

Timely Tips for July

Tip of the Month

Had trouble with fungi or [nematodes](#) in your garden? This is the time to take care of them. Prepare the bed for fall planting now. Add fertilizer and organic matter, water, and then cover with a large piece of at least 4 mil clear plastic (an old shower curtain works great). Use clear plastic instead of black to allow the sun light through. Use heavy plastic to prevent the sun from degrading it during the process. "Solarize" the infested soil for 6 weeks. Temperatures under the plastic will reach 140 degrees F, killing many fungi spores, nematodes, and weed seeds. Don't worry about your earth worms or other beneficials, they will move out when it starts to heat up, but they'll come back in droves.)

Climate Information for July in Phoenix, Arizona

Rainfall

Average: 0.9 inches

Record: 6.5 inches (1911)

Temperature (degrees F)

Average High: 105.9 degrees

Lowest High: 79 degrees (1911)

Record High: 121 degrees (1995)

Average Low: 81 degrees

Highest Low: 93 degrees (1989)

Record Low: 63 degrees (1912)

Note: Rainfall and temperatures vary widely within the valley depending upon elevation and microclimate.

To Do List

Turf

- Plant Bermuda lawns during the active growing season, May through August
- Fertilize Bermuda grass lawns each month beginning late April or early May with 1/2 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
- Apply six ounces of Iron per 1,000 square feet per month.
- Apply one inch of water per week to Bermuda lawns
- Once every two or three years dethatch Bermuda lawns if necessary. Only dethatch during the active growing season, May through August. This enables the turf to quickly recover.

Roses

- Cut back on fertilizing established roses to encourage plants to slow down for the hot summer
- Water deeply as temperatures climb
- Hose off plants in the early morning to increase humidity and control spider mites

Landscape Plants

- Increase water application as the weather warms. June is the driest month. Pay attention to irrigation needs of plants.
- Apply mulch to the ground around heat sensitive plants keep the roots cooler and prevent evaporation.
- Apply chelated iron to bottle brush, pyracantha, silk oak, and other plants with [iron deficiency symptoms](#).
- Prune palms when flower spathes show or delay pruning until after the palm has finished flowering to prevent infestation of [Palm Flower caterpillars](#). If palms are pruned in the spring, leave the top five rows of peels so the caterpillars have a place to hide.
- Cut off spent blooms to stimulate rebloom
- Native and imported heat tolerant plants can be planted right through the summer months. They will need to be watered on a regular basis until fall.
- Transplant palms in the heat of the summer for best results
- Protect newly transplanted trees from heavy winds and dust storms by staking carefully