

## September in the Garden

**What to Plant . . .** **Annuals:** celosia, coleus, cosmos, gomphrena, impatiens, marigold, ornamental pepper, salvia, vinca, sunflowers wax begonia or zinnia. **Perennials:** chrysanthemum, creeping phlox, daylily gazania, gerbera, liatrus, moraea, pentas, salvias, verbena, and yarrow. Cool weather **herbs** such as sage, sweet marjoram, thyme, lavender, rosemary and sweet fennel can be planted this month. **Bulbs:** amaryllis, Aztec lily calla, clivia, crinum, elephant ears, gladiolus, iris, lilies, narcissus, snowflake, watsonia, Zephyr lily.

**What's in Bloom . . .** The goldenrain tree.

**What to Prune . . .** Give any final pruning this month to **cold sensitive plants** so that new growth can mature before winter. For maximum flower production through the winter, this should be the last pruning for **bougainvillea**. It is not too late to prune citrus to shape or remove deadwood. Now is a good time to remove dead fronds from **Sabal palms**. Give **roses** a fall pruning by removing dieback, weak and non-productive growth. Cut back any branches that have become too tall to where the stem is the thickness of a pencil. Remove small, weak growth to improve the appearance. Remove inward growing stems to open the center of the bush.

**What to Fertilize . . .** Light fertilizer applications might be appropriate this month to replace nutrients leached out by summer rains. This especially true of young plants.

**What to Watch For . . .** **Plantbugs, stinkbugs** and **citron bugs** are evidenced by dark spots on the fruit with puncture holes and rotten fruit. These are free flying insects that move from tree to tree at will so spraying does not help. This is often the worst month for whitefly, which look like tiny white gnats. Treat with horticultural oil. This time of year you may find a fine webbing covering some tree branches. This is the handiwork of beneficial insects called "**tree cattle**." These tiny insects clean up the tree by feeding on decaying matter. They are harmless and will move on when they've completed their task.

### September Journal:

- The combination of heavy rainfall and high temperatures can have an adverse effect on **lawns**. Fungus and other disease invade turf this time of year.
- The **vegetable garden** should be in the sunniest area of the yard; choose a site that will be high and dry during heavy rains; use disease resistant varieties and those suggested for Florida growing conditions; water at the roots of the vegetable plants by using low volume irrigation or drip hoses rather than spraying water on the leaves. If you do overhead watering, do it early in the morning while the plants are already wet. Mulch plants once they have started to grow to prevent soil from splashing onto their

leaves when rains are heavy (this can spread soil borne diseases). Check the garden often, searching for early signs of insect or disease problems. Never work in a garden when it is wet, as this can lead to the spread of many more diseases. Also, discard any cuttings; do not leave them in the garden plot.

- Give **poinsettias** their final pruning to keep them on schedule for holiday blooming. On Christmas cactus, pinch off any weak or brown shoots, no later than this month. These plants bloom in response to shortened days so they should not receive any artificial light at night.
- **Amaryllis, cannas, and lily** and other **bulbs** can be lifted, divided and reset now if they have grown too large for their location. Prepare beds with liberal amounts of organic matter.
- **Strawberry** plants can be set now. These plants are treated as an annual in Florida.