

We are in what English gardeners call the gap period, when spring bulbs have died back and perennials are growing fast but are not yet in bloom. This period will last a week or three although most of us won't really notice it because many of our rhododendrons and other shrubs are in flower, which tends to give some color to the yard. When you are walking around your garden, take note of what time of year a particular plant comes into bloom. In fact, experienced gardeners write this information down. You can usually rely on the same plant to come into bloom around the same time each year. If you find that you have gaps in your color scheme, now is the time to find them and obtain a "fill-in" plant that will bloom to give you a little color when you need it. Of course, you don't really need to do this. You can simply go to a gardening store and buy a fill-in plant. But, in my opinion, you probably don't want to do that each year or you may find that your border becomes awfully crowded.

After several weeks of little rain, it was nice to get some from the remains of tropical storm Barry last Monday on what is in fact, only the fourth day of the official hurricane season. Obviously, hurricanes don't listen to the officials, as we had the first named storm about three weeks ago. It didn't come ashore so we didn't feel it, which leads me into a question a couple



The Island Garden

By Roger Marshall

of gardeners have asked lately. What should you do in your garden if we get a hurricane? Frankly, there isn't a lot you can do unless you want to go to the expense of building plywood tents over your garden beds. I would suggest that you make sure that your chain saw is sharp, that you take your most expensive plants indoors if you can, especially if they are in pots and that you fill your rain barrel with clean water, cover it and put it in a sheltered place. Generally, I find that most of my fruits, like tomatoes and peppers end up in Providence or points somewhere north of that in a hurricane, so I pick them if a storm is forecast. Picking veggies is a good way to save them, as they'll last for a few days when there may not be any power or food supplies coming to the island. If the storm is powerful enough and you have to evacuate, make sure that anything you pick is sitting in a cool area, where if you can't get back and it rots, it will not do any harm.

In the Vegetable Garden

Last Sunday and Monday, with

rain and gray skies, were good days to plant everything out and to sow carrots, beets, and other root crops. It's almost too late to plant lettuce again, however you could try to squeeze in another crop but I wouldn't plant many seeds, they'll bolt very quickly and you'll have to eat a lot of lettuce quickly or lose it. Fertilize established plants, especially garlic and onions. Do not fertilize tomatoes with high nitrogen food, you'll get lots of growth but very few tomatoes. You might want to use grass clippings as mulch between the plants to keep the ground moist if we don't get much rain over the summer.

Fruit trees

Spray with dormant oil or orchard spray to control apple maggot flies immediately after blossom drop. Spray peaches with Bordeaux mix or a copper fungicide. Pick off any leaves that show signs of peach leaf curl.

In the Flower Garden

Plant out impatiens, dahlias, geraniums and just about any other flowers that you can plant out. But wait until the ground is reasonably dry. If you clump around in your flower garden in wet weather, all you are doing is compacting the soil and making it much harder for your flowers to grow.

In the Greenhouse

In my greenhouse I've moved all the citrus fruit, olive, and fig trees outdoors and am busily moving other plants out to their places around the yard. Each will get a liquid feed and be watered every day. Most of the citrus is either in bloom or has been in bloom so there's some hope for a good crop of oranges, lemons, limes, and key limes this year. With this greenhouse standing empty it will be cleaned and repainted, ready for the plants to come inside again in October. In the cold greenhouse, all the winter vegetables have been planted out into the garden and the beds have been treated with compost, fertilizer, bone meal, and blood meal, ready for melon plants to go in there in a day or two.

Summer Pops in Westerly

The Chorus of Westerly, under the direction of music director, George Kent, will present the 27th annual Summer Pops concert on Saturday, June 23, in beautiful Wilcox Park in downtown Westerly.

This traditional celebration of music and summer will feature the 200-voice Chorus of

Westerly, the Boston Festival Orchestra, and special guests, brass-wind ensemble Proteus 7. There is also a pre-show featuring the URI Jazz Big Band, Los Diablos and the Westerly Morris Men. The concert begins at 8 p.m., with the pre-show starting at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free. Rain dates are Sunday, June 24 and Monday, June 25. For more information, visit www.chorusofwesterly.org or call the chorus office at 596-8663.



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Keep a home inventory to protect your assets

Protecting your home and possessions means more than simply having an insurance policy in the event of trouble.

A good home inventory record is the best way to protect your belongings in the event your home is destroyed in a fire or other disaster.

Now is a good time to take an inventory of everything you own in the event disaster strikes, according to the Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.).

"An up-to-date home inventory is one of the best ways to make the most of your insurance dollars," said Jeanne Salvatore, senior vice president and consumer spokesperson for the I.I.I. "A home inventory is basically a list of all of your personal possessions and their estimated value."

A home inventory helps you to purchase enough insurance to replace the items you own. It can also help get insurance claims settled faster and substantiate losses for income tax purposes.

To encourage homeowners and renters to conduct a home inventory, the I.I.I. has created a free home inventory software program, entitled "Know Your Stuff." The program is available as a free download at www.knowyourstuff.org.

In order to make the task of creating an inventory simpler, the Know Your Stuff software allows you to organize your possessions according to the room in which they are located and provides lists of possessions that are typically found in certain rooms as a prompt. It also has the capacity to store digital photographs so that you can document your possessions visually.

"More and more of us have all

kinds of high tech gadgets," noted Salvatore. These are expensive to replace, so it is all the more important to keep track of them for insurance purposes."

Consumers can, of course, simply note all of their belongings in a notebook and keep a file of major receipts. But using technology such as computers, digital cameras or video recorders simplify the process. With the Know Your Stuff software you can store digital photographs of important items along with your list of possessions. And using a digital video camera can be quite effective, as it enables you to narrate what you are filming.

When making a record of possessions, it is essential to note expensive items such as jewelry, furs and collectibles since they may require additional insurance. But, it is also important to make note of more commonplace items such as toys, CDs, clothing and even towels and linens, since the cost of replacing these items can really add up if you suffer a major disaster.

"If your household gets involved, this project can be fun. Children can help by opening closets and drawers and listing what is in there," said Salvatore.

More importantly, it is easy to update and store a digital home inventory. It takes nothing more than the click of a mouse to add a new possession. And when it comes to storing your digital home inventory, you can easily burn it onto a CD or print out a room-by-room document - either of which can be stored in a safety deposit box or other secure location.

For more information about insurance and creating and keeping a home inventory, visit the I.I.I. Web site at www.iii.org. - SPM Wire

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