

April Gardening To-Do List

Well, it must be April – it is 18 degrees and snowing, with a forecast of sunny and 60 for the next 5 days! So it is the perfect time to start preparing your gardens for the season. Take advantage of those warm days to perform the following tasks:

1. **CLEAN** your perennial beds. Cut down your ornamental grasses and Russian Sage to 4-6 inches. Cut back/clean any perennials you left intact over the winter. Rake out winter mulch, top dress the beds with an inch or two of compost or other soil amendment, and then apply a fresh layer of mulch.
2. **WEEDS** will be sprouting up everywhere so stay on top of them. Commit to spending just 10 minutes a day weeding your beds or lawn. Just remember to always leave a few dandelions for the bees.
3. **PLANT** trees, shrubs, perennials, and cool season annuals. If the soil can be worked, it is safe to plant. If the plant has started to flower already, expect some of those blossoms to die off during a freeze; this does not mean the plant has died. If a hard freeze is forecast, cover the plants with frost cloth or row cover material to protect the blooms.
4. **SOW SEEDS** for warm season crops (i.e., tomato, pepper, eggplant) and summer flowers (i.e., snapdragon, petunia, and delphinium) indoors so they will be ready to go out into the garden once the threat of frost has passed. For tips on starting plants from seeds, check out the Seed-Starting 101 Fact Sheet on our website. April is an ideal time to sow wildflower seeds. If snow is forecast, scatter the seeds over the area to be seeded and just wait for the snow to come and cover them. As the snow melts, the freezing at night and thawing during the day will help work the seeds into the soil.
5. **HUMMINGBIRDS** will be arriving around the middle of the month. Check your feeders and replace any that are cracked or leaking. We recommend putting out your feeders around the 15th of the month (or sooner if you hear or see them). Remember to change the nectar every 3-4 days, and to bring the feeders in at night to prevent bear or raccoon damage to them.

Hummingbird Nectar Recipe

Mix 4 cups water and 1 cup white table sugar, stir until sugar is dissolved and bring to a brief boil. Let cool before filling your feeder. Avoid using other sweeteners or food coloring as they can be harmful to hummingbirds.



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