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February Garden Planner



Plant:

~ Now's the time to plant cool-season veggies such as Irish potatoes, garlic, onions and hardy lettuce as well as perennial vegetables such as asparagus and horseradish. Mid February is not too early to start seeds of peas, carrot,

radish, lettuce, greens, and spinach indoors, and transplants of parsley, cilantro, cabbage, leek, broccoli, brussel sprouts, kale, celery, cauliflower, and collards but watch the weather since winter weather is often uneven. **Young plants may need to be protected** with plant protection bags or blankets.

~ Many shrubs and trees can be planted if the ground is not too wet or frozen. **Want some color now?** Look for **winter daphne, golden paperbush, wintersweet**, (those 3 have great fragrance!), **flowering quince, camellias, winter jasmine, and witch hazel. Japanese apricots, Corneliancherry dogwood, and 'Okame' cherries** are among the first trees to bloom in late Feb. or early March. And, the winter garden is incomplete without some **long-blooming, evergreen, deer-resistant hellebores** (aka Lenten rose)!

~ **Plant seeds of sweet peas, larkspur, and poppies.**

~ **Herbs** such as basil, chives, parsley, sage, summer savory, and sweet marjoram **can be started indoors from seed now.**

Fertilize:

~ **Put down a pre-emergent for crabgrass** such as Hi-Yield Crabgrass Preventer, or non-toxic Espoma Weed Preventer. Best done by mid-March.

~ **Fertilize cool-season grasses** such as fescue. If you fertilize regularly, you will most likely need only a high nitrogen fertilizer that is lower in other nutrients, for example, a 16-0-8, or Espoma Weed Pre-

venter with Lawn Food, (9-0-0).

Garden Maintenance:

~ **Keep houseplants away**

from heating vents. Low humidity can be a serious problem which can be corrected using a humidity tray, a humidifier, or by misting. Plants with large, smooth leaves will benefit from having their leaves washed periodically. Quarter-turn plants weekly so that all sides receive light.

~ **Clean and sharpen garden tools**, as well as oil those that need it. Sharpen mower blades and change the oil, filter, and spark plugs.

~ **Garden plants, such as fall-planted or recently planted ones especially evergreens, need moisture too!** If there has been a lack of rainfall through February, soak the soil around trees and shrubs once or twice a month if the ground isn't frozen or damp. Protect your plants by making sure they have a 3" layer of mulch.

~ If you have them, **spread a light layer of wood ashes** in areas such as flowering bulb beds and vegetable gardens.

~ If you have **Japanese apricot, forsythia, spirea, quince, peach, cherry, or witchhazel** that are budded up you can **treat yourself to some forced indoor blooms.** Cut the branch on a sharp slant, and place in warm water. Put the branches in a bright location and change the water often. Flower preservative added to water helps feed the branches.

~ **Mow back lirioppe grass** before growth starts in spring. This will get rid of last season's tatty leaves before the fresh ones emerge.

Prune:

~ **Most deciduous trees and shrubs are best pruned in late winter to early spring. Some basic cutting techniques:**

- Cut back to 1/4" above buds
- Cuts should face *away* from buds
- Make cuts on a 45° angle
- Cut above an *outward facing bud* to direct growth away from the center of the plant
- For limbs larger than twigs, be sure to cut the limb just past the swollen area where branch and the trunk meet called the *branch collar*.

• See our Garden Tips page on the website for a free **Pruning Guide for Trees & Shrubs.**





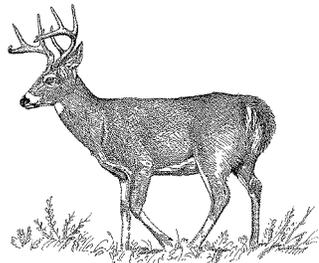
~ **Do not prune spring-flowering plants such forsythia, azalea, lilac, and rhododendrons** until after flowering. Also, **do not prune hydrangeas** until right after bloom in summer (and only if necessary). **Wait until April/May to prune evergreen shrubs** like holly and boxwood.

~ **Now's a good time to prune roses.** Remove all basal suckers (shoots growing out from under the knotty, burlled bud graft union at the base of the plant) and dead, damaged, or diseased wood. Remove all inward-growing branches and any that are pencil size or smaller to form a neat, open-centered plant. Remove canes that are 4 years old or older leaving about 3 to 5 canes of about 1/2" diameter for hybrid teas, and 5 to 7 canes for floribundas and grandifloras. On the remaining canes, reduce them down to leave at least 3 to 5 outward facing buds on each cane. Make all cuts at an angle about 1/4" above an outward facing growth bud. **On climbing roses**, don't prune for the first 2 to 3 years except to remove dead, diseased, damaged or crossing canes and any suckers. After 2 to 3 years, remove older gray and weak canes leaving at least 3 to 5 vigorous canes. On once-blooming types (like Lady Banks roses), prune *after* spring bloom. Prune climbers every few years. **Knock Out Roses and Drift roses** don't need much pruning, unless they get larger than you want. Cut the whole plant back by 1/3 to 1/2 (depending on your size needs) and thin out old wood if the shrub is congested. Always trim anything that is dead or diseased.

~ **When pruning crepe myrtles, DON'T CUT THEM BACK HARD OR TOP THEM.** You only need to remove the suckers growing up from the base, any branches that are crossing other more desirable branches, and anything that's dead or damaged. Removing the top of the tree **ruins the tree's form & is not necessary or beneficial.**

~ **Time to prune butterfly bush.** Remove all but the strongest stems. Cut those remaining stems back by two-thirds.

~ **Trim tattered old foliage off hellebores** to showcase emerging blooms.



IPM

(Integrated Pest Management):

~ **Prevent deer from getting to your garden!** The best way to do this is an **8' electric fence**. If you can't do that, try all or a combo of the following:

1) Liquid Fence or imustgarden Deer Repellent™ sprays. Rotate repellents periodically so deer

don't get acclimated to one product.

2) Ultrasonic devices that emit undesirable noise **3) Deer resistant plantings.** Come by the nursery for our list of *Deer Resistant Plants*.

4) Granular animal repellent spread around the perimeters of garden beds **5) Try deer netting** over susceptible plants **6) Check out other fencing options** if an 8' electric one is not an option (**refer to our guide** on the Garden Tips page of the desktop website or under More Options>FREE Gift Guides on the mobile site.)

~ **Roses and fruit trees will have less insect problems if you** spray horticultural oil. Spread out applications by at least a week.

- When temps hit 70 degrees for 2-3 days in a row, **spray young redbuds, dogwoods, maples, cherries, apricots, and plums** with Eight spray to **prevent borers** from burrowing in, a process **that can kill** young trees. Use PERMETHRIN based sprays for this.

~ **This is a great time to kill overwintering insects** such as mites and scale on shrubs & trees including roses and fruit trees. Smother insects & egg masses by spraying plants with All Season Spray Oil when the temperature is between 40-85°F. *Do not apply within 24 hours of freezing weather.*

~ **To reduce disease problems** remove dead leaves and decayed fruit from under trees.

~ **Help prevent camellia petal blight** by mulching 4" deep around susceptible camellias, keeping the trunk area clear of mulch, and replacing the mulch annually after flowering. Pick off any diseased or fallen flowers. For severe infestations, spray with fungicide such as Fung-onil.



Holidays:

~ The Greenhouse will be featuring lots of lovely plants for **Valentine's Day**. Bring your sweetie a nice blooming gift such as **dainty cyclamen, sweet primroses, or lovely orchids**. Don't forget our attractive **mixed planting baskets and bowls**. Or get creative and **make up your own custom container garden** of flowers and foliage. Come see our Gift & Home Dept. for other great gift ideas and garden accessories. Undecided? We also sell **HOMEWOOD GIFT CARDS** for your favorite gardener!

Coming Events:

~ Our **SPRING PLANT SALE** is coming up! **1st-16th! All outdoor shrubs, trees, and perennials including vines and groundcovers are 25% OFF!**

