

Published February 17th, 2021

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



A variety of daffodils bloom along with Chinese fringe. Photos Cynthia Brian

"When the moon is in the Seventh House

And Jupiter aligns with Mars

Then peace will guide the planets

And love will steer the stars.

This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius."

~ Lyrics to Age of Aquarius by The 5th Dimension

Astrologers don't agree that it is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, but one thing is certain, until Feb. 18, we are living under the sign of Aquarius. It has not felt like winter as the sun has been shining daily with only sporadic bouts of drizzle. In the past two weeks, gardens have burst into bloom as the days are warmer and brighter.

Here in my yard, spring has sprung a full month ahead of schedule. The peach tree buds display their glorious magenta hues, the daffodils stretch their necks to the heavens, and camellias didn't take a bloom break. Throughout our neighborhoods, evergreen pear trees are in full flower. Birds are feathering their nests, the frogs

have begun their mating croaks, and worms are busy loosening the soil.

Our reservoirs are not yet at capacity and we desperately need more rain. Since the groundhog went back into her hole, I'm hopeful that we will still get much-needed precipitation.

Cynthia Brian's Garden Chores for February

Roses

Pruning: Roses need to be pruned to allow for them to thrive. You'll need pruning shears, loppers, a pruning saw, and gloves. Cut out dead or woody stems as well as any diseased or damaged stems. If you have rambling roses, allow them to ramble unless you need them contained. With climbers, cut the previous year's flowering shoots. For hybrid teas and floribundas, prune the stems by 2/3. With shrub roses, cutting back to a 1/3 for single flowering and 1/3 to 2/3 for repeat flowering. Pruning will ensure a beautiful, long-lasting blooming season. Keep in mind if you want smaller plants, you may prune harder. Make sure to nicely shape your bushes. If you have the room, select canes to plant elsewhere or give to a friend. You can plant the canes directly in the ground or in pots to root. Dip canes in a rooting powder before planting.

Bare-Root Planting: Through early spring you can plant bare-root roses.

Make sure the soil isn't frozen or water-logged.

Choose an area that receives a minimum of four hours of sunlight daily. The more sun, the better your bush will grow.

Rehydrate your bare-root in a bucket of water overnight.

Remove weeds and rocks from the area where you will dig the hole and loosen the soil with a garden fork.

Dig a hole with a spade approximately 16" x 20" or whatever is necessary for the roots to spread.

Add a few handfuls of compost or rose soil to the hole.

Remove the rose from the bucket and place in the hole. The bottom of the stems need to be 2-3" below the top of the hole.

Replace the original soil, tap down with your foot.

Water.

Other Goddess Gardener Tips

FERTILIZE your trees, shrubs, and ground covers.

SCATTER snail bait around your garden.

APPLY a systemic insecticide to roses to prevent the first flush of aphids in the spring.

SPRAY roses, citrus trees, fruit trees, evergreen pear trees, and crape myrtles with a dormant oil.

PICK UP and discard fallen camellia blooms.

CUT a branch from a budding peach tree to watch the flowers unfurl.

PLANT a few of my favorite specimens:

To attract hummingbirds: Fringe-love lies bleeding (*Amaranthus caudatus*) boasts striking red hanging plumage. Columbine (*aquilegia*) is a perennial with clouds of bell-shaped flowers in several colors. A loquat tree offers flowers that hummingbirds crave.

Drought-resistant, no maintenance ground cover: Pink Knotweed

Shade plant with distinctive colors: Hellebores

For Borders: Bergenia

Shrub that cascades: Purple potato plant

As we leave the sign of Aquarius and enter the horoscope of Pisces, let's pray that the lyrics from the Age of Aquarius ring true throughout 2021.

"Harmony and understanding
Sympathy and trust abounding
No more falsehoods or derisions
Golden living dreams of visions
Mystic crystal revelation
And the minds true liberation"

Let the sun shine, let the sun shine in! And, please let it rain this next month.

Happy Gardening! Happy Growing!



Fragrant flowering pear attracts bees. Photos Cynthia Brian



Pink knotweed (*Persicaria capitata*) is a perennial ground cover with non-stop pink pom pom blooms Photos Cynthia Brian



Hellebores common name is Lenten Rose as they begin blooming around the first days of Lent. Photos Cynthia Brian



Bergenia is tolerant of wet soil and can be grown around ponds and fountains. Photos Cynthia Brian



Cynthia Brian in the Age of Aquarius.

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!r 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyler Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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