

SEASONAL

tips

FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH FOR WAITING

Though there are many interesting jobs to be done in February, it's also a time for waiting. Certain plants can be pruned now, but wait until the weather warms up before cutting off frost-bitten branches. In cold low-lying gardens and interior valleys, wait until all danger of frost has passed before you move those tender plants safely sheltered under eaves. Fertilize deciduous fruit trees – and avocados too, in coastal zones – but wait until next month to feed most of the landscape. Throw off your coat, dig in the garden, prepare the soil, spread manure, start a compost heap, but wait until March to put in summer vegetables and flowers.

TRICK YOUR FRIENDS

How to Make a Green Shrub or Tree Bloom with Pink or Red Flowers. Conceal large tubs of cane begonias under tall informal shrubs, such as Victorian box (*Pittosporum undulatum*). Train the begonias into the shrubbery so flowers cascade among the branches in a natural way. The shrub will appear to be blooming with pink or red blossoms for most of the year.

HOW TO FOIL THOSE DASTARDLY CUTWORMS

How to Foil Dastardly Cutworms. Save the cardboard tube from inside holiday wrapping paper. Cut it into 2-inch sections to make protective collars. When you plant tomatoes, first slip the leaves of each plant gently through a cardboard collar; then anchor the sleeve ½-inch into the soil around the transplant. Cutworms won't climb over.

QUICK TIP

Control Rose Diseases with the Cornell Fungicide Formula. For control of blackspot, mildew and several pests on roses and for control of early blight on tomatoes: Mix together 1 tablespoon baking soda, 1 tablespoon light summer oil (SunSpray Ultra-Fine Spray Oil) and 1 gallon of water. Spray once every four or five days, shaking spray frequently.



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