



THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH - MARCH

◆ **Six Must-Do Jobs**

- 1) Sow glasshouse vegetables such as cucumbers, melons and tomatoes
- 2) Plant shallots, onion sets and early potatoes
- 3) Deadhead daffodils, but allow foliage to die down naturally - don't tie the leaves into bundles! (It stops the bulb replenishing its energy supplies)
- 4) Protect blossoms of apricots, peaches and nectarines from late frosts by covering trees with fleece
- 5) Lift, divide and replant herbaceous plants (as long as the ground has warmed up)
- 6) Prune established bush and standard roses

◆ **Kitchen Garden**

- Plant asparagus crowns on ridges within trenches enriched with organic matter
- Apply sulphate of potash and a balanced fertiliser to tree and bush fruit (sulphate of potash improves bloom and fruit formation)
- Sow vegetable crops outside towards the end of the month
- Prune established blueberries by removing one or two older branches, cutting close to ground level
- Sow hardy annuals where they are to flower to attract beneficial insects

◆ **Ornamental Garden**

- Prune summer-flowering shrubs such as Buddleia, Caryopteris and Lavatera
- Shrubs can be moved now and should re-establish quickly. Make sure you water them in well, and water again if we hit a dry spell
- Start to control annual weeds by hoeing regularly before they can establish. If you can, hoe on a dry day so that the weeds die quickly. Keeping your hoe sharp helps make things easy.
- Now is the ideal time to start feeding plants with a balanced fertiliser such as fish, blood & bone or Growmore.

◆ **Glasshouse & Indoor Plants**

- Ventilate glasshouses on sunny days to reduce fungal problems such as damping-off disease of seedlings.
 - > **Damping-off** is caused by fungi that attack the base of the stem. The fungi come from the soil or the water - so make sure you use a clean growing medium and clean water (water that has been stored in water butts for a long time may not be suitable for watering seedlings.)
- SPECIAL OFFER:** A compost specifically formulated for seedlings makes an ideal growing medium - such as **J Arthur Bowers' Seedling & Cuttings Compost** which is on 'buy one get one free' offer this month.

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- Cannas, dahlias and begonias can be started into growth
- Repot or topdress conservatory plants such as citrus and house plants. Don't go up more than one size in pot to avoid disturbing the plant.
- ◆ **Lawns**
- Moss can be a problem after a wet winter. Moss killers give good short-term control - make sure you follow the instructions and choose a day when the weather is right.
- Scarifying with a lawn rake to remove thatch will help air get to the roots of the grass - and it's great exercise!
- Start to mow when the grass is growing well - but make sure you keep the blade setting high to start off with
- ◆ **Pest & Disease Watch**
- Check for slug damage on all new growth - slugs love it because it's succulent and soft. Control if necessary, with copper strips or plastic pots of beer or stout set in the ground - the slugs can't resist it!
- ◆ **Wildlife**
- Flowers attract beneficial insects - try to have a good selection of plants in flower each month
- Clean bird baths and keep bird feeders clean and filled - birds get to know where the food is and come to rely on it.
- > **Special Offer for March** - buy a bird-feeder and get a big bag of bird food (worth up to £4.99) absolutely free! These feeders are metal and will last for many seasons - and they're also squirrel-proof! Choose from peanut or seed feeders.