

To Do List for April

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After azaleas, camellias and other early blooming acid loving perennials have flowered, feed them with a fertilizer specifically made for acid loving plants; pinch off old blooms taking care not to damage new growth.

In the lower elevations of our county it may be possible to plant tomatoes in the ground by the end of April. Be sure that the nights do not go below 50 degrees and that the soil has warmed up.

Stop ants from climbing your fruit trees by placing a sticky barrier around the trunk. Ants can damage fruit, and they also protect aphids living in the trees.

When you plan your vegetable garden, it is wise to put plants with similar water needs together; this will save water and keep crops healthy.

We have had a long wet winter this year. Now that the rains are subsiding, it is time to think about mosquito control.

There are many species of mosquitoes; most do not pose a problem to humans or our pets. The few that do can cause serious health issues such as West Nile Virus in humans and heart worm in dogs. The bites of the mosquito can cause secondary infections.

Only female mosquitoes suck blood; the males live on nectar.

Female mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant or very still water so it is very important to make sure all possible breeding areas such as buckets, pots and old tires are drained. Check tree crotches and fill them with dirt if they contain water; empty bird baths and refill them daily. Place some mosquito fish in animal troughs so the fish will eat the larvae. Prevent the fish from entering any waterways as they may become invasive.

Most mosquito bites occur at dawn or dusk; if you need to be outside during these times wear long sleeved shirts and long pants and if there are a lot of insects around, it may be necessary to spray yourself with a mosquito repellent. Lastly, check the screens on the windows of your home to ensure they are snug and have no holes that the mosquito can get through.