



July's List of Garden Tasks

Submitted by Faye Mahaffey

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The butterflies are enjoying the mud puddle I provide in the landscape! The Zebra Swallowtails were happy to pose for a photograph. They are Ohio's smallest swallowtail and among the showiest. Their host plant is the Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), a shrub or small tree of rich woods, particularly on stream terraces. July is a great time to get out your butterfly reference book and walk around your gardens! Sometimes I simply click a quick photograph and identify them later, since butterflies seem to be in a constant state of motion whenever I am trying to ID them.

How are your gardens looking? Are you still taking a daily walk and making notes? Are you feeling overwhelmed? Don't forget about the "15 minute" routine and just work in a designated area and then move on! I don't know about you, but I have some areas that need my attention for longer than 15 minutes!

My favorite Garden Almanac list includes the following tasks for the month of July:

- *Turn the compost pile – remember to balance the "wet and green, brown and dry"
- *Keep up with weeds in garden beds
- * Water your garden during periods of drought – plants most vulnerable to the effects of drought include seedling, young plants and recent transplants
- * Finish transplanting annuals
- * Fertilize container plants regularly
- * Stake tall plants growing in windy sites
- *Cut spent perennials to the ground to encourage new growth
- * Deadhead flowers to prolong bloom time
- * Cut back daffodil leaves after they turn yellow
- *Continue planting broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower transplants for fall crops
- *Continue direct-seeding vegetable and herb crops
- *Beginning mid-month, direct-seed vegetables such as spinach for fall crops
- *Harvest onions and garlic after the tops start to yellow and die back.
- *Harvest and dry herbs for winter use
- *Give your vegetable garden at least 1 inch of water per week during periods of drought.

Remember that leafy crops such as lettuce are especially sensitive to dry soil, and will develop bitter-tasting leaves or set seed prematurely as a result.

Have you ever considered planting an edible edging in your flower bed? Lettuce – especially colorful or frilly-foliaged leaf varieties – can be used instead of sweet alyssum, or other low-growing annuals that are often used to edge flower beds.

Now is the time to be taking notes on your developing color schemes in your flower beds. Watch how your garden evolves during the growing season and how you can improve it by adding, subtracting, or rearranging elements of color.

Don't forget to email your gardening questions to Brown County Master Gardener Volunteer, Mike Hannah, at mhannah1951@gmail.com.



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