



Late Summer

This is one of my favourite times in the garden. The heat is no longer oppressive (not that this was a problem this year!) but it is still warm enough to enjoy sitting in the garden.

I also love this time also for the blaze of late summer perennials and ornamental grasses. My personal favourites are Rudbeckias and Echinaceas. These coneflowers are striking in colour and full of nectar for butterflies. If you live in East Anglia go and visit Bressingham Gardens and Pensthorpe Millenium Garden. They are fantastic for seeing late summer perennials at their best.

Key Tasks

- Take cuttings from tender perennials such as fuschias, pelargoniums and coleus. The sooner this is done the better as it will give the roots time to form before the colder weather arrives.
- Continue to deadhead roses and perennials. Although it won't prolong the summer display it will help keep the border tidy.
- Annual summer bedding plants can be cleared away onto the compost from late September onwards. This will make room for spring flowering plants and bulbs. September is the main time to plant spring flowering bulbs (with the exception of tulips which can be planted later).
- Many spring flowering perennials can be lifted and divided. This is a cheap and easy way to increase the quantity of favourite plants, revive the existing plant and tidy up your borders.
- September is also a good time to trim hedges. Holly, yew and conifers can all be cut back now or in early October. If you have a deciduous hedge this can be left to later in the year.



- Late summer is a good time to plant or move evergreen shrubs. However, it's vital that you water the plants before and after planting. Planting now will give the roots time to establish before the colder weather arrives. Take time to prepare the soil well and be generous with the compost you dig in. Hopefully these shrubs will be here for a long time.
- You've probably noticed that your lawn now needs cutting less frequently. This is because grass growth slows as we approach Autumn. Now is also a good time to remove thatch, aerate the lawn and apply a top dressing. Established lawns can be fed and worn patches reseeded. September is also one of the best months to sow new seed or lay new turf. However, it's important not to walk on new turf for at least 4 weeks and keep it watered until the wetter weather arrives.
- Late summer is also a good time to take stock of the year and start thinking of next year. Look at what has worked well and where you can make improvements. If you are having your garden redesigned or want to improve your borders think about commissioning a garden designer now. Getting a garden built over the winter means you will be ready to plant in early spring and enjoy it for Easter.
- Finally enjoy the remaining days as the nights will start drawing in.