

The Gala Garden

June ~ what a lovely, colourful month ... at last we can enjoy our summer bedding and hang the baskets out !! Make sure and keep them watered though. They'll last all summer long if you do. Watering in the evening means avoiding speedy evaporation or midday scorch. Regular feeding works wonders as does deadheading faded blooms to encourage flowering. There are some truly beautiful varieties to choose from, which cope whatever the weather. You're welcome to visit the Nursery for ideas.

The grass will be shaping up now, following its Spring mowing and hedges can be trimmed from around the third week this month without harming birds raising young. Plant out cannas, lilies (potted up earlier) and dahlias, if you haven't already done so. It's worth keeping up with weeding before overwhelm sets in and also watching out for pests & diseases, catching them early with the treatment of your choice. Whilst 'off the shelf' sprays usually do the necessary, you might like to try natural methods and we'd be delighted to hear from anyone about what works for you (via phone or website) ... the best ideas are shared !

Vegetables are really getting going this month. Plant out runner beans, outdoor cucumbers, tomatoes, courgettes and winter (the 'w' word!) brassicas. There's still time to sow peas for later in the year and keep starting regular salad crops. Turnips can be sown now for Autumn, as can Chinese cabbage and other oriental vegetables ~ using a cloche if you want to speed up germination. As for sweet-corn, pollination will be more successful if you plant it in blocks rather than rows. Check the undersides of your veg & salad leaves for cabbage white caterpillars before they demolish them. In the greenhouse, continue removing side shoots from tomato plants ~ the sooner the better as it's less of a shock to the plant. You'll probably need to use shading now and certainly plenty of ventilation.

Have you got room for a herb garden ? This can be as large or small as you require. A pot or trough of herbs near the kitchen can contain quite a variety and they even grow in pots on a sunny windowsill indoors.

Fruit will be coming along too ~ plum trees are best pruned through the summer. Mulching the base will retain moisture and keep the weeds down. Remove or pin strawberry runners for more plants and allow as much air circulation around them as possible to avoid mould developing when wet.

There's also loads of scope for planting out and enjoying new perennials ~ lovely plants that save you money by coming back year after year and if you choose varieties that feature in different seasons (we'll happily advise), you can enjoy your garden all year round.

Have a lovely summer!

Holly. Lowood Nursery.

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