# MAY GARDEN CHORES

By Leslie Stevens

May’s warmer days usher in a bloom extravaganza in the garden, a time when many fruit trees set buds and numerous flowering plants put on a colorful display. So head outside, gardening tools in hand, and enjoy the show.

## Chores

## Prune winter and spring flowering vines, bushes, trees and subtropical plants and ground covers after they complete their bloom cycles.

## Rebuild water basins around trees and shrubs for the summertime.

## Start deep watering trees and shrubs with soaker hoses or drip systems. A thorough soaking once per week or twice per month uses less water than frequent lighter applications.

* Check timers on lawns and be sure to water during morning hours.

## Flowers:

* Add daylilies for a long season of blooms.
* Attract butterflies to the garden by planting aster, buddleia, marigold and salvias.
* Good choices for blooming shrubs that need little water include bottlebrush, ceanothus, grevillea, rockrose and strawberry bush.

## Edibles

* Sow seeds of warm season veggies such as lima and snap beans, corn, cucumbers, pumpkins, and squashes outdoors.
* To jump-start your summer garden, check local nurseries for transplants such as tomatoes, eggplant and peppers.
* Attract bees to the garden by planting herbs such as basil, borage, calendula, catnip, lemon balm, mint and thyme.

### Trees & Shrubs

* Plant citrus and avocado trees in mild winter areas once frost danger has passed.
* It’s a good time to plant many shrubs and perennials such as artemisia, rockrose, Indian Hawthorne, lavender and rosemary.
* Thin apples, pears and stone fruits when they reach about ½ -to ¾-inch in size. Remaining fruit should be 4-to-6” apart.

## Pests & Diseases

## Sawfly larva, called rose slugs, begin to emerge. Inspect undersides of rose bush leaves and remove larva by hand or with strong water spray.

* Monitor for aphids appearing in new growth on trees, shrubs and roses. Hose off infected plants with a strong stream of water only during morning hours to avoid mildew growth.

## References

Pest Note 7404, Aphids, <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7404.html>

Pest Note 7466, Roses: Insect and Mite Pests and Beneficials, http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7466.html

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