

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for May

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- CONSERVE water by sweeping patios and driveways.
- PROVIDE pollen and nectar sources for bees by growing a variety of trees, shrubs, annuals, and perennials with many shapes, textures, sizes, and colors. Echium, Goldenrod, Lemon Balm, Sweet Clover, and Borage are all easy to establish and are favorites of our pollinators.
- PLANT summer bulbs of dahlias, gladiolas, cannas, and callas. Once in the soil, forget about them until they sprout and bloom.
- THIN the fruit on your apricot, peaches, pears, plums, and other trees so that your harvest will produce larger fruit.
- SOW seeds for succession plantings of radishes, beets, lettuces, carrots, and beans.
- CONTINUE handpicking snails and slugs or set out bowls of beer to help with the eradication.
- LEAVE the foliage of daffodils, tulips, Dutch Iris, and hyacinth in your garden until the leaves are very dry and crispy. Don't tie them back with rubber bands and don't prune if you want to have flowers next spring.
- SET a packet of seeds on each place setting for your Mother's Day celebration.
- INCLUDE children in the gardening process by allowing them to tend to a special section of the garden. The responsibility and patience learned will last a lifetime plus the pride of growing something instills confidence and grows self-esteem. Suggestions for magical sowing include sunflowers, beans, and carrots.
- CUT stalks of the vibrant Bird of Paradise for a flower arrangement. Whether grouped with bearded iris or arranged as a solitary statement, Bird of Paradise provides a long lasting cut flower that is elegant and different.
- SOAK the seeds of Echinacea for 24 hours before planting. The National Garden Bureau has designated 2014 as the year of Echinacea, one of the top five perennials in the United States. Easy to grow, Echinacea is a magnet for hummingbirds and bumblebees with medicinal benefits as an anti-depressant and immune system booster as extra bonuses.
- TRANSFER pots of tuberous begonias to a shady area where they will bloom for months.
- CLEAN patio furniture. Freshen your outdoor look with paint, new cushions, or throw pillows.

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Meyer lemon blossoms fill the air with the fragrance of spring.



Easy to care for with colorful blooms year round, anthuriums, also known as flamingo flowers, scrub the air of common VOCs.