

**APRIL GARDENING SCHEDULE FOR NEW YORK CITY**

A fickle month the can lure you into full spring activity and then bring a few weeks of white stuff to dampen upper enthusiasm. Preparation, planning, and extreme attention to the weather - temperature and winds - will make your garden flourish. If you have not tested your soil for pH and nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, do it now! Cornell soil test boxes available at \$5.00 each from CENYC.

**THINGS TO ORDER:**

- Sprayers for organic or botanic pest control.
- Dusters for disease control.
- Miscible oil for woolly aphids or scale on days when temperature is above 45 degrees F., and will be, for three consecutive days.
- New gloves.
- Soil conditioners should be worked in as soon as possible when ground is not wet. Bone meal at this time of year is especially safe. Stronger fertilizers or unrotted manure can burn tender plant/seedling roots. Wood ash from a fireplace contains potash that is most beneficial to your lawn, roses, bulb and root plants.

**PLANNING.** If you have not already done so, take several pictures or slides of your garden areas. Label new plantings as well as any you may have missed last season.

**DIGGING THE SOIL.** Spade deeply at least one foot down. Do not work in the garden when the soil is wet as you can destroy soil structure. Start at the top of a grade and toss soil upward. Clods of soil should be pulverized as spading is done. Rocks, bricks, broken glass, and other invaders should be removed by riddling (sifting), or manually. After conditioning - adding fresh organic material and bone meal and mixing well - level carefully with a rake. "Top dress" - add a thin, top layer of compost pressed through a sieve. Borders around trees and shrubs should be loosened gently to admit air.

**SEEDING.** Outdoor Annuals. Be sure to be prepared to protect germinated and seeded plants from frost with upside-down bushel baskets, Clorox jugs, quilted burlap, or a glass-covered box.

Flowers that can be sown outdoors this month if the ground is not frozen or wet are: Violas, Pansies, Banderol Buttons, Calendula, Snapdragons, Gypsophila, and Nasturtiums. Be prepared to reseed if an untimely hard frost should occur.

**Vegetables** - Mid-month - Lettuce, Carrots, Radishes, Spinach, Beets, Chard, Jerusalem Artichokes, Salsify, Parsnips. Late in the month start Melons, Cucumbers, Squash, and Pumpkins for transplanting in late May or early June.

**Herbs** - Thyme, dill, sage, marjoram, chamomile, rue lemon balm, anise oregano.

**Cover Crop** - Can be sown now and turned over into the soil in mid-June if your project is not going to get started until later. Mustard, clover, soybeans, rye grass might be good choices.

**Perennials** - perennial beds should receive a treatment of well-rooted manure and bone meal. Divide those shasta daisy, delphinium, fall aster, and chrysanthemum plants that have good root clumps. Replant in prepared location immediately.

**Roses** - If the weather is cooperative, dormant plants can be planted. Established rose bushes may need pruning to improve ventilation and sunlight! Prune down to a strong bud which points outward. In transplanting, add a light, 2-inch much of peat moss on soil, fertilize, and scratch in bone meal. Some sources recommend planting garlic near your roses to discourage insects and pests.

**Grapevines** - do not be afraid to grow these valuable plants. Ask your supplier for strains that are hardy for New York City. The fruit bone on green shoots that grow in spring - never old, woody canes. Prune the canes; be careful cultivating soil around these vines as they are very close to the surface. The herb Hyssop is thought to be a good companion to Grapes.

# THE CITY LOT

**Fruit Trees** - This is the time to prune Apple, Cherry and Fig trees.

**Berries** - Consider planting a Black Raspberry hedge which untrimmed can grow to four or five feet in height; it will provide snowy white flowers in May and delicious berries in July. Blueberries also come out in July; why not prepare an especially acid soil for a hedge of New Jersey Blues? The foliage is noted for its attractive autumn color, and the red branches are lovely in winter. Now is the time to check garden centers and catalogues for the best varieties of bearing Strawberries; you can add them to your garden as borders, or in rows on hills. Do not cover the crown of the plant or leave it exposed to frost. Keep the flowers pinched off. A mulch of compost between the rows - which should be least one foot apart - will help conserve necessary soil moisture.

**Trees and Shrubs** - Almost all wood stock is best planted before buds break out into leaves - especially the large Flowering Dogwoods, Evergreens, Flowering Cherries, Rhododendrons, Weigelas, Japanese Maples, Rose of Sharon, and Sweet Gums. Stake and guy wire and keep watered. Boxwood and Privet hedges should be trimmed before new growth starts. Shaping of Evergreens can be accomplished by snipping back their "candles." Fertilize Evergreens with an acidic fertilizer, such as Miracle Acid or Holly-Tone. Spiraea should be cut to the ground to stimulate new growth. Fertilize your trees and shrubs as they come into leaf. Pruning is necessary for early flowering shrubs; plan to do this directly after blooms have gone by. Remove "water spout" suckers. Add a generous amount of organic matter, like compost and leaf mold, to the soil.