

JUNE 2010

Week 1: June gardening

In June we have winter's arrival and the shortest day of the year. But gardens go on growing, albeit a little more slowly than during the warmer months.

Vegies to sow in June

As long as the soil is well drained and not too cold, broad beans can be sown in June. These cold-loving vegies have so much to offer. They add valuable nitrogen to the soil and are said by some to clean up root-damaging nematodes. Then, in spring, the beans can be enjoyed at their young, tender and delicious best.

Flowers to sow in June

It's not too late to sow sweet peas, especially the small-growing varieties – e.g. Pixie Princess, Cupid or Bijou - into pots. If sowing direct into garden beds (only for warm areas), make sure that they have good drainage. Otherwise the seeds might rot away before they germinate.

Feed in June

With World Environment Day in June, this is a good time to feed with a natural-type fertiliser such as blood and bone or Dynamic Lifter.

They release gently, which suits the slower growth at this time of year, and they don't dump lots of soluble nutrients to pollute waterways etc. Plus, they're produced from waste materials, which means another environmental benefit.



Prune in June

Cut back asparagus ferns that have turned brown. New shoots will emerge from the soil in spring.

June's a good month to check your pruning tools and get them ready for winter action. Sharpen secateurs, clean saws and tighten and oil joints. Take the opportunity to wrap some brightly-coloured tape around the handles so, when tools end up half buried in the mulch, they'll still be easy to see.

June pest watch

After their leaves fall, give deciduous fruit trees a clean-up spray with a copper fungicide. Yates Champ DP dissolves readily and is easy to apply. Next month you can follow up with a winter-strength white oil spray to kill off aphids, mites and scale insects.

June job file

Watch out for the weeds that flourish in winter. Lawn daisies and other broad-leafed weeds begin to pop up in lawns. Yates Turfix will remove them without harming the grass. Spray emerging chickweed before it has time to seed.

Roundup Fast Action will do the job, even at this time of year, but don't allow it to contact any wanted plants.

Plant of the month

It's hard to beat daphne for winter colour and perfume. Pink or white-flowered *Daphne odora* (pictured) is still the favourite, but look out, too, for some of the new daphne varieties.

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Week 2 Winter in the garden

The winter garden is special. Flower colours seem more clearly defined. Cold enhances their pigmentation and deepens their colours. Deciduous trees that have lost their leaves sketch a tracery of bare branches against blue winter skies. And the crisp, cool air makes it a pleasure to work outdoors.

Winter colour

During winter, many plants continue growing in preparation for the spring show to come. Bulb leaves have emerged from the soil and seedlings are making steady progress. Sweet peas are moving steadily up their supports. Watch out for snails and slugs – they love the cooler time of year - and feed flowers regularly with a liquid fertiliser such as Thrive or Nitrosol.

Winter perfumes

Flower fragrance seems sharper and stronger in the winter air, too. Think of the clear sweetness of daphne perfume, the soft notes of pretty pink luculia and the spicy scent of wintersweet (*Chimonanthus praecox*).

The nutmeg bush (*Tetradenia riparia*-pictured) develops winter-blooming, pale mauve plumes with a sweet scent. Its leaves, too, release a pleasantly spicy aroma when crushed.



Early sweet peas begin blooming in winter, and the perfumed spikes of jonquils and hyacinths brighten the garden.

Winter problems

Caterpillars may still be hanging on. If they're causing unsightly damage, use Success to clean them up.

After their leaves have fallen, give deciduous fruit trees a clean-up spray with a copper fungicide (e.g. Yates Champ DP or Nature's Way Fungus Spray). Repeat this just before the buds begin to swell in spring. A mid-winter application of Yates Conqueror Oil will take care of scale and mites.

Oxalis are winter-growing weeds that, although pretty, are very persistent. Dab with Zero Weeding Brush or spray with Roundup Fast Action. Small bulbs in the ground will then

emerge, so follow-up treatment will be necessary.

Plan frost protection. Move cold sensitive potted plants into a sheltered spot or a glasshouse. Put stakes around in-ground plants. Then, when cold nights are predicted it's easy to throw a cloth or old towel over the plant. Remember to remove it in the morning.

Winter planting

Winter's the ideal season to plant and transplant deciduous trees and shrubs.

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Week 3: Small trees for the garden

Trees are important features in any landscape but many modern gardens don't have the space for a large tree. There is, however, a wide choice of smaller-growing specimens that will add interest to the garden. The following suggestions are all deciduous, so they'll allow sun through in winter and provide some shade in summer. And winter is the best season to plant any deciduous tree.

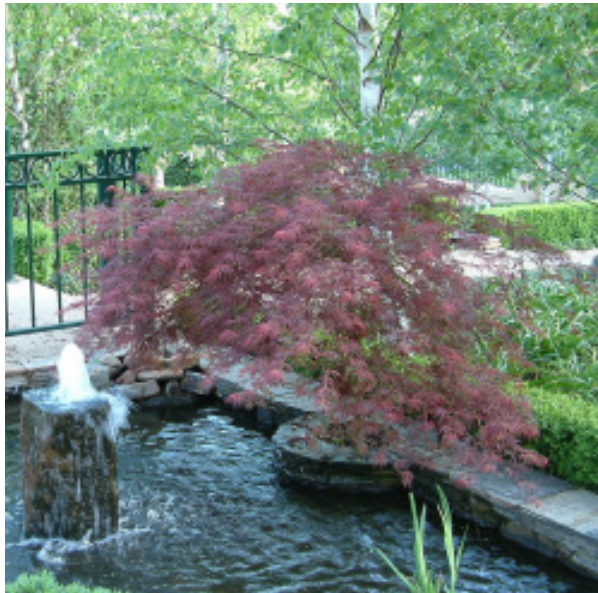
Japanese maples

These special favourites (pictured) are much loved.

The regular Japanese maple grows into a tidy, small tree that is amazingly hardy, but the true aristocrats of the maple world are the cut-leaf, weeping Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum* 'Dissectum

Atropurpureum' is a good example) that are grafted on top of a central trunk. Soft cascades of foliage weep down from this central point to create a waterfall of delicate leaves. These soft leaves can suffer during hot weather, so plan well beforehand to ensure they get maximum protection.

Choose a planting spot that has shelter from the hot afternoon sun. Dig some compost or peatmoss into the soil before planting. At the



same time, mix in some pre-swollen Yates Waterwise Water Storing Crystals (these will hold extra moisture for the dry times). Ideally, plant during winter when there's less risk of damage to the roots. Because these plants are deciduous, their roots will be dormant then, too.

Towards the end of winter, put a layer of organic mulch over the root area.

Weeping mulberry

The weeping mulberry, *Morus alba* 'Pendula' is another excellent small feature tree. It, too, is grafted onto a standard central trunk from which the stems drape down in a vertical arch. Weeping mulberry is very hardy but still appreciates plenty of moisture while it is getting established. After about ten years it will have taken on the shape of a giant toadstool, with the branches weeping downwards. In summer it will form a green 'tent' that provides a great hiding place for kids.

Crepe myrtles

Crepe myrtles are summer-flowering trees that are available in a wide range of colours and sizes. Their ultimate height ranges from about one metre to six or seven, so choose the size that best suits your garden.

It's a good idea to spray all crepe myrtles in winter with Yates Lime Sulphur. This cleans up some pests and unwanted lichen.

Week 4 : Winter lawn care

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Winter, when the rest of the garden needs a little less attention, is a good time to check the lawn and get it into shape.

Feed

In spite of winter's arrival, in all but the coldest climates the lawn will still be growing. Feeding now will keep it in good health and ensure it maintains a better colour through the colder weather. Thrive Granular Lawn Food will produce a quick growth response. Dynamic Lifter Lawn Food is made from composted chicken manure. It will feed the lawn gently and, at the same time, promote beneficial bacteria in the soil.

For an even faster growth response, apply fertiliser in a liquid form. One of the simplest and best methods is to mix Thrive All Purpose soluble into a watering can and water over the grass. Thrive's also available as a liquid concentrate.

Lime

A few weeks after feeding, sprinkle some Yates Garden Lime over the lawn. Most grasses prefer a sweet soil and the lime will counteract any acidity. If in doubt, take some soil to a garden centre and ask to have its pH checked. If this is much below 6 on the pH scale, the lime will make a marked improvement in growing conditions

Repair

Thicken worn patches by oversowing with a fast-germinating lawn seed. Yates Lush Sun 'n' Shade is a blend of fine fescue and fine rye, both cool season grasses. Use a rake to soften the surface and sprinkle a small amount of sandy soil or potting mix onto the bare patches. Sow the seed, rake to cover lightly and keep moist.



Weeding

Broad-leaved weeds flourish during winter. Clover, dandelions (pictured), Onehunga weed, lawn daisies, cudweed and oxalis are all taking advantage of the cooler conditions. Hose-on Weed 'n' Feed is an easy control option. Weed 'n' Feed removes broad-leaved weeds and promotes grass to growth.

Cool, moist winter conditions encourage moss to flourish in lawns. Yates Surrender removes moss from lawns and hard surfaces such as roofs and paving. Surrender works best during warm conditions but will give some control in winter. Don't forget, too, that more sunlight and better soil aeration (spike lawn with a garden fork) will discourage moss.

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