



Virginia Cooperative Extension - Loudoun County Master Gardeners

Helpline Hints for April - the fluctuating weather month

Flowers	Garden	Lawn	Trees / Shrubs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember that it is still too early to plant non-hardy flowers (last chance of frost is mid-May) Direct sow <u>hardy</u> annuals, biennials, and perennials (larkspur, annual poppies, and sweet peas) Provide supports for peonies and other perennials that need staking Divide and/or transplant perennials; train climbers onto trellises Prune roses to buds that point outward, remove dead wood Start seeds indoors to transplant next month Plant gladioli, lily-of-the-valley bulbs Work organic matter into flower beds, and prepare new beds Control weeds by mulching, cultivating, or pulling Plant blueberries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant cool crops (arugula, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, peas, potatoes, radishes, spinach) Plant and/or transplant strawberries, raspberries, or other small fruit Protect seedlings from cutworms with collars Thin cool season crops to proper spacing Start seeds indoors to transplant next month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost any non-diseased garden cuttings, add a little 5-10-5 organic fertilizer, and keep the pile moist Control crabgrass before it germinates with a preemergent herbicide Get ready to mow! Have the mower blades sharpened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant and/or transplant shrubs and trees on windless, cloudy days Prune spring flowering trees/shrubs <u>after</u> they bloom (forsythia, weigela, spirea) Pinch back candles on evergreens to 1/2 to thicken Mulch out – not up (2-4" high is plenty, 3" from trunk) Prune twigs affected by winter kill after new growth begins Look for insects that emerge this month (borers, white flies, leaf miners, lace bugs on azaleas; red mites or scale on peonies) Fertilize trees if leaves are small, sparse, and pale Begin looking for bagworms, remove and destroy them

Important: The average date of the last frost in Loudoun County is **May 10th** – be prepared to cover newly planted flowers and vegetables.

Visit the Loudoun County Master Gardener booth at the Leesburg Flower & Garden Festival . . . or contact our Helpline– 703 771-5150 or ex107@vt.edu.