

The Gala Garden

It'd be lovely to think that we're in for an Indian Summer this year and that, while you're reading this, you'll be enjoying some golden September sunshine. If you've time, this is a useful month to carry out some preparation for whatever the Winter might bring. It's easier to feel the joys of Spring than Winter, so perhaps with a bit of help from plants, we can think of cooler darker days as the start of a whole new cycle ...

Lots of flowers will have finished blooming but not all - begonias and other tender stock will still flower in your tubs or baskets until first frost. Some of these plants can be overwintered indoors as houseplants. **Dahlias & Chocolate Cosmos** can soon be lifted, allowed to virtually dry out and stored in a frost free shed. Some annuals such as **Sweet Peas** and **Calendula** can be sown now in a greenhouse or cuttings taken of tender perennials such as **Pelargoniums**, **Fuchsias** and **Marguerites**, to root in a cold frame (or light window sill) in sandy soil using a hormone rooting powder. Try taking cuttings of **Lavender**, **Rosemary** and lots of roses, especially ramblers. Lift, divide and replant established perennials that are dying back ~ this gives them a boost for next year. It's also a good time to plant out new perennials ~ the soil's still warm but the air's moist, helping them to establish roots and if you want a garden with all year interest, some flower as late as October, such as the delightful **Schizostylis Pink Princess**. Plant up spring-flowering bulbs and buy in fresh Autumn bedding such as **Pansies**, **Violas**, **Bellis**, **Primulae**, **Crysanths & Wallflowers** to dispel any gloom! Shrubs can also be planted out for their attractive foliage. Many go through stunning colour changes and provide a haven for birds and wildlife. Some are deciduous and drop their leaves whilst others remain evergreen, such as **Pieris**. An ideal time for establishing shrubs, trees, hedging and roses is during their dormancy, known as the 'bare root season'. This is a great time to source larger plants at a reasonable price.



Pink Princess

Fruit bushes can now be pruned and new strawberry beds established. Harvest apples and pears (only if they come away easily). Lift beetroot, carrots, radishes & potatoes (unless the skin rubs off easily in which case they're not quite ready), before the slugs get to them and generally tidy up any weeds, old leaves or other debris in the veggie garden to minimise disease. Feed and re-seed your lawn and then, phew, everything can slow down a bit ...

All of the above along with friendly advice can be sourced at Lowood Nursery.

Enjoy the season changing !

Holly