

May Gardening



I am so excited to join a small group of fellow gardeners for a monthly Garden hop. What makes this fun is that we all live in different planting zones. So when one of us is planting, another may be harvesting. So if you love gardening, or are a novice, you have come to the right place. Today my post is May Gardening, a peek into what is happening now in my garden.



Vegetable garden at Bella Terra

For those of you who are new to Life at Bella Terra, I have a designated vegetable/flower garden space on the western side of our 2 acres. Surrounded by a white picket fence, the vegetable garden space is approximately 22 feet wide by 30 feet long. Situated nearby is the hen house.

We have several “gardens” on our property~a fruit orchard, a bulb, rose and flower garden. Today I will focus on our vegetable garden.



There are 5 raised planter beds inside the picket fence. And the entry is a rebar arch with grape vines growing up and over, creating a shady spot during the summer.



A raised bed in the garden

Our growing zone is 9B according to the US Plant Hardiness Zone Map. If you do not know your growing zone, click [here](#). There are two main growing seasons in Phoenix: from mid-February until the end of May, and from September to mid-November.



In May, the temperatures are getting warmer and we are nearing our end of the Spring growing season. Generally this is a good month for harvesting peaches, apricots, tomatoes, snap peas, strawberries, shishito peppers, basil and rhubarb.

Protecting from Garden Pests

This year I am fighting garden pests for the first time. As a result I am protecting the plants with mesh screens, tulle and cages. This is the first time I am using tulle on hoops to cover some of the beds. I just realized that I may be preventing pollination as the birds and the bees cannot access the plants to do their thing.



In pulling back the tulle, I am opening up the fruiting plants (pumpkin, cucumbers, melons) to the air so hopefully this will solve that problem.



Wire mesh around the kale

The quail in the yard is doing a number this year on my garden. In one day, all my snow pea plants were stripped to the stalks. Rhubarb leaves are gone. Sunflower seedlings pulled up out of the ground. Previously I used bird netting, but occasionally it would trap a small bird. And it can be easily gnawed through by something with teeth.



What used to be kale

Kale is another plant that seems to attract rodents. Never before have I had to protect my plants like this.



Beer attracts slugs

Slugs and leaf eating bugs are captured in bowls of beer. But

with additional protective measures this year, I hope to have a good spring crop.

May Garden To Do List



- Fertilize rose bushes and tomato plants (late April/early May)
- Keep roses watered well and deeply throughout this month
- Weeding~summer is coming and Bermuda grass is actively invading flower beds.
- Thin fruits to increase their quality and prevent them from dropping from the heat
- Check your drip system for the coming summer
- Plant cantaloupe, pumpkin and winter squash
- Flowers to sow: Balsam, Celosia Cockscomb, Cosmos, Gloriosa Daisy, Hollyhocks, Marigold, Salvia, Shasta Daisy, Sunflower, Vinca, Zinnia

And now for the Gardening Blog Hop!



Chas from Chas Crazy Creations shows us how to do a [Straw Bale Garden](#) set up....this does sound interesting!



Kim from Shiplap and Shells demonstrated how to [divide dahlia tubers](#).



Stacy Ling from Bricks 'n Blooms shares her early spring garden tour [here](#).

I hope you are gardening or getting ready to plant. It is so rewarding and each year is different than the one before. For another garden post, click [here](#).

Happy Tuesday! I am currently out of town for an unexpected death in the family so I am not posting much on stories, Instagram or Facebook. But hope to be back home next week, if all goes well. Stay safe!

Mary