



It's July and the dog days of summer are upon us. It's hotter than, well, I don't have to go into that. But gardens don't have to wilt. Cooler heads can prevail. Don't forget Noel Coward's admonition – only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun. So take a stroll in the garden early in the day when morning glories are precisely that and lilies scent the air and the dew is still on the roses. And remember you don't need the bang, boom and danger of fire-works to celebrate the Fourth. Let the garden do it with Hemerocallis and hibiscus and Buddleia and balloon flowers and comos and coreopsis. Enjoy the show.

~Irene

JULY 2017: In the Garden with Irene Virag

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>30 Fertilize roses for the last time so tender new growth toughens up before frost.</p>	<p>31 Weed, water, mulch. I've said it before, I'll say it again – it's the gardener's mantra.</p>	<p>Tell me how your garden grows: irenevirag@verizon.net 1019 Ft. Salonga Rd. Suite 10 -- #302 Northport, NY 11768</p>	<p>Check out my TEDx Talk: "Everything I Know About Breast Cancer I Learned from My Garden."</p>			<p>1 Tend your tomatoes: Tie up vines, remove suckers, mulch, keep soil evenly moist.</p>
<p>2 Create a rainbow with rows of Gladiolus. You can plant till the middle of the month.</p>	<p>3 The dog days of summer are here. Stay cool – drink lots of water and lather on the sunblock.</p>	<p>4 Independence Day. Free your garden from the tyranny of chemicals. Go organic.</p>	<p>5 Last call for peppers. Let them turn red for a bigger, sweeter boost of vitamin C.</p>	<p>6 Plant more corn. Put parsley, dill or yarrow nearby to entice good bugs that eat earworms.</p>	<p>7 Pick summer squash, zucchini and cucumbers when they're small, tender and tasty.</p>	<p>8 Tug gently to remove the faded foliage of daffodils and other spring-flowering bulbs.</p>
<p>9 Keep the rose garden rosy. Pick off Japanese beetles; blast aphids with the hose.</p>	<p>10 Cut lavender for drying. Hang bundles upside down in a well-ventilated, dark place.</p>	<p>11 Snip small side buds off dahlias for bigger – albeit fewer – blooms. Provide sturdy support.</p>	<p>12 Pinch back asters and hardy mums one last time so they grow bushy and full.</p>	<p>13 Prune climbing roses and ramblers after they flower. Take out 1/3 of the oldest canes.</p>	<p>14 Bonjour. It's Bastille Day. Deadhead marigolds, nepeta, coreopsis and cosmos.</p>	<p>15 Last chance to shear evergreen hedges. But hold off transplanting until late August.</p>
<p>16 Veg out. Pick beans. Harvest eggplants and okra. Sow cabbage, carrots and broccoli.</p>	<p>17 Curl larger leaves over forming cauliflower heads so they're white by harvest time.</p>	<p>18 Pinch back basil, oregano and thyme so they don't flower and turn bitter.</p>	<p>19 Bring in the beets. Fill the empty space with lettuce, arugula and spinach.</p>	<p>20 Toss spent pea vines in the compost. Turn and moisten the pile so it keeps cooking.</p>	<p>21 Dig up, divide and transplant bearded iris. Get rid of any with borer holes or signs of rot.</p>	<p>22 Keep watering root crops like carrots and radishes so they grow sweet enough to eat.</p>
<p>23 Raise the mower blade to its highest setting so you don't scalp the lawn.</p>	<p>24 Divide Oriental poppies and bleeding hearts, if necessary, while they're dormant.</p>	<p>25 Tidy the perennial bed. Pluck off faded flowers of lilies, daylilies and <i>Platycodon</i>.</p>	<p>26 Pick early Brussels sprouts. But be patient – let tomatoes ripen on the vine.</p>	<p>27 Corn is ready for picking when the silks turn brown. Get the water boiling.</p>	<p>28 Water muskmelons now but stop as they ripen – or you'll risk diluting their sweetness.</p>	<p>29 Revive parched hanging baskets by soaking them in buckets of water till the flowers perk up.</p>