

Gardening tips for August

Gardening requires a lot of water, most of it is perspiration

A month of plenty in the garden and plenty to do. If you have a veg patch time to reap the harvest and if you make space, time to replant for autumn produce. In the flower borders cutting back, pruning and dividing.

The Veg Patch

August is mostly about harvesting, but watering, weeding and mulching are constant companions! If you have well-rotted compost now is the time to use it all so you can start again with this year's waste material.

Dry out or "ripen" bulbs such as onions and garlic for storage. Drying out can be done by lifting the bulb and leaving on the ground in the sun or spreading on the garden bench (not a popular choice in my garden).

Growth of veg. particularly courgettes and runner beans at this time of year is rapid therefore check daily and harvest regularly.

If you still have potatoes growing, keep earthing up to stop the potatoes from being exposed to light. Also earth up around brassicas to help support the stems.

Strawberry plants will be producing miles of runners, peg these down into pots to produce new plants. When established cut the plant from the runner and keep watered. Plant out when you can find somewhere suitable.

Tomatoes

As the tomatoes grow the plants become top heavy and will need extra support so keep tying them up. Water regularly and feed weekly with tomato fertilizer.

The Flower Garden

Deadheading flowering plants regularly and don't forget the hanging baskets, deadhead to keep the plants flowering and a general tidy up, also remember to keep watering. If they dry out, lift them down and give a good soaking in a large bucket (I said this last month but worth repeating!)

If you are after prize blooms on your dahlias (our Autumn Show is on 11th September) remove the secondary flower buds from the main flower stems.

Give hardy geraniums a trim to tidy them up and encourage new flowers.

Climbing/rambling roses that do not repeat flower or produce attractive hips can be pruned when flowering has finished.

I used the garlic extract mentioned in May to control aphids, forget it, it doesn't work (for me), perhaps I need more garlic.

The Water Garden

Continue to keep the pond topped up with rainwater and remove blanket weed and fallen leaves. If the pond is of a smaller size consider taking some water out before topping up, this helps to keep the water fresh.

Lawns

Other than regular mowing, leave the lawns alone. You could be watering it, weeding, aerating, fertilizing, overseeding... but it is there to be played on so just enjoy the space. If you think it looks bad remember what centre court looked like at Wimbledon after two weeks of tennis!

For membership details and to ask garden related questions please go to our website www.gardenreg.org.

Keep gardening.

Richard Haigh EGRGA Chairman