

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian Coming in HOT!



Wichura red roses thrive in summer.

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By planting your garden with heat-tolerant and drought-tolerant varieties, your chances of enjoying a beautiful landscape throughout the summer increase. In addition to succulents, the plants blooming in my landscape fit that description. However, this is NOT the time to plant new specimens, unless you only need a few color spots of annuals. Whatever plants you purchase, make sure to watch and water diligently. Wait until the cooler days in the fall to go on a shopping spree. In the meantime, watch for signs of heat-related stress such as wilting, leaves curling, yellowing, and browning. Here are actions you can immediately employ this summer that will help keep your garden alive.

WATER, WATER, WATER: Check soil moisture regularly. Stick a pencil or chopstick in the soil. If it is dry when removed, your plants are thirsty. Early morning or later in the evening are the best times to water. Water deeply and longer than normal. Make sure the moisture is penetrating and not running off. My preference for irrigation is late evening because the plants have hours to rehydrate. Soaker hoses and drip irrigation minimize evaporation while delivering water directly to the roots.

MISTING: When it is super-hot, plants, like people, enjoy a light misting. This helps cool the plant tissue. For indoor plants, place a tray of water under the container to increase the humidity,

SHADE, SHADE, SHADE: Use umbrellas, shade cloth, or garden fabric to cover your most sensitive plants. Build temporary tents with burlap or even bedsheets. I prefer umbrellas over my very sensitive gardenias, which can be quickly removed with temperature adjustments..

MOVE PATIO POTS: Move container gardens to shaded areas. Be cognizant of water needs. Deep soak most containers daily because they dry out quickly.

WEED, WEED, WEED: Weeds compete with plants for moisture and nutrients. Eliminate weeds as necessary.

MULCH, MULCH, MULCH: Organic matter will increase the holding capacity of your soil. Water regularly. Mulch retains moisture in the soil longer.

REFRAIN FROM FERTILIZING AND PRUNING: Avoid heavy feeding or pruning during heat waves as these actions stress your plants. If a fertilizer is needed, choose an organic, balanced slow-release option.

Make sure to refill fountains and birdbaths to provide drinks for the wildlife. The birds, hummingbirds, bees, butterflies, bats, and other pollinators are grateful visitors. Foxes, skunks, raccoons, rabbits, reptiles, and squirrels have also enjoyed a cool cocktail in my water features! When we work in the garden, we can easily get dehydrated. Drink plenty of water, wear sunglasses, sunscreen, and a big hat. Jump in your swimming pool or spray yourself with a hose when you feel heated, whether you are wearing your bathing suit or your overalls! Softly restore your spirit with the moon, and rejuvenate your body under the stars with the cooler nights. This summer is coming in hot!



Anna's hummingbird stops by the fountain to refresh.



Seafoam statice is drought-resistant and maintains its brilliant purple/blue hue.