

August Time To Relax For Gardeners

August is the month to slow down, relax and enjoy your garden. Because the plants realize and conserve their energy at this time, the gardener can follow suit.

Don't, for example, water woody plants except in cases of extreme drought. Their period of growth is pretty well over by August, and now their

tissues must harden for winter. This is especially true of roses; stop watering and fertilizing them now and they'll be much harder this winter. They still need regular spraying, however.

Good bluegrass and fescues, the common lawn grasses, are almost dormant now, so you probably won't need to mow quite so often, and you can pick up the job of fertilizing the grass until late in the month. Doing it now benefits only the weeds. But lawns do need an inch of water a week to keep them green and soft, and you do have to keep after the weeds.

THE ANNUALS may be looking a bit ratty now, with faded flowers, browning foliage, and seed pods. You can improve their appearance and stimulate further flower production if you cut off the dead flowers before the seed pods form.

If you cut them back, fertilize and water them regularly, they will very probably produce still another crop of blooms even now.

One of the most important steps to ensure a good-looking August garden is the selection of plants that will provide midsummer color. Too many gardeners wait until the first of August to plant annuals, and the plants are then too hot to plant. The ideal conditions for sowing grass seed, August is also the time to transplant evergreens. By now they will have passed the first flush of spring growth and are almost dormant, so that transplanting them now will get them settled in their new location in time for fall root growth. Water them regularly after they're transplanted, and if your soil is less than ideal, use equal parts coarse sand, peat moss and clay loam as a planting mixture.

shallow planting -- more more than two inches of soil over them.

You can even plant bulbs this month that will flower this fall. The most spectacular is colchicum, or meadow saffron. These fast bulbs begin sending up flowers (without leaves) from about Labor Day on. The leaves appear in spring. The bulbs are quite hardy, but should be planted about six inches deep.

Less hardy and less spectacular, but still very interesting, are the fall-flowering crocuses. Plant the little corms about three inches deep. Like the colchicum, they produce flowers in the fall and leaves in the spring.

HOME GARDENERS are always asking how to carry geraniums through the winter. The best way is to take cuttings now, root them in clean sand, and pot them up for house plants. The parent plants can be discarded.

And if you feel there is something vaguely reprehensible about buying ready-grown perennials or biennials from the nurseryman, now is the time to sow seeds of columbine, foxglove, Canterbury bells, car-

nations, pinks, delphiniums, lupines, slabs, galathea, hollyhocks, cornopsis, gallardia, rose mallow, plectranthus, lily, sedum, perennial aster, iris, perennial flax, and red hot poker. You'll find them easier to look after if you prepare a special soil bed in a semi-shaded area of the garden.

Be sure to thin the seedlings to four inches apart after they develop their second pair of leaves. Next spring you can move them where you want them to grow in the garden.

There are lots of interesting things to do in the garden in August, but take a tip from the plants this month--relax, and do no more than you want to.

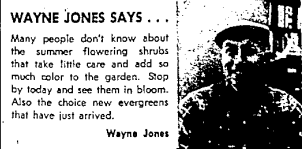
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WAYNE JONES SAYS... Many people don't know about the summer flowering shrubs that take little care and add so much color to the garden. Stop by today and see them in bloom. Also the choice new evergreens that have just arrived.

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Handy Jim's FIX-UP TIPS

Fence Frames Residence

Just as a frame enhances a picture, so does a fence improve the appearance of a residence.

Fences may be used for various purposes, says John Concord, home improvement consultant to Masonite Corporation. They may protect a garden, define property lines, afford privacy, set off certain areas such as a patio, or screen out undesirable views.

Fence styles are varied; they may be panels or strips arranged in various forms limited only by the imagination of the designer. Frequently used because of their weatherability, easy painting and durability are Masonite X-ninety sidings, available in both panel and lay styles, wood or textured.

Some basic ideas are presented in a free plan made available by Concord. They are named: "Women," "Double Header," "The Good Neighbor" and "Hanging Garden."

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