

Things you could or should be doing in your garden in...

...FEBRUARY

- ☛ Water holiday plants – poinsettia, cyclamen, amaryllis, Christmas cactus – thoroughly with a diluted liquid fertilizer (half-strength) and keep in bright light.
- ☛ Continue to assess your landscape. Determine which trees and shrubs have limbs that need to be removed, and prune for shape.
- ☛ Prior to pruning roses, trees and shrubs, step back and determine the desired size and shape before cutting. When removing limbs or pruning for shape, be sure to use the right tools – electric hedge trimmers and chainsaws are not always the best choices.
- ☛ Prune fruit trees, especially apple and pear trees; this may include reductive pruning, shaping, minor thinning and/or limbing up.
- ☛ Prune evergreen shrubs – hollies, wax myrtle, nandina, etc – before new growth begins to emerge. If cutting back, do not remove more than 1/3 in overall size. Renewal pruning may be done at this time as well.
- ☛ Prune back butterfly bushes by at least one-half its size; more overgrown specimens may be cut back to 12" tall.
- ☛ Spray trees and shrubs with dormant oil, then lime sulfur, to kill over-wintering pests and diseases.
- ☛ Spot-spray broadleaf weeds in dormant season lawns.
- ☛ Cut back monkey grass (liriope sp.): The easiest way is to set the mower on its highest setting and cut across the tops. Be sure your blade is sharp if you use this method.
- ☛ Now is a great time to do a soil test if you haven't done one in several years; this will let you know if you need to apply lime in your garden.
- ☛ Till your vegetable garden when the ground can be worked; do not till when the soil is wet. Add organic matter and lime if needed.
- ☛ Sow snap or English peas in the third week.
- ☛ Plant bare-root or container roses in well-drained soil.
- ☛ Fertilize pansies with a diluted liquid feed fertilizer.