

A Greener Difference

CREATING A UNIQUE AND INVITING OUTDOOR

There are many elements to consider when designing an outdoor living space beginning with a patio or sitting area. You can provide shelter by planting shade trees or adding a patio cover, pergola or gazebo. Texas' generally warm climate, makes it possible to enjoy your outdoor living space eight to nine months out of the year.

Adding a fireplace or fire pit creates warmth and atmosphere to your outdoor living space. It also extends the usability of your outdoor environment as the flickering glow of an open fire warms you and your guests on cooler nights.

Proper lighting not only adds beauty but it also provides security. Spotlights and accents lights create a warm, magical feel adding to the overall ambiance of your living space. Outdoor lighting is not seasonal as it lights pathways, making navigating much easier while providing security year round.

Landscaping enhances the beauty of your home and adds value to your property. Your landscape should make a statement reflecting – who you are – and one that compliments your particular lifestyle. Planting different colors and textures brings out each plants individual unique qualities. Flowers and herbs not only add color but also offer fragrance as well. Some plants can even aid in repelling mosquitos and other insects. Accessories such as bird baths, fountains, statues, rocks also add interest and character to your garden.

Sound is also an important element. Water features bring sound and movement to outdoor living space. They can be dramatic or restful but they always but they always add beauty and create a more serene environment for you to enjoy. Imagine the peaceful sound of trickling water flowing from a fountain or waterfall, adding the perfect backdrop for your party or quiet evening at home.

Maintaining your outdoor living space is imparative. A properly installed, quality irrigation system plays an important role in your maintenance program. Proper watering is the most important factor in the care and growth of your lawn and garden. If your ground is hard and compact or if areas of your lawn or garden have drainage problems nothing will grow. Roots in soil with poor drainage can rot. Areas retaining too much water due to poor drainage is also an ideal place for bacteria to grow causing irreversible damage to both you lawn and garden.

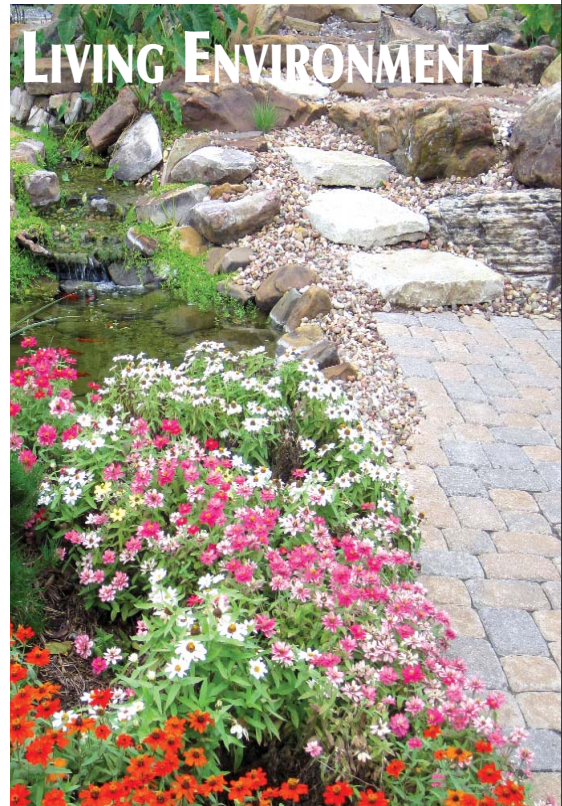
March Gardening Tips:

March weather in Texas is totally unpredictable. The weather conditions can range from frosty cold and windy to hot and humid. March is a great time for planting seedlings in pots or flats. As long as the daytime highs are in the 60's to 70's they can remain outdoors. Be sure to bring them inside if weather conditions turn windy and cold. Hold off till April when planting summer-blooming bulbs.

March is the time for adding new perennials and transplanting some of your perennials. Waiting till April may cause your plants to suffer transplant shock. Growth on new perennials will start off slow but by the end of April or middle of May, most plants will be in full bloom. This is also a good month to check out your rose bushes. If they are sprouting poorly or only have a few living canes, they should be dug up and replaced with new plants. Chances are, you will not be able to revive them to their original beauty and fragrance. Then no more pruning this season.

Happy Gardening

LIVING ENVIRONMENT



Did you know

there are over 7,000 plants and shrubs native to our area? While selecting plants/shrubs that are more adaptable to our region, there is still much to consider

before beginning to plant such as:

- when to plant
- condition of soil
- placement of plant/shrub
- watering / drainage
- sunlight
- when to fertilize
- when to prune

Like people, plants and shrubs need a healthy environment if they are to grow and thrive in your garden.

Visit: www.wildflower.org for a listing of plants native to our area. (Be sure to click on North Central Texas). You may also contact your local nursery or consult with a professional landscaping and irrigation company.