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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



A patch of calendula and nasturtium with an owl guard the vegetables. Photo Cynthia Brian

"I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least - and it is commonly more than that - sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements. " - Henry David Thoreau

Mother Nature has an astounding way of rebounding. The blackened, charred hills behind my house from the October wildfire are now a carpet of emerald green grass accessorized by a super bloom of glorious orange California poppies, and tall, bright yellow mustard. My orchard is blanketed with a plethora of colorful wildflowers mixed with the blooms from seeds either scattered by the wind or me at the end of autumn when the first rains drizzled onto our parched earth. Nigella, morning glory, nasturtium, calendula, statice, euphorbia, chamomile, lupin, daisy, yarrow, and more. My fruit trees have been a succession of flowering petals and delicate fragrance, forecasting a bounty of fresh treats to come.

After six weeks of staying at home, my garden is more alive and gorgeous than ever. The sky is blue and free of jet streams. The heady perfume of jasmine, lilacs, and wisteria waft through the clean air. The birds are singing as they build their nests. Trotting turkeys "gobble gobble"- bowing to one another, then gobbling again in their quest for mates. Untamed vines tangle their tendrils up tree trunks, along wires, and onto fences. Tulip, rose, lavender, iris, azaleas geranium, pelargonium, cyclamen, vinca, bird of paradise, and a plethora of other plants are a parade of festivity. Drifts of daffodils and mounds of grape hyacinth continue to add color and liveliness. Herbs and leafy greens are harvested daily to add nutrition and zest to meals. Freshly picked as needed, oranges, tangerines, lemons, limes, and tangelos provide plenty of vitamin C to keep my family well. My spirits are soaring with gratitude for my garden. I am healthy and happy as I witness spring unfurl in all its glory. I may not be interacting with people, but I am intensely involved with living beings in every moment I spend outdoors. Hopefully, with people ensconced at home, our planet is healing and rebuilding its strength.

The natural world is wild and free. Humans have the power and the responsibility to save our planet. In this beautiful month, be grateful for everything we are and everything we have. Refocus and reclaim your positivity. Reduce stress and anxiety by going where the wild things are . hills, fields, and your garden. Grow yourself!

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for May

PROVIDE security for birds by building a nest box for the birds you want to attract. Place it in the shade with a clear flight path to the entrance.

SOW for succession to provide pollinators a buffet throughout the growing season.

SAVE your back and build a raised bed. It's easy if you enjoy DIY projects. When you wire the bottom, you won't have gophers or other diggers eating your crops.

INVOLVE your kids in gardening by allowing them to grow seeds that feature a rainbow of colors to fill their plates. Red radishes, orange carrots, green peppers, purple beets, and an array of lettuces will sprout quickly.

PLANT aromatic herbs and nutritious vegetables that will ensure the health of your family. Beans, peas, eggplant, broccoli, potatoes, cabbage and turnips. Toward the end of the month, add tomatoes to your plot.

TRELLIS your vining plants such as wisteria, jasmine and bower plants.

TOWER gardens are a great alternative if you have a small space. Find ready-made options online.

CHECK sprinklers and irrigation systems for leaks.

FERTILIZE containers as needed. Plants in pots lose nutrients more quickly than those planted in the ground.

SPRUCE up your patio to prepare for entertaining. Power wash hard surfaces and get ready to celebrate a Mother's Day picnic at home.

SOW annuals now in a rich soil mixture. Marigolds, cosmos, zinnias, and bachelor buttons are excellent choices for a showy summer.

MULCH your garden with grass clippings, chopped leaves, and other organic composts to reduce weeds.

ELIMINATE any standing water from gutters, pot saucers, old tires, or puddles to reduce the breeding of mosquitoes.

DEADHEAD spent blossoms from any annuals or perennials to encourage continuous blooming.

PRUNE back daffodil leaves only when they are yellow and crispy.

THROW bait to eradicate snails and slugs from devouring new sprouts.

READ my books available from <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. To avoid shipping charges, I will leave your enhanced package outside my office door for you. There will be no personal

contact.

MOW your lawn without the bag at least every other week. This allows the nitrogen and nutrients that are in the grass to nurture the growing blades.

EAT the flowers from nasturtiums, roses, arugula, cilantro, thyme, roses, basil and sage. They add flavor and beauty to many dishes.

CUT a branch from a flowering tree, like cherry, for a striking indoor statement.

CREATE stunning aromatic bouquets with blooming lilacs, wisteria, jasmine and roses.

REGISTER your yard or garden as a Certified Wildlife Habitat at

<https://www.nwf.org/CertifiedWildlifeHabitat>. The \$20 fee supports wildlife.

FOLLOW up ground fertilizing of flowers, perennials, vegetables, and fruits with foliar and micro-nutrients at appropriate times during the growing season.

EAT fresh fruits and veggies, especially those you grow yourself.

SLEEP seven to eight hours every day to keep your immune system strong.

BREATHE and know that the sun is going to shine tomorrow.

It may take some months before we are social gathering again. For those of us who usually shake hands or hug, we may be wise to take the advice of the World Health Organization and begin bowing. Or do as I learned in India last year: clasp hands in prayer, bow, and whisper Namaste. Although we are apart, we are together, and we can view this time as a learning experience. Get thee into thy garden. Grow thyself! Be wild and free.

Stay healthy. Stay safe. Stay home.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



Wild and free hillside of statice, nigella, euphorbia, poppy, calendula, and more. Photo Cynthia Brian



Reliable, repeat David Austin Lady of Shallot rose boasts a rich salmon color and tea fragrance.



A flowering cherry is a beautiful asset to any landscape.



Riotous wisteria twines amongst magnolias and loquats.



A bee feasts on euphorbia nectar



Reblooming iris performs best when fertilized after the first blooms disappear.



Cynthia Brian under her Meyer lemon tree flanked by azaleas and camellias, Cynthia Brian,

The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!r 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyler Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Cynthia is available for virtual writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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