

Gardening tips for September

A month of wonderful weather, hopefully better than July and August!

Last year was too dry, this year too wet, welcome to the world of gardening.

The Veg Patch

September is harvest time and time to plan for next year. Start sowing for early picking, suitable crops include broad beans, peas, onion, garlic, winter spinach. As the autumn soil should still be warm sow spring cabbage and salad crops such as Pak choi, lettuce, corn salad and quick to grow crops such as turnips and radish.

Keep watering winter squash, courgettes, pumpkins and cucumbers if the weather is hot and pinch out the tips of these trifid-like plants as they prioritise vegetative growth over fruit formation, you may get fruit drop if you don't keep them contained. With the tips pinched, all the fruit down to the base of the stem should ripen. Place a tile under the largest fruit to stop rot creeping in where they sit on the damp soil. Leave pumpkins, squash and marrows to ripen in the sun as long as possible so that the skin can harden.

Summer raspberries, prune out all this year's canes and tie in the new ones to supports.

Clear beds in the veg patch can be planted with green manure which will help to suppress weeds and add nutrients when dug into the soil in spring. There is a variety of green manures available, go for a winter mix or a winter ryegrass.

Tomatoes

If you are lucky, you will have a crop! Blight has been rampant this year, those with outdoor tomatoes, may have lost everything, those with a greenhouse should be feeling smug. Note for next year, plant Tomato Crimson Crush, the only variety to claim blight resistance.

The Flower Garden

Keep deadheading and weeding, there is always weeding to be done!

Start planting new perennials as well as trees/shrubs/climbers. Plant pot grown trees whilst the soil is still warm and moist.

Plant up containers for autumn interest, remember leaves can provide just as much colour as flowers.

Plant spring bulbs, buy as soon as you see them in the garden centres before they sell out of the ones you want.

The Water Garden

Think about netting over the pond before leaves fall. Keeping fallen leaves out of the water helps keep the water clean and low in nutrients therefore helping to prevent blanket weed.

Lawns

Just as your lawn looks like it is recovering from the ravages of a wet summer and uneven wear now is the time to scarify. Either using a tine rake (good for a workout) or using a powered scarifier give the lawn a really good scratch to remove the thatch, dead and weak grass. If compacted, aerate with a garden fork and over seed with new grass seed. The lawn will look dreadful for a few weeks but will recover to be a better lawn.

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

Keep gardening.

Richard Haigh EGRGA Chairman