

## March Gardening

Sally Scalera

March is almost here and hopefully it will bring some nice gardening weather. Our average daytime temperatures should be in the upper 70s with nighttime temperatures in the mid-50s. If you are looking for some gardening projects, just read on.

- Fertilize your lawn now with a complete fertilizer containing nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and potassium (K). Apply only one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet if it slow release and ½ pound of nitrogen if it is quick release.
- Sod, plug or seed new lawns now or any bare spots before weeds take over.
- When mowing just let the clippings fall so that they add organic matter and some nutrients back to the soil.
- Prune out all of the dead or diseased wood from your trees and shrubs.
- Rake up fallen leaves and add them to your compost pile or use them as mulch around trees or shrubs.
- Annuals that you can plant or sow this month include; ageratum, amaranth, celosia, coleus, cosmos, Dahlberg daisy, gaillardia, gomphrena, impatiens, lisianthus, marigolds, melampodium, ornamental peppers, portulaca, red salvia, sunflower, vinca, wax begonia and zinnia.
- Some ideas for perennials to plant include; bush daisy, blue porterweed, gazania, crossandra, geranium (remember, partial shade through the summer and full sun in the winter), blue salvia, *Salvia coccinea*, *Salvia leucantha*, gerber daisy, kalanchoe, yarrow and African iris.
- Bulbs to plant in shady areas; achimenes, Amazon lilies, caladiums, eucharis lily and walking iris. For moist areas try canna, Louisiana iris and walking iris. If you have dry areas plant amaryllis, blackberry lily, crinum, day lily, lapeirousia, rain lilies, and society garlic.
- Some herbs that can be planted now include; basil, chives, coriander, dill, fennel, sweet marjoram, mint, sage and thyme.
- Fertilize rose plants with a bloom booster (ex. 15-30-15.)
- Trim your fig tree if needed. Removing some of the older wood will increase new growth. Only choose three to five main trunks. Remove all small competing stems from the base. Thin out any limbs that are crisscrossing. Prune out up to one-third of last years growth during this spring pruning. Add new mulch to maintain a four inch layer.
- Fertilize your citrus trees starting this month. Use an 8-8-8 citrus fertilizer. Mature trees can have up to eight pounds of fertilizer broadcast under the branches. Remember, for citrus to produce excellent fruit, they must be regularly fertilized and deeply watered every 7-10 days (with one inch of water) in the event of no rain.
- Remove declining winter vegetables and replace them with new plants. Vegetables that can be planted in March include; beans, cantaloupe, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, Southern peas, pumpkins, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, watermelon, beets, carrots, collards, English peas, kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard, onions (both bunching and multipliers,) radishes and turnips.

- Vegetable seeds that can be started now for planting in April include; beans, okra and Southern peas.
- Now is a good time to establish new banana plantings.