

What TO DO in your garden in MARCH

Flowers

- Sow seeds outdoors for cool-season annuals such as calendula, larkspur, nasturtium, and nigella.
- Start seeds indoors in sterile **Organic Seed Starter** for slow growing annuals such as verbena, stock, nicotiana, cosmos, amaranth, and impatiens.
- Plant cool-season annuals such as pansies, violas, dusty miller, snapdragons, primrose, dianthus, toadflax, nemesia, and alyssum.
- Apply **Organic Traditions Dried Blood** to pansies and violas for healthy growth and **Deer & Rabbit Repellent** to deter rabbits.
- Cut back lirioppe and ornamental grasses to 4" to 6" above the crown. Divide if needed.
- Prepare established and new beds when soil is workable and not overly wet. Lightly dig over the surface of your existing beds. Apply a slow-release organic fertilizer such as **Pro-Start**, and fork in some well-rotted organic mulch such as **Cottonbur Compost** and/or **Worm Castings**.
- Apply **Organic Traditions Greensand** to strengthen stems and provide disease resistance to all plants.
- Fertilize perennials, ground covers and vines as growth appears using **Pro-Start** or a **Plant-tone**.
- As plants emerge spray peonies, clematis and lilies with **Organic Fungus Pharm** for leaf spot diseases. Examine plants for pest and disease damage and treat as necessary. Bring in samples and we will help you diagnose any problems and recommend a treatment accordingly.
- Hand dig weeds and apply pre-emergent such as **Preen or Corn-Gluten weed Preventer**. Don't use pre-emergent in beds where you will be planting seeds!
- Apply **Ferti-lome Dusting Sulfur** around iris, peonies and other plants to prevent fungal diseases.

Roses

- Do not feed or remove winter mulch from your roses. Wait until chance of a freeze is past. (Average last frost date is April 15th.) Dust canes, and emerging foliage, and the surrounding soil with **Ferti-lome Dusting Sulfur** or spray **Organic Rose Pharm** to treat for fungal diseases.
- After April 15th, feed roses with **Rose-tone** or **Bayer All-in-One Rose and Flower Care**.
- Spray **All Seasons Horticultural Oil Spray** or **Organic Rose Pharm** on roses when temperatures are above 40 degrees.

Vegetables And Herbs

- Test soil for nutrients, pH and organic matter with **Earthco Basic Soil Test**.
- Add **Greensand** to vegetable beds to promote sturdy, disease resistant vegetables.
- When soil conditions allow, sow seed directly outside for peas, lettuce, spinach, radish, onion, carrots, kale, leek, turnips, kohlrabi, and celery. Use **Garden Innoculent** on peas for better growth & higher production.
- Start planting hardy vegetables and fruits such as onion sets, shallots, broccoli, cauliflowers, cabbage, collards, spinach, beets, brussels sprouts, mid and late crop potatoes, asparagus, rhubarb, and strawberries later in the month.
- Plant cool-season herbs such as rosemary, parsley, sage, thyme, santolina, and sorrel.
- Use **Garden-tone** organic fertilizer on vegetable beds.

Bulbs

- Start cannas, dahlias, and elephant ears. Plant in good potting mix and keep inside in a warm area to grow.
- Deadhead early flowering spring bulbs so that their energy is not diverted from the bulb to producing seedheads. Do not remove the leaves, however. Bulbs are not harmed by picking flowers for your house.
- Apply **Bulb-tone** to established bulb plantings.

Trees And Shrubs

- Apply *All Seasons Horticultural Oil Spray* or *Oil Pharm* to broadleaf evergreens, fruit trees and roses to control scale.
- Prune limbs damaged by ice, snow and winter kill. Prune shrubs that will flower on NEW growth such as crape myrtle, oakleaf hydrangeas, buddleia, rose of sharon, clethra and caryopteris. Wait to prune other shrubs until signs of live growth appear.
- Apply *Organic Traditions Garden Sulphur* to encourage blue-blooming hydrangeas. It deepens and intensifies the color.
- Branches of forsythia, pear and flowering cherry may be forced to bloom indoors!
- Apply *Holly-tone* or *Organic Traditions Soil Acidifier* to acid-loving plants such as azaleas, blueberries and hollies to encourage rich, green foliage.
- Apply fresh mulch around bushes and trees to inhibit weeds, improve moisture retention and prevent damage from mowers. Use your hand and scoop a ring of mulch away from the base of the tree trunk to keep mulch away from the bark to prevent disease.
- Established fruit trees can be fertilized (once frost leaves ground) with an organic fertilizer such as *Pro-Start*. Spray fruit trees with *All Seasons Horticultural Oil Spray* when temperatures are above 40 degrees.
- Check trees for tent caterpillar egg masses and bagworms. Remove affected branch before eggs hatch and worms emerge.
- Feed evergreens, hollies, and dogwoods with *Holly-tone*. Feed flowering and shade trees with *Tree-tone*.

House Plants

- Repot houseplants with *Organic Potting Soil*.
- Continue to water. Rotate plants in window, cut back and repot as necessary. Water carefully. Water needs may increase as plants come out of dormancy. Fertilize with *Osmocote or Gro-tone*.
- Repot orchids after blooming if needed. Use *Organic Orchid Mix*.
- Apply *Miracid* to gardenias and citrus plants every 3 to 4 weeks.
- Regularly wash dust off house plant leaves.
- Kill mealy bugs on house plants with cotton swabs soaked in rubbing alcohol or use *Indoor Pharm*. If scale is a problem on ficus or citrus plants, apply *All Seasons Horticultural Oil Spray*.

Lawn

- Test soil with *Earthco Basic Soil Test* for nutrients and pH.
- As grass grows, begin mowing to 2.5 to 3 inches as needed.
- After soil is tested, apply *Nutralime* to neutralize pH or *Garden Sulphur* to correct alkalinity.
- To improve drainage and compaction in heavy soils, apply *Gypsum*.
- Repair lawn damage by reseeding.
- Remove fallen leaves and debris—add to compost pile.
- Remove thatch and open up the grass by raking the lawn with a spring-tined rake.
- For crabgrass control apply *Ferti-Lome Lawn Food Plus Crabgrass and Weed Preventor* mid to late March.
- Use *Classic Slow Release Fertilizer or Espoma Organic Lawn Food*.
- Apply *Organic Traditions Garden Gypsum* in areas around walkways where salt was used to melt ice during the winter.

Compost

- Set up a convenient *Geobin Composter*.
- Add *Organic Traditions Bio-Excellerator* along with shredded leaves, spent flower heads, and other organic materials to compost pile. Turn compost pile to speed decomposition.

For The Birds & The Bees

- Backyard wildlife needs food, water, and shelter. To provide food, clean and set up bird feeders and keep feeders full to welcome the return of migrating birds to your garden. Also, set up and clean birdbaths.
- To provide shelter, now is the time to set up bird houses, bat houses, butterfly and toad houses.