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April in the Garden

By **KAREN STAUDERMAN, Volusia County Extension Service**

April 3, 2010 12:05 AM 0 Comments 0 Votes

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WHAT TO PLANT

Annuals: New varieties of coleus do well in sun or shade and provide vivid colors and patterns for months. Experiment with great colorful annual additions including Sweet Williams, wave petunia, dusty miller, pentas, gazania and hollyhock (*Althaea rosea*).



Hollyhocks in Port Orange. Photo | Betsy Enslin

Bulbs: Planting early-, mid- and late-blooming varieties of daylilies will ensure months of color from these low maintenance plants. Selections of corms and bulbs to include in the landscape include gladiolus, gloriosa lily, watsonia and begonia.

Vegetables: Continue planting warm season crops, including watermelon, squash, peppers, pumpkin, corn, collards, cantaloupes, beans and tomatoes. Mulch well to prevent weeds and provide water if the weather has been dry. Now is the time to stake tomatoes and fertilize the garden.

Seeds: This is the last month to plant annual flower seeds that need to germinate before hot weather returns.

Shrubs: Planting season is here and a wide variety of shrubs can be added to the landscape now.

WHAT TO DO

Pests: Monitor landscape plants weekly for aphids on tender new growth. If leaves or flowers of gardenias and roses are damaged, thrips may be present. Control with an Ultra-Fine oil. Bugs attack stressed plants and blooming stressed plants.

Propagate: Divide clumps of bulbs or herbaceous perennials to expand garden beds or pass along to friends.

Lawn problems: Many lawn problems mimic insect damage. Confirm the damage is being caused by insects before applying a pesticide.

Mulch: Mulch conserves moisture during dry weather and minimizes weeds in landscape beds.

Written by Karen Stauderman, the Volusia County residential horticulture extension agent. Reach her at 3100 E. New York Ave., DeLand, FL 32724-6497, 386-822-5778 or e-mail: kstauderman@co.volusia.fl.us.



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