

Gardening Question and Answer

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Q. Our neighborhood is loaded with deer, so I have planted lots of primrose jasmine and thyrallis. I like them both, but it has surprised me lately that they are wilting from the heat. They have been in place for 3 years; do I need to worry about them dying if the heat and dry weather continues? I thought they were both good xeriscape plants?

A. Primrose jasmine and thyrallis are good xeriscape plants, but that does not mean that they don't react to dry hot weather by wilting. The thyrallis and primrose jasmine in my neighborhood are also wilting but they always recover quickly when the rains resume. You could water them at the base once this summer, but they will do fine in the long run, even if you don't water them.

Q. We are going to begin to water our lawn again. It is Bermuda grass in full sun, how much water do you think it needs? How frequently should we apply irrigation?

A. If the soil is heavy (caliche, blacklands) and over 4 inches deep, it should stay green with a half inch once per week. If it is on sand, apply 3/8s of an inch twice per week. Adjust up or down as temperatures rise or drop. An advantage with Bermuda grass is that you don't have to water it and it will go dormant, and quickly recover when the rains resume. If you have areas on the lawn such as near the sidewalk that are especially prone to dry out, give them a supplementary hand watering twice per week.

Q. How do we control those little crazy ants that have moved in our kitchen?

A. I have found that using Terro with Borax as the active ingredient is easy and effective. Another option is to use products like Bayer Advance Home Pest Killer or Raid Max Bug Barrier sprayed on the ant's entry points and pathways. Follow label instructions.

Q. When can we plant snapdragons and stock for winter blooms? My zinnias are coming to the end of their bloom period.

A. Begin planting the cool weather annuals in September. If the zinnias are declining, consider filling the gap with Cora vinca. They should keep a bloom until Thanksgiving. Aren't any of your zinnias reseeding? They will also provide blooms until Thanksgiving.

Q. Last year the winter weeds overwhelmed our landscape. When can we apply the preemergent herbicide? Which do you recommend?

A. On or about Sept 1 apply Amaze, XL, or Dimension to prevent germination of bedstraw, thistle, henbit, dandelion, beggars' lice, and other winter weeds. Follow the label instructions.