

Gardening Almanac for the Plateau

July

Weather – Average Rainfall and Temperatures:

The average rainfall for July is 5.18 inches. The average maximum temperature is 85 degrees F. and the minimum is 56 degrees F.

Activities:

- Now you can enjoy your garden -- cut some flowers for the dining room table and maybe cut some to dry for winter bouquets.
- Both annuals and perennials will still have to be deadheaded to encourage continuous blooms.
- If you want to plant fall bulbs for spring blooms, your catalog order should go in very soon.
- Get rid of crabgrass and other weeds that could invade your garden.
- If there isn't adequate rainfall, you may have to water your garden and lawn. If you prefer a lush green lawn, mow it at a higher height and water deeply (preferably early in the morning).
- Perennials can be planted any time, so watch for mid-summer sales and make additions to your garden area, and don't forget to water them regularly until they are well established.
- This is the start of BLT season as tomatoes ripen. Fresh salads are also mighty tasty with veggies picked fresh from the garden.
- Your fall veggie garden can be started by setting out broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower transplants, and sowing lettuce, collards, and kale and spinach seeds. These should be ready to harvest before the first freeze.
- In hot weather, keep your birdbath clean and filled with water.
- Organic mulch, to a plant, is nature's sunscreen. Three to four inches of shredded hardwood, leaves, bark, peat moss, straw, compost or grass clippings will add a protective layer that will keep the soil cool and moist (except in drought conditions).
- Cut back iris leaves after the blossoms are gone. Day lily stems should be cut after the blossoms are gone, but if the leaves look attractive, they could be left. Do NOT prune spring-flowering shrubs such as forsythia, spirea, hydranga, etc.
- As August approaches, switch from your balanced fertilizer to one with a higher middle number, which is phosphate. A 6-12-12 plant food would be good to use for the rest of the season.

Wildlife:

Bird sightings in the Crossville area during July include:

Red bellied woodpecker, Red headed woodpecker, Hairy woodpecker, Downy woodpecker, Pileated woodpecker, Muscovy duck, Wood duck, Northern Flicker, Brown headed cowbird, Eastern Kingbird, Quail, Mallard duck, Lesser scaup, Canada goose, American goldfinch, Song sparrow, Carolina wren, Tufted titmouse, White breasted nuthatch, Mourning dove, Carolina chickadee, Eastern bluebird, Blue jay, European starling, American crow, Wild turkey, Purple finch, House finch, Northern mockingbird, Northern cardinal, American robin, Great blue heron, Little blue heron, Scarlet tanager, Gray catbird, Tree swallow, Ruby throat hummingbird, Wood thrush, Kingfisher, Whip-poor-will, Common bobwhite, Red winged blackbird, Red winged hawk, Red tailed hawk, Indigo bunting, Dark-eyed junco, Great crested flycatcher and Egret.

Flowers

Flowers that you may see in July include:

Sun flowers, Cosmos, Zinnia, Day lily, Gladiola, Celosia Amigo, Gaillardia, Liriope (monkey grass), Black eyed susan, Wild blue berries, Queen Anne's lace, Speedwells, Oxeye daisy, Evening primrose, Sweet pea, Joe Pye weed, Coneflower, Cardinal flower, Vinca, Hosta, Geranium, Moon flower, Gourds, Tomatoes, Squash, Cucumber, Pumpkin, Astilbe, Scabiosa, Manarda, Coriopsis, Blackberry Lily, Candy Lily, Fox Glove, Lavender, Fennel, Chives, Hybiscus, Cyprus Vine, Pentus, Mandavilla, Lantana, Verbina, Columbine, Pansy, Phlox, Cattails, Pale Meadow Beauty, White clover, Yellow-top clover, English Planton, Broad leaved planton, Common strawberry, Felabane daisy, Common dandelion, Crown Vetch, Hoary Mountain mint, Horse nettle, Jimson weed, Seedbox, Sweet pea, Trumpet creeper, Chicory, Common Mullein, Common Plantain, Impatiens, Mum, Petunia, Zebra grass, Encore azalea, Wax begonia, Dinnerplate Hibiscus, Calla lily, Poppy, Snapdragon, Shasta daisy, Hen & chickens, Canna and Roses.

This information has been created by the Cumberland County Master Gardeners Association, Crossville TN