



Through the
Garden
Gate

January Gardening Tips and Reminders

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Feathery Friends

Now is the time to feed the birds in your garden as natural food sources are scarce this time of year. Use suet cakes along with birdseed to provide protein and fat for the birds.

Water is also important for the birds, so if you have a birdbath in your garden, be sure to use a de-icer to prevent the water from freezing or a heated birdbath. Visit the store to view our extensive line of bird houses, feeders and other bird friendly items.

General

Brush or sweep heavy snow off evergreens to prevent breakage.

Time to apply anti-desiccants to azaleas, rhododendrons, hollies and other broad-leafed evergreens to minimize moisture loss during the cold and windy weather months. Do this when the temperature is above 45 degrees Fahrenheit. For the health of your broad-leafed evergreens, it is important to protect their leaf tissue; which can lose moisture from the very drying effects of the wind and cold.

If January is dry or windy; you should water thoroughly on day when the temperature is above 40 degrees.

January or February is also the time to prune fruit and shade trees if necessary.

Protect your landscape from hungry deer with wildlife control strategies; ask your local nursery for assistance.

January is a great time to apply cow manure and other organic soil conditioners to your garden. Apply the manure 2 inches deep in your vegetable garden and let the nutrients soak into the soil.

If you have containers and birdbaths that will not be used during the winter months, be certain to turn them over in order to prevent them from collecting water that could freeze and ultimately crack the containers.

If you have a small pond or water feature, be certain to check that the water pump(s) is working properly. The larger pumps which move a lot of water typically can keep running throughout the winter with no problems. However, smaller pumps will probably freeze and should be turned off for the winter months.

Depending on the size of your pond, it may be necessary to use a floating de-icer. The de-icer will help ensure the survival of your fish during the extreme winter temperatures.

Lawn

January is an ideal time to lime the lawn if you have not done so in recent years. Lawns prefer a pH range of 6.2 - 6.8 which may require liming. Apply 50 lbs. of lime per 1,000 square feet of lawn area. This will help to raise the pH by 1/2 point. If it is necessary to apply more lime, then wait six weeks between applications.

House Plants

Enjoy indoor gardening during the winter months. Orchids, African violets and other flowering houseplants will brighten the inside of your home or office.

Mist ferns and gardenias at least once a week, especially if your house is very dry.

Do not feed your houseplants as often during the winter months for this is their resting period. Begin feeding them more regularly in late February with a good quality indoor plant food.

Check the leaves of your houseplants for insect problems like scale, mites and mealy bugs. If you detect a problem, take a sample to your local nursery who can help you diagnose the problem.

Also, check your houseplants for any leaves that are turning yellow and/or brown. Lower leaves that curl and fall off may be too warm, too dry or the plant is simply not getting enough water. Lastly, check the pots of your plants for any protruding roots from the drainage holes or even up over the top. If this has occurred repot the plants to larger pots.

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Happy New Year!