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Lawn and Garden

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



Update

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September Plant of the Month . . .

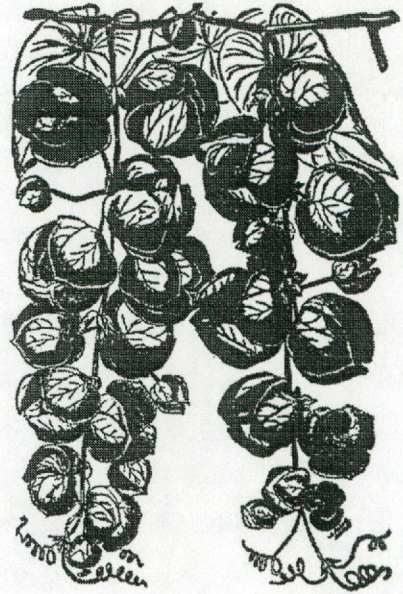
Coral Vine

Antigonon leptopus

By Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

This native of Mexico is widely cultivated in Texas and the Gulf South for its striking, lacy pink flowers. Like many of our popular heirloom plants, it has at least several common names, such as 'heavenly vine' and 'rose of Montana'. It is a vigorous vine, with heart-shaped leaves, that needs the support of a trellis, fence, or tree. The first hard freeze of autumn kills all the top growth, but established plants return readily the next year from sweet-potato like tubers that some sources describe as edible. It is generally root hardy in the southern half of our state, and can be easily grown in containers elsewhere.

Coral vines are easily grown, but must have good drainage and at least a partially sunny exposure. They are very drought tolerant, and really begin their landscape display after the first good rains of late summer and fall. A white form is sometimes available. Propagation is by division or seeds. It is best to start the seeds early in the spring so that the vines will grow and develop tubers before frost.



A. Leptopus is an integral part of many southern gardens. At its best, it graces a garden like fine lace. The foliage is attractive and sufficiently dense to provide summer shade on trellises and arbors. I planted one in combination with a vigorous old climbing rose, and it is a very successful combination, with the rose ('Trier Rambler') having a pale pink color and the coral vine much darker. The rose provides support for the coral vine, and the combination is striking.

COMPOSTING

This article is excerpted from The Composting Slide Set, produced by County Extension Horticulturists Skip Richter, Vince Mannino, and Nowell Adams, and Extension Specialist Marty Baker for the aggie-horticulture web site. Major editorial contributions were made by Sam Cotner and Dan Lineberger.

One time-tested method of turning 'trash' into 'treasure' is home composting. Interest in composting is increasing dramatically. The early Greeks and Romans practiced composting, although the process itself has occurred in nature since the beginning of time. Whether an ancient art or a modern science, composting is a useful and environmentally sound gardening practice.

WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

Composting is nature's own recycling program! In forests and meadows, tree leaves and other organic material form a carpet over the soil surface. In time, naturally-occurring organisms break down or decompose this layer. Compost is the rich, dark, crumbly material that results; in essence, it is nature's own nutrient-rich slow-release fertilizer.

WHY COMPOST?

Yard waste makes up 20 to 50 percent of curb-side garbage. Composting landscape and kitchen wastes at home reduces the volume of curb-side solid waste. This saves transportation and disposal costs while providing an environmentally sound alternative.

Compost is a valuable soil amendment. It can be used to:

- Enrich soil with nutrients
- Help sandy soils retain moisture and add nutrients
- Loosen tight, heavy clay soils
- Mix with potting soil for container-grown plants
- To mulch around landscape plants.

If you have a garden, lawn, trees, shrubs, or even planter boxes or house plants, you have a use for compost.

WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

You can compost kitchen waste, leaves and grass clippings, as well as other yard waste such as pine needles, weeds, small or chipped prunings, and spent garden plants. Shredding the material first, although not required, makes for faster composting. Avoid composting diseased or insect-infested plants, noxious weeds, and kitchen wastes containing meat, dairy products, cooking oil, or grease.

HOW TO COMPOST

For composting, you can use traditional free-standing compost heaps or homemade or manufactured bins. A bin or some type of enclosure may save space and be more attractive. There are a variety of manufactured composting bins available from garden catalogs or retail stores. Designs and prices vary considerably, but they do offer a quick-start way of composting.

Make a homemade compost bin from a number of materials, including wire fencing, lumber, used pallets, and cement blocks. Whatever materials you use, it's important to design the bin to allow for good air movement and easy accessibility for turning the pile and removing the finished compost. So, if you use a bin, choose materials and a design to suit yourself and your needs for neatness, appearance, economy, performance, and access.

Ideally, your compost pile or bin should be 3 to 5 feet in diameter. With any pile or bin, it's best to start the compost in several layers. The microorganisms that turn yard waste into compost need the proper balance of nitrogen and carbon materials in their 'diet'. Alternate 6- to 8-inch layers of high-carbon materials (such as leaves and other dry plant debris) with layers of high-nitrogen material (such as grass clippings, kitchen water, or manure). Add Fertilizer. When such materials are unavailable, a sprinkler or fertilizer can provide the nitrogen. Add Soil. Follow this with a shovelful or two of compost or garden soil, to add the microorganisms necessary for decomposition. Add Water. Moisten each layer as you stack it. If you don't moisten the pile as you build it, it will be difficult to effectively do so later. Repeat Layers. Repeat layers until the pile is about 4 feet high. Afterwards, water enough to keep the pile moist but not wet. Turn-

(Continued on Page 3)

ing. Turn the pile weekly to thoroughly mix the materials. Turning allows for thorough decomposition and speeds up the composting process.

The basic ingredients in making compost are water, air, and soil or compost to introduce microorganisms. The mixture of these ingredients is important. Too much or too little can slow the composting process and cause other problems as well.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Here are some ways to tell if your compost is progressing well.

- If the pile is composting properly, the interior should heat up to at least 140 degrees Fahrenheit.
- If the pile fails to heat up, composting is still progressing, but very slowly, and may take six months to a year or more to be completed.
- If your compost is damp and warm only in the middle, the pile may be too small. Collect more material and mix the old ingredients into a new pile.
- If the heap is damp and sweet-smelling but still will not heat up, it's short on nitrogen. Simply mix in a nitrogen source such as fresh grass clippings, fresh manure, or nitrogen fertilizer.
- If the center of the pile is dry, you may have too much coarse, woody material and not enough water. Chop or shred the coarse material, add fresh green waste, and then turn and moisten all the ingredients.
- Finally, if the compost has a bad odor, the pile is probably too wet and not getting enough air. In this case, add coarse dry materials and mix well.

IN-THE-GARDEN COMPOSTING

There are many methods of in-the-garden composting, one of which is 'walkway' composting. Place a thick layer of leaves, shredded branch trimmings, garden wastes, and grass clippings between the rows of raised-bed vegetable gardens. If grass clippings are used, they should be partially dried or applied in a thin layer, to avoid offensive odors. This makes an excellent all-weather walkway that will allow you to work in your garden during wet periods. As these materials decompose and compact, add more to the surface. In a few months, this material will be largely decomposed and ready for mixing into the garden soil.

A second option, called 'sheet composting', involves rotor-tilling a few inches of leaves into the garden in the fall. A light scattering of fertilizer will help speed the process along. By the following spring, these leaves will be decomposed, leaving a rich, easy-to-work soil ready for planting. Large amounts of leaves may be easily mixed into the soil by repeating the spreading and rotor-tilling steps, one layer at a time.

TRENCH COMPOSTING

Another method of composting involves the use of trenches. This method works well for vegetable gardens, especially if you don't have a space for a compost pile or bin. Dig trenches deep enough to accommodate the volume of waste to be composted. Build next season's new planting beds on top on the trenches, and dig new trenches in place of the old beds. By alternating trenches and garden rows each season, you'll improve the soil throughout your garden. And, you'll see improved results in your garden harvest.

Landscape Design Study Course II, Series XVII
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Sod Installation and Care

By Gene R. Taylor, Ph.D. Turfgrass Extension Specialist
Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station

Having a healthy, mature lawn adds to the beauty and value of your property while creating a safe place for family and friends to use. Purchasing sod for your home allows for an instant mature lawn that removes the hassle and waiting associated with seeding.

There are several steps to consider when purchasing and installing sod. First and foremost is buying the right grass for your use and location. Factors like shade, traffic, level of care, desired quality, and cold and drought tolerance can influence which grass species and/or variety you should use in your lawn. For more information on turfgrass selection, contact your local turfgrass supplier, producer, or county Extension agent and request a copy of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service publication "Turfgrass selection for the Texas Homeowner."

Step 1 – Measuring

Using a tape, measure the lawn area that will receive sod. Make a sketch of the lawn area, using the measurements of the area where you plan to establish your lawn. Include the dimensions of sidewalks, parking areas, shrub beds, and buildings, as they will influence the total amount of sod you need to order. Once you have all of the measurements, calculate the total square footage of lawn area. If you are not sure how to do this, take your drawing and measurements to your local sod supplier. They can help you calculate just how much sod you will need to order.

FYI: There are 9 square feet in a "yard" of sod, so if you have 3,500 square feet of lawn area to plant you will need to order at least 388 yards of sod. $3,500 / 9 = 388$ Do not be surprised if you have to order 400 yards of sod, as many companies only sell sod in units of 50 yards per pallet.

Step 2 – Ordering and Scheduling

Order your selected sod from your local sod retailer. Schedule your sod to be delivered after all preparatory soil work is completed and you are ready to install. Quick installation on the delivery day is crucial to ensuring a healthy lawn. All sod should be planted the day of delivery. The longer the grass sits on a pallet the more likely it is to take longer to establish, and it may die if it is not planted promptly.

Step 3 – Soil Preparation

Get soil testing information from your local county Extension office. With a spade, take soil samples in several areas of your yard to a depth of about 4 inches, and mix the soil together in a plastic bucket. After mixing, scoop some of the soil into the soil-sample bag provided, fill out the associated paperwork, and send the sample to the TAEX address provided. The soil test will help you determine the nutritional status of your soil. Also it will help you identify which fertilizers or soil amendments are needed to ensure a healthy, mature lawn in your area; the time before sod installation is best for making these determinations.



Kill all grass and weeds in pre-existing lawn with a non-selective herbicide. After all weeds are dead, roto-till the soil to ensure good sod-to-soil contact. After tilling, begin soil work to eliminate drainage problems (slope away from



(continued on page 5)



Sod Installation and Care (continued from page 4)

house, garage) and low areas in your lawn, and then add fertilizer or organic amendments as needed, based on your soil test results. Lightly till the soil and amendments to a depth of 4 to 5 inches. Rake the soil smooth, removing all rocks, large soil clods, and plant roots/sod chunks. Be sure to keep the soil level about 1 inch below the level of sidewalks or the driveway.

Step 4 – Sod Installation

Install your sod immediately when delivered. Begin installing sod along a driveway or sidewalk, and push edges together tightly without stretching. Be sure to stagger the joints of the sod in a brick-like (running bond) pattern to avoid continuous seams, and use a sharp knife, spade, or machete to trim edges of sod to fit the landscape. Always place sod across steep slopes, and stake in place if needed. Do not place small pieces of sod along outside edges, because they will dry out and die. Begin watering sod within 30 minutes of installation. In hot weather, place unused sod in the shade, and keep it moist until it is laid in the landscape. After a light watering, roll the sod with a roller to ensure good sod-to-soil contact.



Step 5 – Watering

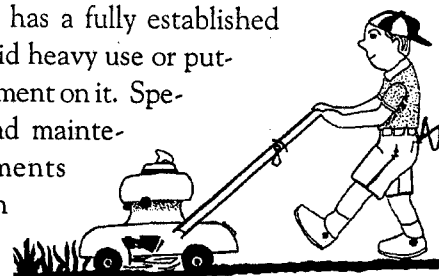
Be sure to water your new sod as soon as possible after installation; professional sod companies commonly have a person hand-watering sod as soon as it is laid. During the first two weeks, you should water at least once a day with enough water to keep the sod and soil moist but not soaking wet. Check to make sure that the sod and upper soil profile remain moist throughout the day. Be extra cautious during hot, dry, and windy weather, as the sod can quickly dry out. By following this watering advice, you will ensure good turf rooting into the soil. You should begin a deep and infrequent watering program to

promote a deep and healthy root system for your new lawn as soon as the grass is well rooted (when you cannot pull the grass from the soil).

Maintaining Your New Lawn

Until your lawn has a fully established root system, avoid heavy use or putting heavy equipment on it. Specific fertilizer and maintenance requirements

can be gotten from your county Extension agent, local sod producer, or retailer. Mow the lawn as soon as it starts growing. Make sure that you have a newly sharpened blade. Mow at the correct height for the grass. Scalping is not uncommon in newly planted lawns. If a scalped area in the lawn does not clear up on its own after two or three mowings, it means the lawn is not level. Adding a light application of a sandy loam soil to the depression will help fill it in and reduce the scalping. For deeper depressions, it may be easier to dig up the grass, fill in the depression and then replant the grass. Remember to water deeply and infrequently, mow often with a sharpened mower, and watch for insects, disease, or fertility problems.



For more information about caring for your new lawn, contact your local county Extension agent or local sod supplier, or visit our web site at

<http://AggieTurf.tamu.edu>



Ten Commandments of Fall Gardening Success

Excerpted from an article by Skip Richter, CEA-Horticulture, Montgomery County

Fall vegetable gardening is in many ways better than its spring counterpart. Many vegetables, such as broccoli and cauliflower, seem to do best in the fall. The quality of beans, peas, root crops, and many other veggies is superior when grown in the cooler days of fall. Almost anything grown in spring will do well in the fall, with the possible exception of sweet corn. I paused to reflect back over past seasons at what appear to be the most important factors in getting a fall garden off to a good start, and the result is the following pontification. Like the original ten, folks who think these are optional are headed for disappointment.

1. Thou Shalt Not Read Gardening Books And Magazines Published For Areas Other Than Thine Own.

If you do, let it be recreational and not to learn "how to." To take advice from another region is about as dependable as watching the Weather Channel's forecast for San Francisco, Seattle, or Newark to determine if you need to take an umbrella with you today or how to dress for working in your garden.

2. Select Ye A Site With Full Exposure To The Sun. Unless you are planning on growing mushrooms, 6 to 8 hours of full sunlight is important. If you have a spot a bit too shady, try putting your leafy greens and cole crops (like broccoli) there. They will put up with less light, but even they won't like it.

3. Prepareth The Soil Well Before Thou Planteth Thy Crop.

Soil is critical to plant growth. The importance of soil preparation cannot be overstressed. At least half of your success has been determined before the first seed or transplant ever hits the ground. To plop your new seeds and transplants down into the barren, parched August wasteland, among the cremated remains of your spring garden, is tantamount to a death sentence. Proper soil pH and optimum nutrition are best set before planting. Incorporate well-decomposed organic matter and fertilizer according to soil test results. In the absence of a soil test, apply 1 pound of 15-5-10 and 2 pounds of K-Mag per 100 square feet.

4. Provideth Thy Garden With Optimum Drainage.

Although we've been assured the '40 days and 40 nights' ordeal will not be repeated, we often experience only slightly less here in Texas. Most veggies detest 'wet feet'. Unless your soil is very well drained, raised beds are a life-saver. Remember, "It's easier to water a desert than to drain a swamp." When long rainy spells come in the fall, you will be glad you took the time to prepare raised beds before planting.

5. Thou Shalt Thoroughly Water Thy Plot Before Planting.

Farmers know that the single most important watering a crop receives is the one before it's planted. Seeds

germinate and grow best in soil that has already received a good deep soaking.

6. Choose Ye Adapted Vegetable Species And Varieties.

Unless you love the challenge of growing Brussels sprouts, head lettuce, and rhubarb, avoid these and other poorly-adapted veggies. Most types of vegetables have at least a few varieties that do well here. Many even offer built-in disease and insect resistance. Here in the South, we have a short season between summer heat and the first freeze, in most years. Therefore, it is best to select early-maturing varieties (ones with short days-to-harvest intervals) to avoid having an almost-ripe bean crop freeze.

7. Thou Shalt Not Plant A Plant Too Early, Nor Shalt Thou Plant It Too Late, But On Its Appointed Day Shalt Thou Plant It.

Follow recommended planting dates closely. There is nothing more frustrating than pampering an early-September planting of corn or tomatoes through the season, only to have it 'stall out' in the cool days of fall, and never reach maturity before the first frost. Likewise, lettuce and spinach planted in early September will never see the light of day. We have a 'window' of time in the fall when many of our warm-season veggies can effectively ripen. Planting too late is setting yourself up for disappointing results.

8. Subject Not Thy Tender Transplants And Seedlings To The Infernal Heat Of Summer.

Your new transplants have been living the 'life of Riley', with daily watering, petting, talking to, etc. Suddenly exposing these succulent unsuspecting plants to the full brunt of the scorching sun and sandblasting wind is enough to get you reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Plants, and is sure to result in less-than-hoped-for results. Plant seeds slightly deeper in the fall (but not over 3 or 4 times their width) and cover with a light mulch of pine needles or a light-weight row-cover blanket, to give them a slightly cooler environment in which to germinate. Covering seeds with compost rather than soil will help reduce crusting and improve germination. Protect new transplants from the sun with a homemade "lean-to" shade structure, positioned on the southwest side.

Wildflower Seeding

By John Cooper, CEA-Hort, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Denton

Taking a cue from nature, botanists recommend planting wildflowers in the autumn. Although you can be sure our native wildflowers have adapted here, we cannot assume they will establish without some care. Wildflowers, by nature's design, have blanketed Texas for millennia. Our native flowers link us with an age when American bison freely roamed the vast western plains. The rugged beauty of these flowers, borne on windswept prairies, captures our imagination. The seeds of spring and summer wildflowers have matured, and as cooling fall rains come, many will germinate and form rosettes to pass the winter. Species that have a cold requirement will pass the winter as dormant seeds, and germinate next spring with warming temperatures.

You can broadcast wildflower seeds in the yard like chicken feed and get a few flowers for your efforts, but they are just as likely to become bird seed as they are to become plants. Nature naturally produces enough seed to feed the birds in addition to that required for reproduction of the species. For us, it would be cheaper to just use cracked corn and millet. Prepare a good seed bed as if you were planting zinnias, marigolds, or any other seeded flower garden. Cover the seed with about an eighth of an inch of soil, and keep the seed bed moist for 2 or 3 weeks following planting, to enhance germination.

Over the past decade, flower seed sales have been overtaken by sales of bedding plants. The trend will probably follow for wildflowers. Any plant is more easily es-

tablished from a started plant than from a seed, and wildflowers are no exception. Among the best wildflowers for northern and central areas of Texas are bluebonnet, Indian blanket, Indian paintbrush, eryngo, Maximilian sunflowers, blackfoot daisy, Engelmann daisy, goldenrod, coreopsis, horse mint, black-eyed Susan, Mexican hat, purple prairie coneflower, clasping coneflowers, yarrow, gayfeather, prairie verbena, and snow-on-the-prairie.

Perhaps the most sought after wildflower is the bluebonnet. The current method of breaking dormancy — acid-scarification — has greatly increased success rates with bluebonnet seeds, and has even made it possible to grow transplants for the nursery trade. Acid scarification involves soaking seeds in pure, concentrated sulfuric acid. This is a hazardous process which should be left to professional seedpeople. Planting acid-scarified seeds in late summer is the surest way to establish bluebonnets from seed. Bluebonnet transplants will be available in area nurseries and garden centers in August and September. Selections will include white, pink, and assorted shades of blue. Plant bluebonnets in a well-drained site in full sun. Fertilizers are not required. Over-watering may be the greatest threat to young plants. Water the transplants when you plant them, and don't water them again until the soil dries to a depth of one inch. Planting in flower boxes or decorative pots will help showcase your bluebonnets. Fill in around the rosettes with pansies or dianthus to create interest this winter. The bluebonnets will easily push up through them for the main attraction next spring.

The Ten Commandments of Fall Gardening Success

9. Stressteth Not The Growing Crops Under Thy Care. Keep your plants growing healthy and vigorous. They'll be better able to fend off problems and will produce much more. Some crops, like broccoli, never seem to 'forgive and forget' if you once let them get stressed. Good nutrition, mulching (which keeps surfaces cool in the August and September heat and holds moisture), regular deep soaking, and scouting for insect and disease problems are all very important.

10. Neglect Not Thy Attendance At All Extension Service Gardening Programs. There are some excellent programs throughout the year to sharpen your skills and expand your gardening savvy and 'comprendo'. We also have free informative handouts on almost any gardening subject. Take advantage of these opportunities.

Dried Flowers

By Wayne R. Pianta

For hundreds of years, gardeners have preserved flowers by drying. The so-called 'everlasting' types, like strawflowers, have been most popular, but there are many other annual flowers that can be used. Summer annuals that are excellent for drying include marigolds, salvias, cosmos, zinnias, coreopsis, and gloriosa daisies. Ageratum, dahlias, calendulas, chrysanthemums, dianthus, asters, and daisies also make fine dried specimens. Many native flowers and plants, such as cattails, dock, oats, and numerous grasses, dry naturally or produce interesting seed heads. Flowers can be preserved by hanging, pressing, or drying with various drying agents.

HANGING. Air drying, or hanging, is the easiest and best method for preserving many flowers. Remove the leaves on the flower stem, and hang the flowers upside down in a warm, dry place until dry. An attic, closet, or pantry work well for flower drying.

PRESSING. This method is quick and easy, but it flattens the flowers. For pressing, use unglazed paper, such as newsprint or an old telephone book. Place the flowers between several thicknesses of paper, making sure they do not overlap. Weigh down with a heavy object. This method takes from 2 to 4 weeks.

DRYING WITH ABSORBANTS. Flower can be dried by burying them in sand mixed with borax, cornmeal mixed with borax, or silica gel. These materials work well for drying certain flowers, but are undependable for others. Silica gel has the capacity to quickly absorb a large amount of moisture. Flowers, minus leaves, should be buried in the gel in a closed container, and left for about one week. Silica gel can be used over and over by re-drying it, after use, in a warm oven. The gel can be purchased in most garden centers, nurseries, florist shops, and hobby shops.

After drying, secure each flower to a wire stem by using a 2- to 4-inch section of Number 2 florist's wire; then, wrap all wire with green floral tape, and make your arrangement.

Accent the Fall Landscape with Vegetables and Herbs

By Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist,
Texas A&M University, College Station

Now is an excellent time to evaluate the home landscape and begin making preparations for fall plantings. Vegetables and herbs can be used in imaginative ways to add beauty, interest, and utility to our landscapes. Mid-summer and early fall offer us a good 'second season' for growing these plants if gardeners can motivate themselves to provide a little extra care during the long, hot days of late summer.

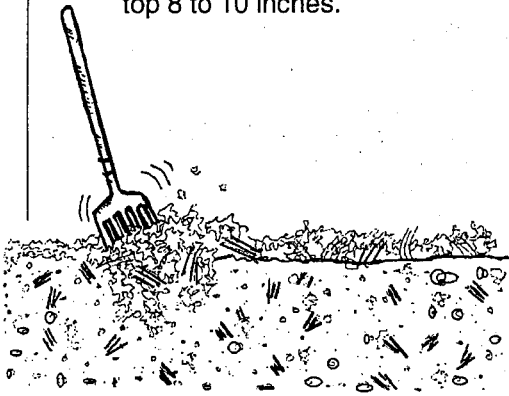
Hanging containers of parsley, mint, thyme, rosemary, and tomatoes can all be started now. These plants may be available at local nurseries, but with a little extra effort they can be grown from seed. Each has a drooping growth habit which makes it especially appropriate for hanging-container use. An even larger variety of herbs and vegetables may be grown in the more 'down-to-earth' containers, such as clay pots and wooden tubs. Tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, eggplants, carrots, and radishes are just a few of the many. Even small porches and decks of apartments can be made more attractive and interesting with groupings of containers filled with herbs and vegetables.

Two important points to consider in growing container plants are the media and the container selection. Most vegetables require excellent drainage, so select a container with a hole in the bottom. Plain clay pottery is attractive and versatile, as are many of the cedar and redwood tubs. Small containers dry out very quickly, and sometimes require daily or twice-daily irrigation. A minimum size for containers is 10 to 12 inches, with 16 or 18 inches being more appropriate for large plants such as tomatoes or eggplants. The media must also drain well for most plants to thrive and yet still hold an adequate amount of water. Some gardeners prefer soilless mixes, such as half peat moss and half vermiculite. Others like the added support of micronutrients found in mixes such as one-third garden loam, one-third peat moss, and one-third sharp sand. Many different media can be used successfully. The most important factor is for the gardener to learn how to manage the media selected, since water and fertilizer requirements vary considerably.

GARDEN CHECKLIST FOR SEPTEMBER

*By Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station*

- ✓ Rejuvenate heat-stressed geraniums and begonias for the fall season by lightly pruning, fertilizing, and watering.
- ✓ Caladiums require plenty of water at this time of year if they are to remain lush and attractive until fall. Fertilize with ammonium sulfate at the rate of 1/2 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.
- ✓ Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture. Hollies will frequently drop their fruit under drought conditions.
- ✓ Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning until midwinter. Pruning now may stimulate tender growth prior to frost.
- ✓ Divide spring-flowering perennials such as irises, Shasta daisies, gaillardias, cannas, day lilies, violets, lirioppe, and ajuga. Reset divisions into well prepared soil with generous amounts of organic material worked into the top 8 to 10 inches.



- ✓ Prepare the beds for spring-flowering bulbs as soon as possible. It is important to cultivate the soil and add generous amounts of organic matter to improve the water drainage. Bulbs will rot without proper drainage.

- ✓ Plantings at this time can provide landscape color for three seasons in central, east, and south Texas. Annuals set out early enough will bloom as soon as Thanksgiving, and frequently last until Memorial Day. Annuals that should soon be available in nurseries and garden shops include petunias, calendulas, pansies, snapdragons, stock, sweet peas, and violas (from seed).

- ✓ Continue a disease-spray schedule on roses, as blackspot and mildew can be extremely damaging in September and October. Funginex, used every 7 to 14 days, will usually give excellent control.
- ✓ Christmas cactus can be made to flower by supplying 12 hours of uninterrupted darkness and cool nights (55 degrees F.) for a month, starting in mid-October. Keep plants on the dry side for a month prior to treatment.
- ✓ Replenish mulches around trees and shrubs, and water every 3 to 5 days.
- ✓ Start cool-season vegetables, such as mustard, lettuce, arugula, broccoli, carrots, and turnips, from seed in well prepared beds.
- ✓ Harvest okra, peppers, squash, and other vegetables often to keep them productive.



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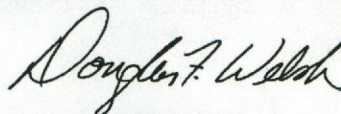
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SEPTEMBER 1999

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Douglas F. Welsh, Editor September 1999