

Gardening Calendar for June

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If you kept your tomatoes irrigated and fertilized, you should be harvesting both cherry and full-sized fruit. Peppers, okra, eggplant, cucumbers, tatum and watermelons should also produce this month.

It is not too late to fertilize your lawn if you will be able to irrigate it and or we get sufficient rain. If the lawn is dried out, however, it is unable to use available nutrients. If you applied a preemergent herbicide to prevent the germination of sand burs and crab grass, it is recommended that a second application occur in mid-June. Sand burs are notorious for germinating over a long season. Amaze, Dimension, and XL are the usual preemergents used to control grassy weeds. They are also effective for preventing some of the broadleaf weeds. Check the label instructions for the required methods of its use and the expectations of the results.

Recommended mowing heights are 3.5 inches for St Augustine grass, 1.5 inches or less for Bermuda grass. And 2 inches for zoysia. It works best if the grass is mowed frequently enough that no more than one-third of the blade is mowed with each mowing. That recommendation usually translates to mowing every week.

The purple martins are in the middle of their nesting. The young will appear at the entrance to the apartments and emerge before we proceed very far into the month. Early next month the mature birds and young of the year will all assemble for their migration to South America.

Zinnias respond to cutting flowers by producing more buds. If you do not harvest the blooms for bouquets or deadhead the spent blooms the flowers will brown out and drop seed. A bed with lots of brown flowers is not as attractive as a garden dominated by new blooms but it is sure popular with seed eating birds. Lesser goldfinches, cardinals and other seedeaters will eat many of the seeds and the rest will germinate to produce new zinnia plants.

Zinnias are among the most popular source of nectar for butterflies, honeybees, and hummingbirds in June. Other sought-after sources are mistflower, milkweed, porterweed, Mexican flame vine, penta, Mexican honeysuckle, lantana, salvia and firebush. Deer do not usually eat salvia, lantana, milkweed, and Mexican honeysuckle.

For blooms in full sun even if the weather is especially dry and hot consider esperanza, thyrallis, firebush, poinciana, and durante. The deer do not eat thyrallis, esperanza, and poinciana in most neighborhoods.

Keep up your spray program to protect the late maturing peaches such as La Feliciano from diseases and insects. The peaches in June are ready to harvest when the background cover changes from green to yellow.

If your rose blooms are brown and deformed around the edge it is probably damage caused by thrips. Acephate is an effective systemic insecticide to treat thrips.

If your lawn has too much shade to produce a compact lawn consider one of the shade tolerant groundcovers such as Asiatic jasmine, liriop, monkey grass, or dwarf Mexican petunia. To save water in

the sun replace your lawn grass with a groundcover such as prostrate rosemary or cemetery iris. SAWS customers can use the Landscape Coupon Program to help pay for the new plants and any mulch or hardscape needed.