other greens as needed. Snip the tops of greens to encourage more growth.

**PERUSE** seed catalogues curled up on the couch with a cup of hot tea on a chilly, rainy day. You'll get ideas for new plants and learn a bit more about the growing seasons.

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