

## Timely Tips for February Gardeners from Calloway's and Cornelius

February may be the toughest gardening month. Thank goodness it's short. In North Texas we do not know what kind of weather to expect from day to day or from day to night. Keep in mind that the average last freeze for North Texas area is not until mid-March. Even so, many plants normally begin to show signs of growth in February, which makes it the perfect time, to get outside and work in the yard.

This is the perfect time to get your garden tools in good working order. So that when Spring arrives you are ready to plant those plants, mow the grass and prepare all those beds in preparation for a beautiful landscape.

Pruning is both an art and a necessary maintenance function. Most trees and shrubs can be lightly pruned at any time; however mid-winter is generally the best time for major pruning.

Summer flowering trees and shrubs should be pruned before buds begin to swell for Spring, generally they bloom on new growth; examples are crape myrtle, butterfly bush, spiraea and honeysuckle. If those seed heads on crepe myrtles bother you, remove them this month. Just clip back the ends of the branches, do not destroy the beauty of the gracefully sculptured trunks by severe pruning. Please **never top** a crape myrtle. Spring flowering plants such as azalea, Carolina jessamine, wisteria, forsythia, and quince should not be pruned until after the blooms are spent.

February is the best time for pruning most roses. Remove any old and diseased canes then cut the remaining canes back by 50%. Make your cuts above a bud that faces away from the center of the plant.

Early to mid-February marks the time to apply a pre-emergent herbicide for lawns. These products kill germinating seed. A second application may be needed in late May or early June. Remember that the best defense against lawn weeds is a healthy, thick turf resulting from good management.

Trim back perennials and ornamental grasses before the new growth appears in Spring. Clean up around plants and mulch well to protect.

This is a great time to visit your Calloway's/Cornelius Nursery. New plants are arriving now for late winter and early spring planting. By planting early, plants will be off to a better start and can become adjusted before the stresses of summer arrive.

While at your Calloway's/Cornelius Nursery treat your special Valentine with beautiful, fresh, living flowers! The rose can be enjoyed all year; cool season flowers such as pansies, primrose and cyclamen can add a burst of color to your landscape, patio or garden. That special person would love a container filled with exotic blooms and foliage comprising orchids, bromeliads, cyclamens and more.

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