

Fall Yard Projects

By: Melinda Sperl

Fall is the time of year to prepare your yard for winter. Because we are somewhat of a tropical climate many of our plants cannot survive our normal winters much less the recent freeze and drought. Proper preparation can save many of your plants this year.

Mulch is the most important item for winter preparedness. Mulch gives insulation to the roots of plants, keeps weed seeds from germinating, retains moisture around the roots, oxygenates the soil, then biodegrades to feed the plants.

Winterize your plants and grass. Use a low nitrogen fertilizer, preferably organic, to feed your plants and grass for the winter months. Even though it is winter your plants are still growing roots. Give them food to grow to store energy through winter and come back healthy in the spring.

Apply pre-emergent herbicide to your flowerbeds and grass to kill the weed seeds that will germinate the following season.

Tree trimming should only be done in the winter when the tree is dormant and the sap is not flowing because of the insects that feed on the sap. These insects can infest a tree and totally kill it within one growing season. Remember that trees only need to be trimmed every 5 to 10 years and really should only be done by a certified arborist. One bad trim can damage a beautiful tree for life. Avoid the guy that shows up with a saw and time on his hands!

Now is NOT the time to trim spring blooming plants like azaleas as they are busy setting blooms for spring. If you can avoid trimming those now you will be awarded in the spring with a bountiful bloom season.

Plant those Veggie gardens now as this is a great time for vegetables.

Trim knockout and climbing roses now. Remove dead wood and any crossed branches. Weave or tie up any trailing stems to keep them growing where desired.

Happy Gardening!

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