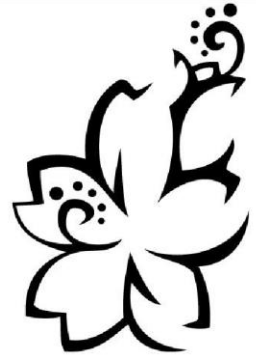


**Anderson's La Costa Nursery**  
**400 La Costa Ave.**  
**Encinitas, CA 92024**  
**Tel: 760-753-3153**  
**[www.andersonslacostanursery.com](http://www.andersonslacostanursery.com)**  
**[andersonslacosta@gmail.com](mailto:andersonslacosta@gmail.com)**



## **Mid-Summer Gardening Tips**



As we sit comfortably in the middle of our mild summer, it is time to sit back, relax and enjoy your garden. Take a peek to see if there's anything that might need some attention, or simple chores like watering and deadheading that can be done in the early, cool mornings or later into the evening. Regardless, now is the time to reap what you've sowed - if not literally than figuratively! Enjoy the fruit of your labor!

However, if you are inclined to poke around in your garden, here are a few mid-summer reminders:

**Watering** and **pest control** will be your main tasks this month. Remember the basics: Water in the early morning, and water the soil to the extent of the radius of the leaves, and not the leaves themselves. Water deeply and occasionally rather than shallow and often.

It is important to **water plants deeply** during the hot of summer. If they are merely sprinkled their roots tend to reach up toward the soil surface to get at the water rather than reaching downward as they should. Shallow roots will perish during hot weather. One deep watering a week utilizes less water, is better for plants and requires less time than a daily sprinkling. Water thoroughly each time but allow the soil to dry out between watering. Deep water trees needed according to the tree species, age and the weather.

It's also a good time to make sure your irrigation system is performing at its peak. Flush filters and header lines of drip systems. Also check drip emitters and clean or replace those that aren't working properly.

A thick layer of **organic mulch** averaging about two inches should be maintained on top of the soil year-round. Add additional mulch as needed to maintain this level. A thick mulch layer will cool root systems from hot summer temperatures, reduce irrigation by as much as half, reduce weeds, and improve soil life and soil quality.

Plants grown in containers or very sandy soil will require more frequent irrigation. Soak containers well. If you can't keep up or they're wilting anyway, move pots to a shadier spot. Also give your compost heap an occasional dousing to promote necessary decomposition and consider shading the heap to keep it moist longer.

### **Pest & Weed Control**

A variety of pest problems can occur in the height of summer. If you have plants that are having a problem, bring in a sample to the nursery and you can speak with one of our plant specialists. We will diagnose the problem for you and recommend appropriate control.

To control tomato hornworms, spray with products containing **Bt (Bacillus thuringiensis)**, a biological control that will not harm beneficial insects. Don't wait until you get a major infestation and the worms get out of control. A preventive spray applied every 10 days should keep them in check.

Just as conditions are ideal for growing beautiful trees, flowering plants and your top summer fruits, veggies and herbs, conditions are also ripe for unruly, pesky weeds! For growth you cannot remove by hand, here are some tips on applying weed killer:

- Do not apply weed controls on newly seeded areas
- Do not apply weed controls on windy days
- Do not apply weed controls near or on the edge of waterways
- Do not apply weed controls when temps are above 85 degrees F
- Do not allow children or pets to play on lawns freshly applied with weed controls. It is best to wait one week.
- Always follow the label directions.

### **Your Edible Garden**

After the middle August you can plant seeds for the following vegetables: Beets, Cabbage, Carrots, Collards, Kale, Lettuce, Peas, Radishes, Spinach, Swiss Chard, Turnips.

This is your last chance to plant **fall tomatoes**. If your spring planted tomatoes are still doing well leave them in. If not, rather than nurturing the last few fruit - start fresh! Consider the "fall" varieties now. Some warm-season vegetables can still be planted but keep them well watered. At this time of the year quick-maturing or "early" varieties will often be good choices.

Monitor soil moisture and irrigate fruit trees as needed. Flooding the soil beneath these trees or using a drip system are excellent methods. Avoid the use of

sprinklers and do not regularly wet the trunk - this can cause certain diseases. If you want to reduce or limit the overall size of any of these trees the correct time to prune them is immediately following the fruit harvest.

Fertilize established fruits and vegetables as needed with a good quality slow-release vegetable food such as Dr. Earth Organic Fruit & Vegetable fertilizer.

## **Flowers**

It is best to wait until late in the month to start winter-spring flowers from seed unless you plant them in pots for later transplanting. You can still add plants with summer flowers this month. Some possibilities include: Ageratum, Alyssum, Bedding begonia, Cosmos, Dianthus, Dusty Miller, Impatiens, Marigold, Petunia, Portulaca, Vinca rosea.

Keep newly planted **annuals** well-watered until they are thoroughly rooted. Because of their quick growth and heavy flowering potential, annuals need more fertilizing than most other plants in the garden. Keep deadheading (removing spent flowers) to help them continue blooming.

Planting displays of glorious **sunflowers** helps liven up any mid-summer garden. Prune summer flowering shrubs as the flowers fade. Trim and feed hanging baskets to prolong their beauty.

Warmth-loving **bougainvillea** can be planted with good success this month. The plants are available in several different colors in addition to the popular reds and purples. Choose a warm sunny fence or wall to train the plants on. Be careful when planting not to disturb the fragile root ball.

Although your **roses** may still be blooming, the heat of this and next month are taking a bit of a toll on roses especially in sun exposed gardens. A moderate summer pruning will help revive your roses and will encourage a big fall bloom. Early in the month is the best time to do this pruning. Remove about 1/3 of the plant and any crossing or awkward growth. Be sure to fertilize after pruning.

**Fuchsias** should still be blooming although less than a couple of months ago. Keep fertilizing regularly with a balanced fertilizer or one slightly higher in phosphorus to promote more flowering. Proper watering is key this time of the year especially those in hanging baskets. Water early in the morning or in the evening and check soil moisture every day.

**Petunias** should be cut back this month. The hot weather tends to make the plants leggy. Prune the plants to about 5 inches above ground level. When pruned, feed the plants with an application of a liquid fertilizer. In a few weeks the plants will be full and lush again with lots of blooms.

While **water lilies** appear delicate, don't let their exotic aura fool you. These flowers are as tough as they are beautiful. They do well in any USDA hardiness zone. Water lilies can be grown in a tub on the patio or in ponds of any size. They grow from tubers planted in pots beneath the water and send up stems with rounded leaves and star-shaped blossoms that float on the surface. Hardy lilies are dependable and easy to plant - a good choice for the beginner. Daytime bloomers, they blossom in the morning and close after sunset lasting three or four days before sinking beneath the surface. The flowers appear from spring to fall blooming in all colors except blues and purples.

Hardy water lilies go dormant in winter and may be left in the water or stored. Tropical water lilies which bloom in more exotic colors take a little more care but are well worth the effort. Their flowers are larger and more prolific. Night-blooming varieties have vibrant almost electric colors. Tropical water lilies require a water temperature above 70 degrees F and tubers must be removed from the pond in winter.

This is still a good month to plant or transplant **palms** and **cycads**. They will need to be kept well watered to help them get established. Watering should be often. Most tropics & subtropics need fast drainage, too.

Be very cautious irrigating **native, drought-tolerant plants** during the summer. Most of these are adapted to a winter wet/summer dry moisture cycle. Too frequent irrigations now (especially in soils with clay content) will cause serious problems. Unless, of course, they have either just been planted, or we go through a dry spell during summer. Then they will require a rain-like flushing of water until they are refreshed or become established.

You can plant native desert perennials and shrubs now - you will just need to keep them well-watered. If an annual is sickly or struggling at this point in the season just pull it up and pitch it. If a perennial is sickly or looking otherwise awful cut it back to just a few inches. It will come back this year or next spring with healthier growth.

Continue to feed **houseplants** with a good quality indoor plant food and check more frequently for dryness in the container during our hot summer months. If you'd like any advice, just ask one of our helpful and knowledgeable staff and they will be more than happy to assist you!