

## November Monthly Reminders

### Introduction

Much colder temperatures are around the corner, so be prepared to move sensitive container plants and have frost cloth on hand. Fall wildflowers are still blooming and cool-temperature vegetables can be planted. Hardscaping or water harvesting projects can be implemented. Spring-blooming bulbs and wildflowers can be planted now for a blast of color later.

### Maintenance

- The first frost sometimes occurs in mid-to-late November. Prepare by obtaining frost cloth, sheets, utility lights or re-use incandescent C-7 or C-9 Christmas lights (not miniatures or LED). Be sure to protect any light bulbs from accidental damage and do not allow contact with cloth coverings. Protect plants as needed; some portions of your yard may be colder than others (Refer to Frost Protection AZ 1002).
- Do general garden cleanup. Pull weeds before they go to seed.
- Remove dead or dying plants and rake up fallen leaves to compost them if not diseased (Refer to Small Scale Composting in the Low Desert of Arizona AZ 1632).
- Replenish organic mulches to a depth of 3-4 inches for soil temperature and moisture control as well as weed prevention. Refresh any decorative stone landscape materials.
- If prickly pear cacti have a cottony substance on them known as cochineal scale, a strong spray of water from a garden hose will remove most of it. Heavily infested pads should be cut off at the joint and discarded; do not compost (Refer to Problems and Pests of Agave, Aloe, Cactus and Yucca AZ 1399).
- Remove spent blooms of flowers such as petunias to increase flower production (Refer to Flower Planting Guide for the Low Desert AZ 1100).
- Move *adenium* (desert roses) and other cold-sensitive succulents such as *pachypodium* and certain *euphorbia* to a protected area or move them indoors for the winter. Provide them with a sunny spot until outdoor nighttime temperatures return to the mid-50's.
- Protect young vegetable and flower transplants and seedlings from cutworms by placing a ring cut from a paper or Styrofoam cup around the transplant at the soil line to protect the stem. The rings can be removed after a week or 10 days.
- Plan and implement hardscaping & water harvesting projects while the temperatures are cooler and rain is minimal (Refer to Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use AZ 1344, and Landscape Management Practices to Optimize Passive Rainwater Harvesting and Plant Health AZ 1916).

### Planting

- Early in the month, sow seeds directly into the ground for beets, carrots, peas, onions, chard, spinach, kale, endive, and turnips. Space them appropriately to allow for plant and root growth.
- Transplant broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower starts into the ground or raised beds (Refer to Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden AZ 1435).
- Early in the month sow seeds directly into the ground for spring-flowering wildflowers such as California and Mexican poppies, cowpen daisy, desert blue bells, desert marigold, tidy tips, and white chicory; keep the area moist but not damp until seeds germinate. Be sure the chosen location will not be too shaded when Spring comes; they love sun.
- Plant flowering perennials such as gaura and angelita daisy.
- Plant spring-flowering bulbs such as bearded iris, hyacinth, crocus, daffodils, and narcissus for a burst of color after Winter. (Refer to Spring Flowering Bulbs, Backyard Gardener)
- This is a good month to plant trees, shrubs, ground covers, vines, herbs, and winter vegetables purchased from nurseries before the first frost. (Refer to Planting Guidelines: Container Trees and Shrubs AZ 1022, Training and Pruning Newly Planted Deciduous Fruit Trees AZ1668, and Selecting, Planting, and Staking Trees AZ 1402).

## Fertilizing

- Vegetables require light fertilization throughout the growing season. There are various fertilizer options, including organic and chemical fertilizers. When using organic fertilizers, it's important to apply them early to allow sufficient time for breakdown, ensuring a steady nutrient supply as plants grow. (Refer to Backyard Gardener, Organic Fertilizers and Fertilizing Home Gardens in Arizona AZ 1020).
- Do not fertilize citrus, roses, or frost-tender plants, as this may encourage tender new growth susceptible to damage. • Fertilize winter lawns monthly to retain good color.

## Watering

- Adjust your irrigation frequencies (not length of time) for November.
- Continue to water your fall wildflowers.
- If you brought potted succulents indoors to protect them, water these very sparingly during this time.
- If you see fungus or mushrooms, cut back on watering in that area.
- Irrigate in preparation for cold nights except for cacti/succulents. Moist soil will store heat from the sun's energy and release it at night, keeping these plants warmer.
- Importantly, if a freeze is predicted, do not water cacti or other succulents.

For more information on this month's topics, the Cooperative Extension offers the following resources, along with a wide range of bulletins and additional documents.

- AZ 1002 Frost Protection. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/frost-protection>
- AZ 1632-2014 Small Scale Composting in the Low Desert of Arizona. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/small-scale-composting-low-desert-arizona>
- AZ 1100a Flower Planting Guide for the Low Desert. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/flower-planting-guide-low-desert>
- AZ 1916 Landscape Management Practices to Optimize Passive Rainwater Harvesting and Plant Health. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/landscape-management-practices-optimize-passive-rainwater-harvesting-and-plant-health>
- AZ 1344 Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/harvesting-rainwater-landscape-use>
- AZ 1435 Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/ten-steps-successful-vegetable-garden>
- Backyard Gardener #89. Organic Fertilizers. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/attachment/OrganicFertilizers.pdf>
- AZ 1020-2014 Fertilizing Home Gardens in Arizona. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/fertilizing-home-gardens-arizona>
- AZ 1817-2020 A Turfgrass Maintenance Guide for Residential and Commercial Lawns in the Low Elevation Arizona Desert. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/turfgrass-maintenance-guide-residential-and-commercial-lawns-low-elevation-arizona>
- Spring Flowering Bulbs, Backyard Gardener, October 26, 2016. Link: <https://cales.arizona.edu/yavapai/anr/hort/byg/archive/springfloweringbulbs2016.html>
- AZ 1022-2012 Planting Guidelines: Container Trees and Shrubs. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/planting-guidelines-container-trees-and-shrubs>
- AZ 1668-2015 Training and Pruning Newly Planted Deciduous Fruit Trees. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/training-and-pruning-newly-planted-deciduous-fruit-trees>
- AZ 1402 Selecting, Planting, and Staking Trees. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/selecting-planting-and-staking-trees-powerpoint>
- AZ 1399 Problems and Pests of Agave, Aloe, Cactus and Yucca. Link: <https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/problems-and-pests-agave-aloe-cactus-and-yucca>