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August Is For Iris

By Ken Andersen



'Superstition'

August marks the beginning of the fall bulb season with the arrival of Bearded Iris rhizomes in the latter part of the month. This year we are expecting more than 30 varieties in a rainbow of colors.

Bearded Iris are easy to grow. They will bloom with magnificent flowers and these tough perennials can brighten up a sunny area. Bearded Iris prefer full sun and well-draining, loose soil. If you have heavy or clay soil, consider

[continued p3](#)

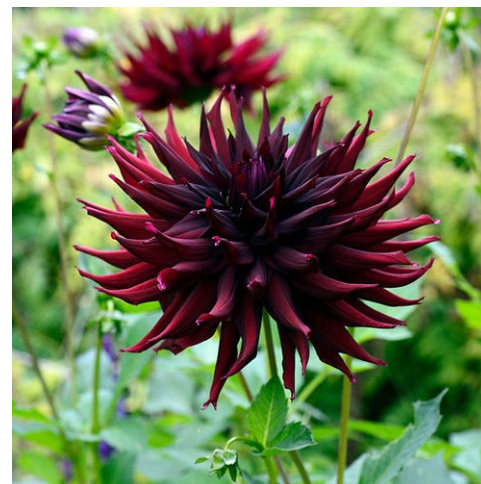
Dahlias 101: A Guide To Shapes & Sizes

By National Gardening Bureau



Dinnerplate

Dahlias continue to be a popular landscape choice and make excellent additions to border plantings, flowerpots, and cut-flower gardens. They flower continuously from summer through the first frost and will bloom prolifically if spent flowers are removed regularly. They do best in full sun and prefer well-drained



Cactus/Semi-Cactus

sandy soils but will tolerate heavier clay soils, especially if amended with sand or peat moss.

Dahlias can grow as short as 12 inches and as tall as six feet depending on the variety. Classified by their size, shape, and color, the selection of dahlias means there's something for

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Fertilizer: Which To Use And When

By Botanical Interests

About Fertilizer

There are three essential macronutrients (nutrients needed in large amounts) that are the most commonly referenced in fertilizers. By understanding how each of these components influences plant growth and knowing your soil deficiencies (through a soil test), choosing fertilizer can be easy. On most fertilizer packaging, three numbers are listed, separated by dashes (e.g. 10-5-5). These numbers represent



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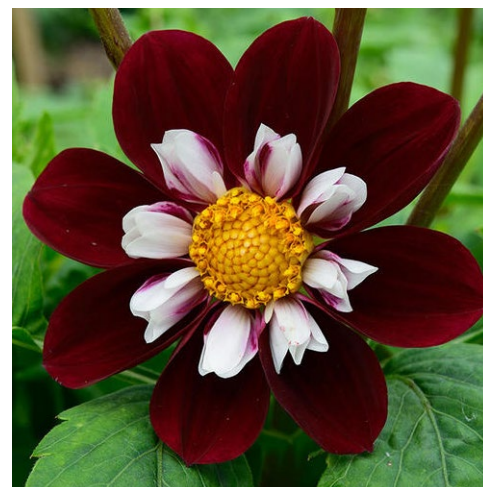
Dahlias 101 continued from p1



Pompon & Ball



Decorative



Anemone & Collarette

everyone! Colors range from yellow, pink, purple, red, scarlet, orange, to white and several varieties are multi-colored, featuring stripes and two-toned petals.

Dinnerplate Dahlias

Dinnerplate Dahlias are the most dramatic of dahlias with huge blooms up to 12 inches across! Dinnerplate is not actually an official classification. These magnificent blooms are registered under many other dahlia types. These beauties bloom continuously from summer through the first frost.

- Giant blooms, growing to 12 inches in diameter
- Petals are sometimes twisted or pointy
- Growing up to four feet tall
- Great for border gardens
- Height and size add intense visual interest to the garden

Cactus/Semi-Cactus Dahlias

Cactus Dahlias get their name from the pointed rays of petals that give them a prickly look with double flowers that come in a range of colors. These unique varieties bloom all the way through summer and tend to hold up well.

- Curled petals give blooms a spikey look

- Blooms range from 2 to 12 inches across
- Plants usually grow to at least 40 inches tall
- Adds an unusual textural element to the garden

Pompon & Ball Dahlias

These small, double flowers have an open center and are globe-shaped with rolled petals that curve inwards. Petals are usually blunt at the tips and are often perfectly symmetrical in their arrangement. Beautiful in bouquets or as patio plantings with vibrant shades of pinks, yellows, and oranges.

- Petals form a spiral
- Most varieties feature small flowers
- Can grow up to three feet tall
- Striking swirls of symmetrical petals

Decorative Dahlias

Decorative Dahlias are unique and have double flowers that have petals with tips that are flat or rolled. They add a dazzling display to landscapes and cut flower arrangements. This classification comes in two categories; “formal” Decorative varieties tend to have broad and flat-tipped petals with symmetrical arrangements while “informal” varieties have irregular petal arrangements with rolled tips.

These come in a huge range of sizes, making them suitable for a great variety of landscaping applications.

- Formal varieties have evenly spaced, flat-tip petals
- Informal varieties have irregular petal arrangements of twisted or wavy petals
- Come in a variety of sizes but typically have large blooms
- Varieties can be as short as 12 inches and as tall as six feet!

Anemone & Collarette Dahlias

Anemone Dahlias feature one or more layers of petals surrounding a cluster of small florets that form a pincushion-like center. Collarettes have a layer of flat or slightly cupped petals surrounding an open center. Flowers are solid or bicolor and come in a range of colors from deep burgundies and oranges to bright yellows and whites. These dahlia blooms tend to be smaller than other types and are good for borders and containers.

- Unique formation of larger outer petals surrounding inner layer of smaller petals
- Small blooms, up to four inches in diameter
- Great for border and container plantings

Dahlias 101 continued from p2



Peony-Flowered



Orchid



Mignon

August Is For Iris

continued from p1

planting in raised planters or containers where you have more control over the drainage.

The plants like some space and do not want to be crowded, 12 inches between plants is good spacing. They do not like to be buried deep, so when planting, bury only the roots and leave the back of the rhizome exposed. Feed them during the growing season with a flower and bloom fertilizer like Gro-Power Flower and Bloom. When the first flowers fade, cut the stalk back and this may encourage reblooming. While they will bloom in their first year, it is the second year that they really take off. Every couple of years the plants will benefit by being dug up and divided. To do this, remove all of the existing dirt from the roots and then the rhizomes are easily divided and replanted. Extra rhizomes can also be gifted to friends and neighbors while bare root. Stop by either location later this month to see the selection we will have! Bearded Iris arrive at the end of August. Superstition is one of the varieties we are expecting. •

- Most varieties grow between 40 and 48 inches tall

Peony-Flowered Dahlias

Peony-flowered Dahlias have small flowers with two or more layers of petals surrounding an open center disc. Several peony-flowered varieties have dark-colored foliage, setting them apart from other dahlia types. As with most dahlia varieties, peony-flowered types bloom continuously from summer through first frost. These make great border and container plantings and will also hold up in cut flower arrangements for up to a week.

- Flowers are typically four to six inches in diameter
- Varieties grow two to four feet tall
- Often with irregular petal shape and unique, dark-colored foliage
- Nice for border or container plantings

Orchid Dahlias

The spider-like look of Orchid Dahlias makes them the most unique of dahlia types, featuring one ray of florets surrounding the center or double blooms with no center showing. Single-layered Orchid Dahlias often resemble pinwheels with vibrantly colored rolled petals and bright orange or yellow centers. Double-flowered varieties have swept-back petals that roll inward.

- Varieties grow two to four feet tall
- Uniquely shaped petals in single and double layers
- Resemble Encyclia orchids
- Versatile for planting in classic or contemporary gardens

Mignon Dahlias

Mignon Dahlias are classic blooms, compact with a rounded, daisy-like appearance displaying a single layer of petals around golden centers. Available in various shades of pink as well as soft yellow, red, and white. They have a relatively short growth habit making them a versatile option in the garden.

- Daisy-like petal arrangement and look
- Blooms are three to four inches
- Plantings reach about 20 inches tall
- Great for containers or window boxes

Dahlias are grown from tubers which are similar to bulbs but with potato-like skins. Dahlia tubers can overwinter in the ground in zone 8 and higher or be lifted after the first frost and stored over winter in colder climates. They prefer warm soils and a moderate amount of water; too much water can cause tubers to rot. Dahlias make great cut flowers. In fact, the more dahlia flowers are cut, the more the plant will produce. •

Pollinator Facts

By Garden Center Magazine



Lavender

95 > Ninety-five kinds of fruits and seeds, such as almonds, avocados, cranberries and apples, in addition to commodity crops like soy, are pollinated in North America by honeybees alone.

71 > The United Nations Environment Programme reported that of the 100 crop varieties that provide 90 percent of the world's food, 71 are pollinated by bees.

40 pollinator species are threatened or endangered

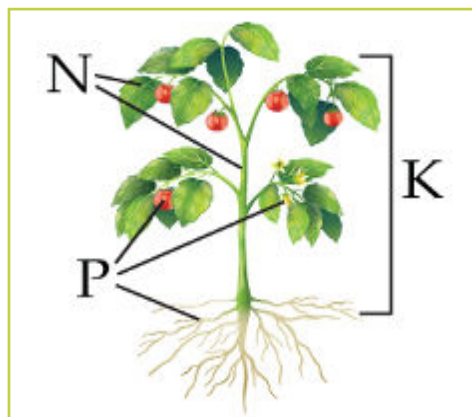
bees like
basil, lavender,
star jasmine,
salvia, and
honeysuckle

4,000 > More than four thousand species of native bees don't produce honey, but are critical contributors to the pollination of the food we eat in North America.

40 > Forty pollinator species are listed as threatened or endangered, and several more are currently being considered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

continued p5

Fertilizer continued from p1



the percent weight of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K), always in the same order (also known as "N-P-K"). A fertilizer that contains all three macronutrients is called "complete" and if all three nutrients compose equal parts in the ratio (e.g. 20-20-20), it's considered "balanced". The ratio of each of these macronutrients to one another dictates the dominant reaction in a plant.

Nitrogen (N) encourages vegetative growth (leaves and plant shoots) and is an important component of amino acids that create proteins. Nitrogen is also necessary for creating chlorophyll, which makes plants green and is essential for photosynthesis (the process of a plant making its own food). Nitrogen, unlike the other macronutrients, readily evaporates and drains out of soil, so it is the macronutrient that most often needs to be replenished.

Phosphorus (P) encourages the growth of roots and flowers, as well as the fruit and/or seeds that follows blooms. Phosphorus is important to every plant process that uses energy, such as photosynthesis, new cells/growth, or water regulation.

Potassium (K) activates enzymes, which drive processes that improve a plant's ability to handle stress. Plant stresses include those caused by transplanting, heat, cold, drought,

disease, and pests. Potassium is essential for overall plant health, too.

How Fertilizer Helps Plants

Here are some examples of how to use fertilizers to encourage the growth you would like. These examples assume your soil nutrients are "balanced" but deficient, or you are using a container with potting soil/media that contains no nutrients.

Leafy Vegetables

Once seedlings like lettuce and kale are looking strong, about the size that they have four true leaves, start giving them a fertilizer that's higher in nitrogen to encourage green, leafy growth. The same applies to your lawn in spring or, believe it or not, onions! We often think of onions as a root crop, but the bulb is actually a modified extension of the leaves.



Flowering Plants

Once flowering plants like tomatoes and zinnias are almost large enough to produce flowers and fruits, start feeding them a fertilizer with a higher ratio of phosphorus (P) to encourage abundant and larger blooms and fruits or seeds. The larger the plant prior to blooming, the more food it can make for itself, which translates to more blooms, fruits, and seeds it can create. Larger plants also provide more shade for the fruit, which can be susceptible to sunburn.

continued p5

Pollinator Facts

continued from p4



Honeysuckle



Star Jasmine

\$700M > Seven hundred million dollars is the approximate total annual value of U.S. honeybee products and services sold.

\$217B > Pollinators add \$217 billion to the global economy and honeybees alone are responsible for between \$1.2 and \$5.4 billion in agricultural productivity in the U.S.

90% > Sadly, 90 percent is the rate at which Monarch butterflies have declined in the last 20 years. Twenty five percent of bumblebee species are thought to be in serious decline.

You can thank these hard-working bees by planting bee-friendly plants: bees like any plant that produces nectar-filled blooms (basil, lavender, salvia and honeysuckle). They especially flock to Star Jasmine. If you are allergic to bees, you can plant bee friendly plants toward the back of your yard or away from areas you frequent. •

Fertilizer continued from p4

Plant Stress

Plants occasionally get stressed during a heat wave, at transplanting, or from pest/disease pressure. Potassium (K) can help plants handle that stress by managing their coping systems efficiently. For example, potassium helps water regulation, so the plant can react appropriately to drought by holding onto water better. Transplanting also causes some stress, as we disrupt the root ball and introduce plants to new environmental conditions (real sun, cool nights, new soil, etc.). Seaweed and kelp are great organic sources of potassium.

Liquid or Dry Fertilizer?

Liquid fertilizer is faster acting, but should be applied more frequently (weekly to monthly) as it does not remain in the soil very long. It will also have a near immediate impact and is likely the best choice for seedlings started indoors or plants showing a visible deficiency. Most dry (or granular) fertilizer is slowly released over a month to several months, so you spend less time applying it. It is generally worked into garden beds prior to planting. In most cases, plants can also be “side/top dressed” (applying fertilizer to the soil around the plant and lightly incorporating with a cultivator) during the growing season. Dry fertilizer is a great way to balance your garden and provide all the macronutrients for success, and you can either side/top dress a more targeted dry fertilizer as needed, or use a targeted liquid fertilizer regularly. Always follow fertilizer instructions. Too much fertilizer can burn plants, causing irreversible damage and stress.

While this information is designed to help you understand macronutrients as they pertain to fertilizer, we don't want to downplay those other macronutrients (calcium (Ca),



sulfur (S), and magnesium (Mg)), as well as micronutrients (e.g., zinc (Zn), iron (Fe), boron (B)) are also essential, just in smaller quantities. Your soil test should also give you an indication of what micronutrients need balancing in the soil. Soil tests are available at Walter Andersen Nursery. Keep in mind that some nutrients act in concert; meaning one cannot be absorbed without the other, but again, your soil test will give you a clearer direction. Organic fertilizers often offer some micronutrients along with the macronutrients in the formula, but read the analysis to be sure.

The more you know, the more you grow! Over- and under-fertilization can invite pests, cause pollution, increase costs, and cause frustration and reduced harvests. Look for information on fertilizer needs for specific varieties on the inside of our seed packets. Proper fertilization puts your plants on the road to success giving them the nutrients they need to be bigger, better, and stronger! •



Old Ben: The Rarest Bird In The World

By Old Ben



In 1990, a group of Cambridge scientists arrived at the Plains of Nechisar in Ethiopia. On that expedition, they collected more than two dozen specimens, saw more than three hundred species of birds, rare butterflies, dragonflies, reptiles, mammals, and plants. As they were gathering up their findings, a wing of an unidentified bird was packed into a brown paper bag. It was to become the most famous wing in the world.

This unique wing would set the world of science buzzing. It was like nothing they had ever seen before. Could a new species be named based on just one wing? After much discussion, a new species was announced. **Nechisar Nightjar**, or **Camprimulgus Solala**, which means “only wing.” And so, birdwatchers began to dream.

In 2009, renowned ornithologist Ian Sinclair led a trip to the area where the wing was found and located the nightjar the first night they were there. This nightjar was easily distinguishable from the more common smaller nightjars in the area. It was a large nightjar with huge white patches and was seen several times in the next few nights. It appeared to be a male while the museum wing specimen had a more buffy patch and appeared to be that of an immature female bird.

Its natural habitat is subtropical or tropical dry lowland grassland, and is threatened by habitat loss and is listed as vulnerable. •

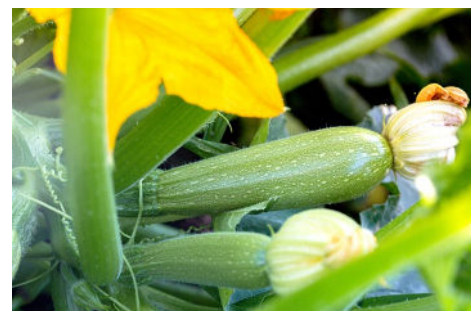
To Do List: August



Plant shrubs and trees



Feed citrus with Gro-Power



Plant more warm-season vegetables

Fertilize

> For lawns, use Marathon Fertilizer for tall fescue, and Bonide DuraTurf Weed & Feed to feed grass and control broadleaf weeds. Feed ornamentals with Gro-Power. Feed vegetables with Gro-Power Tomato and Vegetable Food or Dr. Earth Organic Tomato and Vegetable Food. Feed citrus, avocado, and fruit trees with Gro-Power Citrus and Avocado Food. Feed palms and tropicals with Gro-Power Palm Tree and Tropical Food.

Water

> If you will be unavailable, arrange for a neighbor or your gardener to watch your yard to make sure everything gets appropriate water. Adjust sprinklers to make sure they operate properly. Think about switching your existing sprinklers to more efficient types.

> If you are considering removing your lawn and plants, we suggest starting with an irrigation tune-up first. Have someone look at your system.

It might be worth investing in your irrigation system rather than incurring the expense of removing existing plantings and replacing them.

> Mulch, mulch, mulch. Topping the soil with a layer of mulch helps keep the moisture in. Mulch breaks down and enriches the soil, and it makes your plantings look manicured and finished.

Plant

> Plant tropicals, ornamentals, trees, and shrubs.

> Plant late crops of warm-season vegetables, like tomatoes, squash, and beans.

> Later this month, plant Sweet Peas for early crop of flowers.

> Add some drought-tolerant plants such as Cactus, Succulents, Lantana, Grevilleas, and Leucadendron.

> Look for bedding plants, Bougainvillea, Crape Myrtle, Hibiscus, Agapanthus, Citrus, Plumeria, and Avocados. •

Organic Pest Control

By Botanical Interests



Years of gardening experience proves time and again that pests can find their way into our gardens. Learning to cope with pests has delivered a few organic means of combatting them.

Some General Tips to Keep in Mind

- > Controlling pest's eggs will be easier and more productive than waiting until pests are mobile.
- > Acting early can mean your efforts will reduce insecticide use.
- > Apply sprays carefully, not broadly, and in the morning or evening when many insects are less active, allowing you to better target pests. Cooler temperatures often allow the product to work longer.
- > Scout for pests regularly.

Ready-Made Organic Products and Concentrates

Although these products are organic, they should be used with care and caution. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions on which pest and plants it is useful for, how to apply, when to reapply, and any other guidelines. Some products cause pests to die immediately and others cause them to die over time; it helps to know what to expect.

Tomato Hornworms do not like Bt. These pests can be hard to spot as their green bodies match foliage. They are often found on the underside of foliage and you'll know if you have caterpillars if you see what looks like black spots of dirt which is actually caterpillar number 2!

Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) and **B. thuringiensis var kurstaki** are bacteria that kill caterpillar pests by disrupting their digestive system. It may take a few days for caterpillars to die, so don't expect immediate results. Repeat applications may be necessary as new generations hatch. Bt is helpful against tomato hornworm, cabbage loopers, cabbage worms, corn earworm (if mixed with vegetable oil and applied to silks), and cutworms and other caterpillars (if mixed with moist bran and molasses and scattered over surface of beds). Bt comes in liquid or dry forms.

Copper compounds are useful for controlling certain types of fungus like mildews, anthracnose, blight, and more. Many formulations are organically approved. See packaging for specifics.

Diatomaceous earth is made up of the fossilized remains (powder) of diatoms (tiny aquatic organisms) that have turned to silica. To soft-bodied insects—like slugs, aphids, fleas, mites, and ants—diatomaceous earth is actually very sharp, causing them to dehydrate when they come in contact with it. Diatomaceous earth can be applied to plants and on the soil around plants to create a protective barrier that deters and kills these soft-bodied pests. Avoid inhaling diatomaceous earth.

Insecticidal soap is a good complementary treatment to Bt or can be used on its own as a first line of defense. Insecticidal soap is a liquid spray that works best in direct contact with susceptible soft-bodied pests and insect eggs. Because it is effective only upon contact and washes off readily, there

aren't ongoing effects to pests and beneficial insects after the spray has dried. Some insecticidal soaps are also labeled for use against powdery mildew on some plants.

Horticultural Oil is a light mineral oil and controls by smothering pests and their eggs. Horticultural oil is effective against many eggs, nymphs, and adult insect pests like aphids, mites, scale, leaf hoppers, white flies, caterpillars, mites, mealybugs, and thrips. Thorough coating of the entire plant is best for complete control.

Seaweed (kelp) extract is packed with micronutrients and minerals along with some macronutrients. It can be used to boost plant health and boost resistance to pests, diseases, and stresses like drought or pest damage. It has been recommended as a foliage spray to help combat blossom end rot; however, note that calcium deficiency, which causes blossom end rot, is quite often caused by inconsistent moisture. It can be found in a liquid or dry form; generally, the liquid form is better for a sprayer, as it is less likely to clog, and the powder can be incorporated into the soil.

Spinosad is a soil bacterium in dry or liquid form that can be toxic to chewing insects. Insects will not die immediately, so exercise patience and reapply as per product recommendation. It is toxic to bees while wet, so take precautions to protect bees.

Sulfur is another organically approved fungicide that can be used to combat fungal diseases like powdery mildew or blight.

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Organic continued from p7

Other Deterrents

Garlic and hot pepper spray is used for a wide assortment of garden pests including aphids, leaf hoppers, squirrels, caterpillars, birds, deer, vampires, and more. Spraying in the morning or evening helps to protect pollinators; less of the spray evaporates, and it helps ensure plants are not stressed or at risk of burning from the spray. Reapply after a rain and every 7 to 10 days as needed.

Soil solarization uses plastic sheeting to heat the top of the soil during hot summer months, which at high enough temperatures can kill many soil organisms, including those that cause disease, nematodes, weed seeds, and seedlings. One drawback to this method is that it will also kill beneficial organisms, so use with caution. •



Garden Classes: August

Saturday classes are **FREE** and last about an hour. Complimentary coffee is served. During inclement weather, classes are held indoors in San Diego and on the covered, heated patio in Poway. Topics are subject to change. See the full schedule at <https://www.walterandersen.com/classes-events/>.

SAN DIEGO | 9:00AM

8/6

Shade Plants
with Constanze

8/13

Worm Composting
with Kathleen

8/20

Water Saving Techniques
with James

8/27

Fall Veggies
with Josh

POWAY | 9:30AM

8/6

Staghorn Fern Care/Culture
& Remounting
with David Ross

8/13

Hydroponics 101
with Rick

8/20

Brassicas & Other Fall
Vegetables
with Farmer Roy

8/27

Vegetable Seed Saving
with Adams



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