July Gardening Tips
Click on highlighted links for additional information

Annuals and Perennials

- Cut back mums, tall asters, Montauk daisies and helianthus by about one-quarter for bushy, more floriferous plants.
- If your cool season annuals have died off, pull them out and add to your compost pile. Sometimes a severe shearing, water and fertilizer will bring them back to life. Often, they are best replaced with heat tolerant annuals.
- Water early in the morning to reduce the loss of water to evaporation during the hottest days.
- Container and hanging plants may need additional water later in the day if hot and windy conditions prevail. Check plants again at day’s end to see if any additional water is necessary.
- Mulch garden beds to help conserve water.
- Hummingbirds are attracted to red salvia, nasturtiums, coral bells, and bee balm.

Education and Events

- Check out the UConn Extension Bug Week, July 24-29, 2023 for events, activities, and programs.
- Sign up for gardening classes or seminars offered by many garden centers or town recreation office or through the UConn Master Gardener Program.

Houseplants

- Consider propagating some new Dieffenbachia or Jade plants from cuttings to pass along to friends or family.

In the Vegetable Garden

- Tomato hornworms are large green caterpillars that feed on the leaves of tomatoes and related plants. Hand-pick or control with Bacillus thuringiensis. Do not remove caterpillars that are covered in white pupae as they have been parasitized by beneficial wasps.
- Pinching back herbs to stop flowering will keep the best flavor in the leaves and encourage branching. Herbs can be air dried, dried quickly in the microwave, or frozen.
- Inspect garden plants regularly for insect and disease problems. Sanitation practices, insecticidal soaps, and insect traps are alternatives to pesticides.
- Cucumbers are heavy drinkers and feeders. Keep the soil evenly moist during hot spells to avoid bitter fruit and side-dress plants with ¼ cup of 10-10-10 fertilizer or the equivalent in mid-July.
- Plant cool-season crops such as broccoli, spinach, kale, lettuce, and chard where they will be shaded from the sun.
- Mulch garden beds to help conserve water.
- Check brassicas for cabbageworm, diamond-back moth caterpillars, cross-striped caterpillars, and cabbage loopers. Use row covers or Bacillus thuringiensis to control them.

Landscape and Lawns

Fruits

- Put netting on fruit trees and bushes a few weeks before the fruit begins to ripen to protect it from birds and squirrels.
- Pick up, bag, and trash (do not compost) any dropped apples that show signs of apple maggot.

Lawns

- If grubs were a problem in previous years, apply grub control no later than July 15th so that it is systemically in place in grass roots when the grubs hatch in early August.
- Change directions when mowing your lawn. Travel north to south on one mowing and east to west on the next.
- Water early in the morning to reduce the loss of water to evaporation during the hottest days.
- Try shade tolerant ground covers in areas where lack of sunlight limits grass growth.
- Raise your mowing height to 3 inches during hot weather and mulch clippings if possible.
**Trees and Shrubs**
- Summer blooming shrubs should be pruned for shape after they have finished flowering.
- Dead or diseased branches of shrubs can be removed at any time.
- Do not prune azaleas and rhododendrons after mid-July as they will begin setting their buds for next year’s blooms.
- Fertilize roses for the last time in mid-July.
- Properly placed shade trees will reduce air conditioning costs.
- Check roses, Mugo pine, hibiscus, and dogwood for sawfly larvae. Insecticidal soap, and horticultural oil are among the least toxic products recommended for control.

**Wildlife**
- Check family members and pets for ticks after being outside, especially when in tall grass or wooded areas. If necessary, send ticks to the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory for testing.

**Yard Tools and Accessories**
- Hose down or power wash Spongy moth caterpillar frass (droppings) that accumulates on furniture cushions, decks, and driveways.
- Control mosquitoes by eliminating all sources of stagnant water. Clean bird baths and pet’s outdoor dishes often.
- Leaky garden hoses and fittings can waste water. Check hoses while they are under full pressure and make repairs.

Despite good cultural practices, pests and diseases at times may appear. Chemical control should be used only after all other methods have failed.

For pesticide information please call UConn Home and Garden Education Center weekdays, in Connecticut call toll free 877-486-6271. Out of state call 860-486-6271

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