

Flower Bed Maintenance

While April and May are spent cleaning out winter debris from your flowerbeds, planning the layout of your summer planting, and filling the beds with colorful annuals and perennials, June and July are the months for garden maintenance.

Planting winds down at this point in the season, and the next task is to keep your new or established plants looking as fresh and bright as the day you planted them.

The first concern most gardeners have is watering. The combination of our summer's hot sun and high Flint Hills winds can quickly dry out a garden.

The key to having well-watered, strong-rooted plants in your gardens is to use deep watering. Instead of quick overhead watering that promotes fungus, diseases, and shallow roots, set up drip irrigation that will water your beds slowly and evenly.

Drip irrigation employs long, slow watering in a specific area. This encourages deep root systems which let plants go longer without water and develops stronger roots. Also, it minimizes evaporation (unlike sprinklers) and excess watering (unlike soaker hoses).

The next step in garden maintenance is weekly weeding. Weeds not only look unappealing, they are also bad for your desirable plants, as they will steal nutrients and harbor insects and diseases.

Pick a day of the week you know you'll stick with, and each week at your chosen time scan your beds for any weeds that have come up since the previous weeding.

Spreading bark or rock mulch helps prevent excessive weeds, and this also makes it easier to spot weeds when they come up through the mulch layer.

It's important to pull up weeds while they're still young; most people know how hard it can be to pull up a month-old dandelion, only to realize you left half of the root in the ground!

Finally, deadhead blooming plants throughout the growing season.

The term "deadheading" refers to the process of removing dead or spent flowers from a plant in order to encourage more flowers and a tidier appearance. It also prevents the plant from forming seed pods, which uses energy a plant could otherwise use for more flowering.

Therefore, removing the dead flowers will encourage most annuals and many perennials to bloom throughout the summer.

Plants with thick stems, like Coneflower, can be cut back with scissors or garden pruners, while thinner stemmed flowers such as Marigolds can be pinched back with your fingers.

Finely stemmed plants with a profusion of flowers, like Moonbeam Coreopsis, are easiest to prune by shearing the entire plant.

Following these simple steps will help you maintain your garden and flower beds throughout the summer.

Also, doing a little work each week will lighten the task of maintaining beautiful, long-lasting blooms in your perennial and annual flower beds. ❁

What to do in June

- Plant trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials and annuals
- Fertilize and spray roses
- Add fountains, birdbaths and ponds to your landscape
- Apply fungicides to turf, perennials, shrubs, etc.
- Inspect plants for insects and disease
- Fertilize fescue and bluegrass lawns with Fertilome Southwest Greenmaker slow-release nitrogen
- Apply weed and grass preventer to flower and shrub beds
- Remember Father's Day June 21st



Nancy's Notebook

Battle of the Bugs

This time of year we start seeing the bugs come out in force. It can be frustrating at times, but if you keep ahead of them, you can be successful in controlling their populations.

Spray your evergreens for bagworms this time of year, when they are small. Fertilome Bagworm and Borer killer with Spinosad is a relatively new insect killer that was discovered from soil in an abandoned rum distillery in 1982.

It is produced by fermentation and can be used on outdoor ornamentals, lawns, vegetables and fruit trees to control caterpillars, thrips, leafminers, borers, fruit flies and more.

Spinosad must be ingested by the insect; therefore, it has little effect on sucking insects such as spider mites or grasshoppers. It is relatively fast acting, killing the insect within one or two days after ingesting the active ingredient.

Grasshoppers are another insect you really need to control

when they are young. Semaspore is really quite effective in keeping grasshopper populations down if you apply the bait when the grasshoppers are young.

The bait contains *Nosema locustae*, a microsporidian parasite that infects grasshoppers, makes them eat less and begin to die. The disease spreads to healthy grasshoppers through cannibalism.

In two to four weeks, 50% of the population will die, and most survivors will be infected, continuing to spreading the disease. Infected survivors eat 75% less than healthy grasshoppers and lay fewer eggs. To apply, simply dust a perimeter around your gardens.

Another big concern in yards is grubs. Bayer grub control with Merit has a long-acting residual, and can be applied now. We haven't seen any problems yet, but if you had grubs last year, be on the lookout. Water in the grub control for the best management in your lawn.

And, of course, if you have any more concerns, bring in a sample (in a baggie, please!) and we will try to diagnose your problem and get you on the right path toward control. 🌸

FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Friday & Saturday, June 19 & 20

20% off all fountains

Also, choose from our great selection of trees, shrubs and gardening tools.

