

April Is The Time To:

- hide your loppers and put the secateurs away. **Do not** prune your fruit trees now, let them flower
- rake lawn to remove moss, apply lime (1 bag per 1,000 sq. ft.); scatter more grass seed if you have bare spots; add lawn fertilizer 3 weeks later
- pull broadleaf weeds or if there are just too many weeds, use Weed & Feed fertilizer later in April - you need 12 hours with no rain - after applying Weed & Feed. Do not use treated grass clippings in the compost
- sow new lawns or top-seed older lawns that have bare spots when danger of frost is past
- aerate poorly drained lawns, spread a thin layer of sand after aerating and rake lightly to improve drainage
- fertilize lawn with 12-4-8 lawn fertilizer mid to late April
- fertilize fruit trees, evergreen hedges and Rhodos if you haven't done so already
- fertilize spring bulbs when they have finished blooming. Leave foliage to ripen and die-back. Remove leaves when yellow - bulbs will then have stored enough energy for next year
- fertilize perennials, asparagus, rhubarb, trees and shrubs if you haven't done so already. It is important to fertilize in spring when plants are putting on a lot of new growth
- fertilize kiwi vines with high nitrogen fertilizer (blood meal is organic). Young plants 1/2 lb. per plant; 4-5 year old plants 1 - 1 1/2 lb. per plant
- fertilize garlic (if you didn't do it in March) - 1/4 cup blood meal per plant is good
- add lime (or nitrate of potash) to keep hydrangeas pink. Add aluminum sulphate (or sulphate of ammonia) to turn them blue (1/2 to 3/4 of a cup per 2 to 3 foot plant)
- plant strawberries, blueberries and raspberries
- renovate strawberry beds by turfing out 3 year old plants and setting out new baby plants from runners - about 15 inches apart, in rows
- in the garden, turn-over and dig in fall rye, wait 3 weeks and it will be decomposed enough to plant seeds
- continue planting trees and shrubs - **REMEMBER TO WATER THEM IF WE GET A WARM SPELL**
- plant early potatoes - vegetable seedlings can go outdoors into the garden - lettuce, kale, cabbage, swiss chard, broccoli, spinach, onions
- plant dahlia tubers outdoors later this month - make sure the tip of the bulb is covered by 3 - 4 inches of soil
- if you have room - plant dahlias indoors in pots now and transplant outdoors when plants are about 6 inches high
- plant other summer flowering bulbs outdoors 2 1/2 times their depth in sunny, well drained borders (if bulb is 1 inch high plant 2 1/2 inches deep)

(continued on page 3)

April Is The Time To (con't)

- veggies to sow outdoors now are - lettuce, spinach, cauliflower, cabbage, kohlrabi, parsnips, carrots, radishes, beets, broad beans and peas
- when planting bare-root deciduous trees (fruit trees etc.) cut the top back 1/3 to bring the root system and top into balance - do not cut hollow stemmed trees like walnuts!
- when planting apples, pears, plums and cherries, don't cover the graft union (knobby joint just above soil line)
- if you have not done so - lower water level in ponds and remove leafy sludge before it decomposes in warmer weather (refill to normal water level after work is completed)
- start planting water plants in your pond. The floating oxygenating plants won't be available until late April or when night-time temperatures remain above 15° C
- turn compost and keep moist
- remove mulch from tender plants and top dress flower beds with compost, manure or coco-fiber strands
- keep weeds in check - start weeding early
- watch for slugs in flower and veggie beds. They especially love lettuce, cabbage, dahlias, daylillies, iris, hosta and asparagus. Try sprinkling cayenne pepper where they are a problem
- plant chrysanthemums and asters for fall colour
- rose pruning should be finished by the beginning of the month. Top dress with slow release rose fertilizer and mulch between plants with manure or compost to keep weeds down
- spray roses every two weeks commencing April 1st with systemic sprays. Use Funginex (for blackspot and powdery mildew) Lagon for aphids and insects (this one should be brushed onto the stem of the plant not sprayed)
- Amaryllis that have finished blooming should be kept watered and fertilized until August - then left in drought conditions until November
- keep your Christmas cactus moist but not soggy from now until May, then move outdoors into a shady spot. Feed with liquid fertilizer all summer, bring indoors in September. It will love you for it and will show-off its flowers in December
- after harvesting early peas and beans, turn the plants into the soil to decompose. This will make an important addition to the soil as these plants take nitrogen from the air and bind it into their roots
- watch for returning hummingbirds. Put up a hummingbird feeder, use 1 part sugar to 4 parts water. Make sure sugar is dissolved. You can bring mixture to a boil on the stove, let cool then fill feeders. Forget the food colouring, it is said to affect their liver!