

Cynthia Brian's Mid-Month Gardening Guide

WATER lawns and perennials deeply and thoroughly. September is notoriously hot and it's essential to keep an eye on your plants. If they are drooping, they are thirsty.

IRRIGATE succulents, cactus, and native specimens sparingly as their water requirements are minimal.

HYDRATE yourself constantly. Don't garden in the heat of the day as you could get dangerously dehydrated. Toil in the morning and the evening.

CUT back hollyhocks to the ground once they have finished flowering. Save the seedpods to share with friends. Within a few weeks, you'll see new green growth as the hollyhocks will continue to thrive.

PRUNE fruit trees after harvesting.

STAKE any smaller trees that may break in winter winds.

CONTINUE deadheading roses and flowering perennials to prolong the blooms until winter.

DONATE to Operation Fire Disaster Relief to help in California's recovery. www.BetheStarYouAre.org

RAKE leaves as they fall and put them in the compost bin. If you can shred the leaves, they will compost quicker.

KEEP mulch away from trunks of trees and around shrubbery.

BEGIN preparations to renew lawns. October is the month to reseed or install a new lawn. Research what type of grass you want to install. I'm a fan of Pearl's Premium. Check it out online at www.PearlsPremium.com.

GRAB some freebies while visiting me and other contributors to my eighth book, "Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers Celebrating the Gifts of Positive Voices in a Changing Digital World" at the Pear and Wine Festival from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 22. Get your books autographed with sales benefitting literacy outreach projects. Visit <http://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Thank you to Lamorinda Weekly for sponsoring.

COLLECT seedpods from marigold, bachelor button, amaranth, calendula, Four O'clock, hollyhock, zinnia and forget-me-not. Spread on a cookie sheet to dry or place in brown paper bags. Next month they will be ready to scatter for a reward of flowers in spring and summer.

PLACE hay under growing pumpkins to keep them from rotting.

PLANT asters, the colorful workhorse of the fall garden that create habitats for pollinators and grow in poor soil.

SWIM and enjoy the final days of summer. If you are considering installing a pool, start the design process now. Find inspiration in the photos in this issue.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.

Cynthia Brian



Lights in and around a tropical pool add elegance to the night landscape.



An elegant cabana offers pristine poolside dining.