



Geraniums before the freeze are pretty and perky.



Geraniums look sad after the freeze. Once they are pruned in March, they return to their normal splendor.

- AVOID walking on your lawns when they are very wet or when there has been a cold spell as you will damage the grass blades.
- PERUSE seed catalogues to discover the new offerings for 2014. Stick to GMO free heirloom varieties. Check out www.sowtrueseed.com and www.rareseeds.com for suggestions on varieties.
- MIST houseplants and check for dryness often. During the winter months our houseplants suffer from our heating sources.
- PLANT bare root fruit trees, roses, and berries this month.
- REMOVE all ornaments, tinsel, lights, and hanging wires from Christmas trees. If at all possible, shred your tree and add to your compost pile. If you will be recycling through your waste service, make sure to check the pick-up days for your area.
- PLAN your spring and summer garden. We may be going into a very dry season. Consider drought resistant specimens. 2013 may be the driest year in California history since 1895. We need a mindset of "spare the water!" Plant more yarrow, sedums, sage, and gaillardia.
- SHARPEN and clean tools in preparation for spring.
- TAKE your mower and shredder in for annual maintenance.
- BEWARE of bees in your boots! Yes, before putting on your shoes, check if any living creature is visiting. My right foot will attest to the sting.
- ENJOY winter downtime by wandering in your backyard and daydreaming of what could be.
- FIND evergreen varieties of azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons that suit your style, sun/shade exposure, and color preferences that bloom in late winter.
- VISIT a secret garden this year. Find out open days on private places at <https://www.gardenconservancy.org/opendays>.
- SET your sights high and grow for it!

Let's make this the best year ever in our gardens and in our lives. We'll do it together! Happy Gardening, Happy Growing, Happy New Year!

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