

## March Gardening Calendar

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We pass the average last frost date in early March, so later in the month all the cold sensitive plants can be moved from the greenhouse. If you are extra cautious wait until the very end of the month.

The winter weeds are all trying to produce a seed crop. Do your best to keep them mowed or pulled. String mowing also works well to keep beggars' lice, thistle and other weeds with obnoxious seeds from producing those seeds. If they are still vigorously growing, a product like Fertilome's Weed Free Zone will kill the weeds in the lawn.

Bedstraw responds well to being removed with a steel rake. The plants stick together and are easily collected in the rake's teeth.

On the first of the month it is the last recommended day to apply one of the pre-emergent herbicides such as Dimension, Amaze or XL to prevent the germination of sand burs and crabgrass this summer. Make another application on or about June 1 to prevent the late germination of sandbur seeds.

In the vegetable garden use a portion of the onions in the row for green onions so that it opens up more space between the remaining plants. It is too early to fertilize the lawn but the onions and remaining actively growing cool weather vegetables and flowers should receive another dose of "winterizer" fertilizer.

Some of your potted-up tomatoes could be transplanted to the garden but save some until April 1 to make sure the soil has warmed up enough to support active growth. Consider the new Rodeo tomato "HM 8849" as one of the varieties you grow this year. If you have nematodes, Celebrity, Tycoon, BHN 968 and Valley Cat are all nematode resistant. In addition to tomatoes in March plant green beans, cucumbers, potatoes, and peppers in the vegetable garden.

Snapdragons stocks, dianthus, ornamental kale, alyssum, primula, cyclamen and calendula are all blooming strong but after mid-month it is also a good time to plant zinnias by seed or transplant. The monarchs will be here in April so plant milkweed, mistflower, and porterweed along with the zinnias to provide nectar. The milkweed is the only plant on which they will lay their eggs.

The wildflowers should be growing strong and most will begin their blooming in March. Blue curl (phacelia) is especially desirable because it is attractive, and it is a favorite nectar source for butterflies. Let the seeds of the wildflowers mature and drop if you want the plants to naturalize and grow again next year. If you don't have blue curl put the word out to your fellow gardeners that you would welcome some seed, so you can get some planted for next year.

If you have purple martin houses nesting pairs should be looking for housing early in the month. I always put the houses up on March 1 even if I haven't seen the birds yet. They always seem to move in before mid-month.

Keep your feeders full March is the usual time to see the first returning hummingbirds. Other migrants also will visit you seed and suet feeders as the pass-through heading North. If you have a water source especially if it is recycling the water you will often see painted buntings, warblers and orioles.