



# Betty's Bloomers Nursery

Issue 7

APRIL 15, 2005

## Everything's Coming up Roses...

& petunias, & marigolds, & impatiens & begonias & on and on... This is the time of year when all our hard work starts paying off. Make time to enjoy it now. Unfortunately, this is the season for all types of creatures to be hatching out and with the mild Winter we just experienced this will probably be a bad year for bugs. Try to be observant and take care of a problem before it becomes a big problem. Speaking of problems, if you have oak trees in your yard, you are probably experiencing the annual "oak worm" hatching. Every time we go outside they try to hitch a ride on our shoulders or climb up our legs. The good news about these caterpillars is they won't be around much longer and they are selective in what they like to eat. They can be sprayed with any general purpose insecticide to help control them.

## Grower tips

The chore of "deadheading" annual flowers can sometimes be tiresome, but well worth the effort. Deadheading simply means removing all the old blooms before they can go to seed. Contrary to popular belief, flowers are not here for our enjoyment, but to attract bees and butterflies to pollinate them for seed production for next season. If you let them go to seed, they think their work is done and will sometimes

stop flowering. Roses, bougainvillea and crepe myrtle also benefit from deadheading.

## What's in Season?

With the ground warming up, it is now time to start planting warm season annuals such as vinca (periwinkles), portulaca, zinnias, salvia impatiens, & torenias.

Some shrubs now coming into bloom that are worth trying are pink bridal wreath, weigelia, bottle brush, & abelia.

## To Do List:

Make sure you keep new transplants watered enough. They are used to being "spoon-fed" when they are in containers in the nurseries. You will need to continue to baby them for a couple of weeks until they are able to feed themselves. Adding a good liquid fertilizer such as miracle-gro, mixed at half strength, will help prevent transplant shock. An easy way to fertilize is to use a good slow-release fertilizer such as Stay-Green Bloom Start. This is a granular fertilizer that will feed your blooming plants for up to 3 months.

Caladium bulbs can be safely planted now. The ground has warmed up enough for them to sprout quickly. If you are having problems finding new caladium bulbs, don't feel alone, our suppliers in Florida were not able to send us any due to the fact the 3 hurricanes

that went through there last summer devastated their crops. Hopefully they will have better luck next year..

These warm Spring days, treat your houseplants to a shower. Take them outside and spray lightly with a water hose. This will remove dust & grime accumulated over the winter in your house. Also, remove saucers or pot covers & give the soil a good flushing with water. Over time salts build up in the soil from fertilizer & water. Repot or add new soil & fertilize now. Do not leave them out in the direct sun, they will sun burn just like we do.

## Something Extra

When the humidity starts to climb, fungal diseases start to spread rapidly. Common problems are powdery mildew, which looks like baby powder sprinkled on the leaves and black spot, which turns leaves yellow with black mildew spots. If you are experiencing black spot or powdery mildew on your roses, crepe myrtles, squash & tomato plants, try mixing 2 teaspoons of baking soda and a few drops of ivory soap in a gallon of water and spray the entire bush. Clean up any infected leaves to help keep diseases from spreading.

## Contact us

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HAPPY GARDENING!