

june ■ july ■ august

Summer

GRASS

Be consistent about watering cool season grasses. Bluegrass requires water every two days, penetrating 4-6 inches into the ground. Fescue needs watering every three to five days.

Warm season grasses can be seeded now. Established warm season grasses, like bluegrass and buffalo, might need watering every 7-10 days. Water should penetrate 12-18 inches into the soil.

For both warm and cool season grasses, avoid use of a fertilizer high in nitrogen, and use an iron-based product instead.

ANNUALS, PERENNIALS, WILDBIRDS

Transplanting is less traumatic on plants during the cooler evening hours. Water transplants thoroughly. Established annuals, perennials and wildflowers may need water every 7-

10 days while daytime temperatures are above 95 degrees, and especially while plants are in bloom. Remove moderate-robbing weeds to keep them from reseeding.

Moderate zone; frequent watering

BIRDS

Continue feeding birds if desired. Providing water will be the most critical thing in a dry, hot summer, and will attract many birds. Any moving water such as a mister or dripper in a birdbath is especially enticing.

Moderate zone; frequent watering

TREES AND SHRUBS

Water non-eric trees and shrubs once a week. Spend blooms on roses can be cut back to the first five-leaf cluster. For lilacs in July with an all-purpose rose food, and water at least once a week. Mulching keeps soil and roots cool and slow evaporation.

Mini-oasis zone; Harvest water use

BUG WATCH

Spider mites look like small white specks on foliage and leave fine webbing on the underside of leaves. They are fond of junipers, petunias, roses and hollyhocks. Wash them away with a stream of water, but more severe infestations may require a miticide. Also, watch for pine tip moth adults lured by the Cooperative Extension Service.

WATER

HARVESTING

Take advantage of summer rains by channeling water to planting areas.

VEGETABLE GARDEN

Water every 2-3 days or more often if plants still look droopy in the evening after daytime heat has subsided. Start fall season crops such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts and eggplants in a window box or a shaded cold frame, and transplant in late fall.

FRUIT TREES

Water at least once a week. Drop watering material over smaller trees to protect fruit from birds. For larger trees, redesign your soil to sharing the fruit. Mulching recommended.

COMPOST

Keep compost pile moist and turned. Bury kitchen waste (no meat or grease) in the non-planted garden rows.

NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS

Early- to mid-June is a good time to thin and shape multitrunk trees, like desert willow, New Mexico olive and Vitex, to highlight the attractive trunks. Water deeply about once a month for established trees. New transplants may need water over a week.

HUMMINGBIRDS

Cherry sage, penstemon, trumpet vine, desert willow and red yucca are inviting to hummingbirds.

CACTI AND SUCCULENTS

Once-a-month watering for the most xeric plants may be necessary if seasonal rains do not occur. More broadly adapted plants may need water every two weeks while blooming, otherwise water once a month.

Sources: Jeffry Phillips, Bernardo Beach Native Plants; Geri Krollsch, Wild Birds Unlimited

MORE HELP FOR YOUR GARDEN

■ The Journal's landscape series at www.abcpjournal.com/xer

■ Xeriscaping, water conservation and city water bill rebate information at (805)768-3655, or www.cahgs.gov/waterconservation

■ Xeriscaping information at www.xeriscapers.com

■ Look for tips on water-wise gardening every three months on the cover of *NapaLife*. Our next cover story planner will appear Saturday, September 7.