

# MAY

## PLANT

- After the danger of frost is past, transplant plants from cold frame into prepared beds.
- Plant gladioli every 10 days for a succession of bloom.
- Plant ageratum, ajuga, begonias, dahlia, marigolds, nasturtiums, petunias & other annuals.
- If you missed dividing plants like hardy asters, coreopsis and chrysanthemums, do it now.
- Plant on an overcast day, then shield from the sun.
- Cut back candytuft and erica (heath) in order to keep plants bushy and to improve next year's bloom.
- Continue planting trees and shrubs.
- Divide and replant early blooming perennials after flowering.
- Sunflowers grow well here as they tolerate poor soil and drought and love rich soil with plenty of moisture.
- Seeds of annuals (dahlias, marigolds, salvia, snap dragons, zinnias, ageratum, pinks, wax begonias and verbena) after danger of frost is over (in this area, after Mother's Day is a common reference).



## PRUNE

- If you wish to remove rhododendron blossoms, it must be done with care in order not to decrease or prevent bloom next year. Old clusters should be snapped off when partly dry.
- Cut off old peony blooms to the first compound leaf.
- Prune flowering trees and shrubs when they finish blooming.
- Pinch back aster and mum buds to prevent early blooming.
- To keep young pine trees small and compact, prune them by pinching back 1/2 of the candle (new growth) each year.

## FERTILIZE

- Bulbs after blooming, let foliage die down naturally and pull faded flowers from daffodils. Do not fold back but cut off leaves when discolored. Use a slow release fertilizer such as Osmocote on perennials and vegetables. Use liquid fertilizer (Miracle-Gro or Peters) on annuals monthly, and on mums until color can be seen in the bud. Continue pinching back. Water newly planted annuals and perennials every 2 or 3 days if soil is dry underneath.



## BEDDING PLANTS

- Look for plants that are not leggy, but compact and healthy and not yet in full bloom. They'll get a better start in your garden than those already blooming. If they have overgrown their pots there will be greater transplanting shock than those that are not as developed. Be sure to loosen roots before putting plant in the ground.
- At planting, work a slow-release fertilizer into the soil.
- If you have to wait for a period of time before planting market packs (4 and 6 pack plants from garden center), water daily.

## HINTS

***If you plan to move indoor foliage plants outdoors for the summer, make it a gradual transition. Best time is when rainy and sunless days are predicted. Place them on a porch or terrace on the north or east side of your home or set them in the shadiest areas of your garden. The harshest sun is mid-day when they can bum easily. • Divide and repot any overcrowded plants. Increase fertilization to one application of water soluble 20-20-20 every 2 weeks.***



## LAWNS

- This is a good time to fertilize warm season grasses (bermuda, zoysia, etc.) if you haven't already. See April Lawn tips. Apply as directed on the package. Some fertilizers also contain an herbicide that will kill broadleaf weeds at the same time.



## WATCH FOR

- Red spider mite and leaf miner on boxwood and junipers. You'll see a circular white powdery growth on the tops of foliage. The spots eventually become darker and irregular in shape. Leaves may curl and become distorted and may drop.
- Black spot and mildew on many vegetables, ornamental plants, crape-myrtles, hydrangeas, holly, dogwood, euonymous, roses and photinia.
- Borers: To prevent infestation on dogwood, apple, hickory, willow and the peach borer on fruit trees:
  1. Keep trees as healthy as possible and the bark intact.
  2. Water trees well during drought.
  3. Do not pile up mulch around tree trunks, which only softens it, making it easier for borers to drill into.
- Remember to keep one well marked sprayer for fertilizing, another for weed-killers and another for insecticides and wash out after each use. A used and cleaned household sprayer (like Windex) can be used for small jobs, but label contents on sprayer.
- Watch for lace bugs on underside of leaves on azaleas and rhododendron.
- For pest control recommendations, contact either Fluvanna or Albemarle extension office.

## CHORES

- Continue composting garden cuttings and fruit and vegetable kitchen waste.
- Lawn care - set mower to 3-4 inches, water deeply—at about 1 inch weekly. Patch bare areas by sowing new seed
- Install stakes around tall growing perennials.

## GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

- Bulbs: alium, Lily of the valley, wood hyacinths
- Perennials: broom, caladium, candytuft, centaurea, coral bells, daylilies, daisies, iris, lilies, peonies
- Climbers: some clematis, roses, wisteria
- Shrubs: azaleas, lilacs, rhodies, roses, spirea, viburnum.