

FEBRUARY

What to Plant . . . **Annuals:** Plant annuals, perennials, herbs and bulbs recommended for planting in January. Continue with dianthus, petunias, snapdragons and similar cool season flowers.

What's Blooming . . . The **Hong Kong orchid tree, purple tabebuia, red silk-cotton tree.**

What to Prune . . . Prune **roses** before February 15 and prune **muscadine grapes** before month's end. If necessary, **citrus** should be pruned early in the month before blooming starts. Do not put anything on the cut. It will heal better by itself. Cut back **ornamental grasses** including fountain, cord and fakahatchee grasses. Do not prune cold sensitive plants such as ixoras and hibiscus. Refrain from cutting back on cold damaged plants.

What to Fertilize . . . Mid to late February is the perfect time for fertilizer applications. If plants are not as dark green and attractive as they used to be, your February feeding will help green things up. Apply a complete fertilizer to **St. Augustinegrass**, including floritam and palmetto and also **Bahiagrass** lawns. Fertilize **citrus trees** regardless of age. Apply fertilizer to ornamental trees and shrubs. Once the soil warms, plants tend to need less help to remain green. Irrigate soon after fertilizer applications.

What to Watch For . . . This can be a messy month. Expect leaf drop from a wide variety of plants especially after a colder than normal winter. Keep an eye out for **cutworms**.

February Journal:

- This is an important month for your **Florida lawn**. Now is the time to apply a preemergence herbicide to suppress broadleaf weeds before they grow rampant in lawns. Act to eliminate Bermudagrass before it becomes established. Finally, apply a complete fertilizer such as 16-4-8. Inspect, sharpen, oil and clean gardening tools as needed. Wear goggles when using gardening tools and invest in a pair of sturdy, gardening gloves.
- Add two to three inches of **mulch** to planting beds. Do not mulch near trunks of trees. All mulches break down and need to be replenished about twice a year. Mulching is your best form of weed control and water conservation.
- Fertilize **citrus trees** before flowering and strong spring growth occurs. Apply up to 3 lbs. of 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 to each tree less than four years old. For trees four years or older, apply 6 lbs. of fertilizer per tree.
- Check your **irrigation system** and clean and adjust sprinkler heads if necessary.