



Gill Garden News



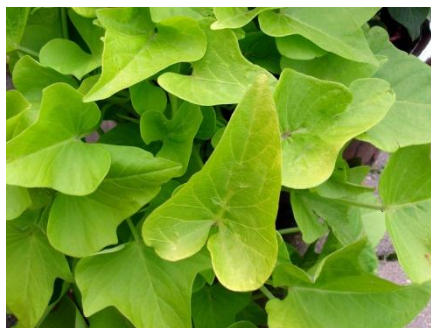
Spring is in full swing and our nurseries are bursting at the seams with spring plants and garden accessories. Wake up your landscape with lots of color 'cause The Easter bunny will be hopping around this month! There is so much to see and do and plant, you just have to come see us in the garden!

Caladiums are a South Texas favorite for long season color. Best grown in shady spaces in a garden or planted in pots for patio color. The large leaves of bright reds, pinks, or white are veined or speckled with contrasting colors. The bulbs are easily planted and make a wonderful border in front of hedges. It is a nostalgic old fashioned plant that has stood the test of time.



Popularity Contests!

Crazy as it is... plants are almost as trendy as shoe styles. Of course the "style" changes with the season, so here's the latest "in demand".



Sweet Potato Vine: The best new-old plant that everyone can grow! Loves sun or shade, fast growing, stays beautiful spring, summer, and fall. Sweet potato vine will produce potatoes that can be dug and replanted in more garden spaces. I would not eat them. The colors are a spectrum of greens, purple, chartreuse, and multi.



Coleus: This shade loving annual at one time only came in a pack of mixed colors; now there are dozens of varieties to tantalize your color palette. Bowls of coleus mixed with spring annuals give you months of enjoyment. Coleus can easily be kept “tidy” by simply pinching the tops occasionally, take them and place in a vase of water for indoor color.



Periwinkles: They have to be at the top of the list for sun loving color. Periwinkles endure the hottest and driest of conditions. I had many requests as early as January for these summer lovers, but don't try to rush them. If planted once night time temperatures are warmer, they should last all summer. Brilliant or pastel, there's a color perfect for you!

TO DO THIS MONTH....

- Fertilize your roses and other spring bloomers like crape myrtles so they have plenty of nutrition for the season. Hibiscus and other tropicals will also be in need of a good feeding, with Green Diamond Hibiscus Food.
- Get on a regular watering schedule for your lawn and landscape. Lawns will need watering every 7 days if we do not get rain. New lawns will need water more often. Go to our website and look at the troubleshooting guides, “Good Water Practice For Established Trees, Shrubs, & Lawns.”
- Mulch Those Beds! The city had “mulch madness” in March; it was one of the best ideas to help new gardeners understand the importance and value of using mulch. Mulch not only improves your landscape look, it also aids in water retention (very valuable) as we get closer to the summer months.
- Start watching for critters. As our landscapes grow and bloom so do the bugs that love to feed on them. But remember do not use pesticides that kill our dwindling bee populations. Most pesky insects can be controlled with topical products that will break down quickly. Bring by a sample of your pest problem before spraying; you may not need to do anything.



Butterflies & Caterpillars Oh My!

Most of us enjoy the fascinating change that happens when a caterpillar spins its cocoon to emerge into a beautiful butterfly. One of my favorite plants is Butterfly Weed. It is one of the most sought after plants both by monarch butterflies and those people who adore them. The monarch uses the plant for nectar and lays its eggs on the leaf for the larvae to feast on once they hatch. Butterfly weed is one of the few plants we love to sell “complete with caterpillars”. Be sure to never spray the plant with insecticide.