



# NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

## Helpful Garden Tips for June 2023

by Peyton Ellas, UCCE Master Gardener

June means hot and dry weather, with occasional drops in temperature. Daytime temperatures average around 92 degrees Fahrenheit daytime and 58 degrees Fahrenheit at night. Expect almost 14 hours of sunshine per day, but don't expect rain: June is historically the third driest month of the year. We know how to keep our gardens healthy and growing with water-efficient practices and low-water-use plants.

**PLANTING:** Your ornamental planting should be finished by the middle of the month. If you must plant ornamentals in summer, choose water-tolerant plants. In low-water-use gardens, this can be the many sage (*Salvia*), among them California native sage, California fuchsia (*Epilobium*), sage hybrids and cultivars like 'Hot Lips,' and 'Flame,' plus Yarrow (*Achillea*), Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*), Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia*), Bougainvillea, rosemary, Hesperaloe, and Apricot Mallow (*Sphaeralcea*.)

In the edible garden, plant melon, winter squash and pumpkin, basil, corn, and okra. Edible gardening is a high-maintenance project and is not low-water. But as long as we don't waste or overuse water and we maximize our harvest by controlling pests and diseases, we should not be afraid to keep our edible gardens and fruit orchards.

**MAINTAINING:** Lawns should be watered deeply and infrequently. Keep your grass at least three inches tall to help the crowns stay cool and not dry out between watering. Consider removing your lawn or reducing the size and/or switching from a high-water-use species to a low-water-use lawn or turf substitute.

Even our low-water-use plant species appreciated the abundant winter precipitation, but they are still adapted for the upcoming long hot dry season and can thrive with less water all summer than high water use plants like roses and fescue lawn.

Monitor your garden, both edible and ornamental, for pest insects like scale, aphid, whitefly, stink bug, spider mite, and earwigs. Edible gardens with flowers and hedgerows can be a great habitat for garden allies like lacewing, ladybug, birds, spiders, native wasp, butterflies and moths. Monitor populations of pest insects and see if the beneficials, including birds, can keep the numbers manageable. If some help is needed, follow the "least toxic first" method of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practice before you reach for the kills-everything insecticide.

### Other tasks this month are:

- Deep-water ground covers, lawns, shrubs, and trees, including fruit trees.
- Divide bearded iris once they finish blooming. First carefully dig up plants and discard old rhizomes and any diseased or rotted sections. Replant the healthy rhizomes, making sure to plant shallowly. Just barely cover the rhizome with soil before watering.
- Prune azalea, camelia and hydrangea after bloom.
- After harvest, clean up berry vines. Cut this year's fruiting canes to the ground and tie up the new green canes in their place. Spread compost or fertilizer in the bed, then deep water.
- Prune apricot trees in the summer. You can also do a light summer pruning of other stone fruit trees. Beware of pruning too much, since bark that has previously been in the shade can be extra-sensitive to sunburn.
- Lightly cut back any perennials that are becoming too leggy.
- Snip spent flowers from summer blooming annuals and perennials.
- Wisteria can be pruned aggressively now. Cut back to two nodes on the new branches, as this will keep the plant from unrestrained growth, while giving it time to put on a spectacular display of blooms next year.
- Manage mosquitos by limiting standing water and using dunks containing *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (BTI).

### WEED CONTROL:

- Crabgrass thrives in overwatered, over-mowed lawn. Change the lawn care and reduce this weed. IF you use an herbicide, be sure to follow the directions carefully; don't just throw it on by handful.
- Nutsedge also loves overwatered lawns and planting beds. It's tough to get rid of. Be diligent with hand pulling, hoeing, and spraying to remove it before it takes control of your garden or lawn.

- Spurge is often a sign you also have an Argentine ant problem and, in lawns, that you are mowing too short. This flat creeping weed with a red spot on the leaves must be hand pulled or hoed before plants set seeds. Also control the ants with baits, changing the active ingredient every few months.

**CONSERVING:** Even this year, follow good practices by avoiding over watering. If you do only one thing, repair leaks! If you can do more, SaveOurWater has easy to follow tips for prioritizing water use and conserving water ( <https://saveourwater.com/en/How-to-Save-Water/Around-the-Yard>.) Many of these tips are easy to make into a life-long habit, drought or no drought. If you are still a hold out, trying to save onto your water-thirsty lawn and England or New England-type landscape, perhaps some of the new garden styles appearing throughout our valley will inspire you to modernize your garden and reduce the water needs of the ornamental landscape so we can continue to use water as needed to grow our home gardens and orchards without worry. Maybe this is the year to investigate water-storing features like cisterns, a rain garden or rain barrels. Try to tolerate benign insects and keep in mind insects feed bats and birds, including those rare tri-colored blackbirds we've seen this year and the colorful finches and tanagers.

Have a safe, healthy, full-of-garden-wonder month!

**The Tulare-Kings Counties Master Gardeners will answer your questions in person:**

Visalia Farmer's Market- 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 8-11 am, 2100 W. Caldwell Ave (behind Sears)

June 3 -Visalia Farmers' Market, 2100 W. Caldwell Ave (behind Sears) - 8-11 am

June 3 - Ace Plant Clinic, 2230 W Walnut, Visalia - 10 am - 1 pm

June 10 – Luis Nursery Plant Clinic, 139 S. Mariposa Ave, Visalia – 10 am – 2 pm

June 10 - Berry Festival @ Woodlake Botanical Garden, 577 E Naranjo Blvd, 7:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Questions? Call the Master Gardeners:**

Tulare County: (559) 684-3325, Tues & Thurs, 9:30-11:30;

Kings County: (559) 852-2736, Thursday Only, 9:30-11:30 a.m

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