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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian Garden Trends for 2020, Part 1

By Cynthia Brian



Prune or shape your crape myrtles. Photo
Cynthia Brian

"Take a deep breath of life and consider how it should be lived."

~Miguel de Cervantes

A new year, great cheer, time to eliminate the fear of getting dirty and starting a garden. So many people confide to me that they have "brown thumbs." I don't believe it is possible. There are only those who have not tried, tried again. There is no failure in the garden. Failure is fertilizer. Every time I have a plant that does not do well, I send it to the compost pile where it will renew my garden. Pledge to get down in the dirt this year and experiment with plants. Once you have success, you'll be hooked on gardening, and your vivacity will soar.

To help you get into the swing of things, I'm offering you the top trends that are predicted for 2020 that have been formulated by the Garden Media Group. These trends help you choose plants, products, and services that assist you to survive and thrive in the

outdoor world of Mother Nature. Who knows, with so much information you may become an influencer, or even a trendsetter yourself.

Dive in. Read the research and have some fun with regreening our Earth.

Currently, more than 50% of the world's population resides in cities. By 2050, that number will grow to 70%. With so much connectivity and urban living, people are hungry for nature. Because of urbanization, it will become increasingly imperative for cities and businesses to design tranquil, plant-filled spaces for people to refresh and enjoy. We live in the age of social media, and parks, forests, water elements and sustainable edible gardens are critical not only for recreational purposes but to get away from the hustle and bustle of urban living. People with knowledge of plants are in demand.

More trees will be planted as a cost-saving strategy to improve the health of communities while controlling stormwater runoff, reducing air pollution, and mitigating the heat. Green environments will become the norm with green businesses assisting in the education of the public about the necessity of becoming stewards of our planet.

We currently live in a throw-away society of major consumption. Many of us remember the days when appliances lasted 20 to 30 years. My mom's washing machine lasted 45 years! Today, we are lucky to get seven to 10 years before replacement. When I was a girl, I learned to sew and made all my clothes. Today I mend torn clothing and alter my wardrobe to replicate current fashions. I don't toss them. Since 1970, global consumption tripled with only 9% of consumed materials reused. This material "mismanagement" contributes to 67% of global greenhouse gas emissions. It's easy to reuse, repurpose or re-engineer items we already have to create new items we need.

Just today I was rereading a letter from my cousin who wrote to me about how he called my dad "Superman" because he was one of those farmers who always stopped to help anyone in distress and could fix anything and everything with baling wire and electrical tape. Daddy did more with less and he taught his growing family to do the same. Repair, reuse, recycle, remake, renew! We were all doing these things before it was in vogue. Now the "re" everything is trending. It's the power of RE.

When you buy a plant, either return the plastic container or reuse it. A major goal for 2020 is minimal waste.

Are you looking for a great job or second career? Consider horticulture. Did you know that in 2018, gardening in America grew to an industry of \$40.6 billion according to Euro Monitor? By 2023, gardening is expected to reach \$49.3 billion, meaning that more labor will be necessary.

The next generations will need to learn to grow more food. Encourage children to seek an education that will offer them expertise in urban agriculture, environmental sustainability, or garden installation. Start on the job training now at home, in your backyard. Give your kids seeds to plant, weeds to pull, and areas to irrigate. Allow them to grow a few vegetables to make a pizza. They'll be happier, healthier, and will become automatic stewards of our soils.

As we begin 2020, take a deep breath and walk around your neighborhood. Consider the importance of the flora around you. What can you do personally to be more sustainable and regreen our planet?

I'll have more information for you in my next column. Until then, remember that failure is fertilizer and do your part to implement the power of RE.

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for January

RECYCLE unflocked Christmas trees without any stands by the curbside on your regular garbage service day. Remove all lights, ornaments, tinsel, and trimmings. For trees over 8 feet, the collection company requests that you cut them in half.

RETURN grass clippings to your lawn. Grass mulching can fertilize the soil and minimize the amount of

water needed to keep your yard green and healthy.

PRUNE roses and crape myrtles throughout this month.

REVISIT the wonders of winter in the Sierras, in the vineyards, or public gardens.

RE-BOOST your vitamin C with fresh fruit from citrus trees. Ripening for the next two months you will enjoy sweet navel orange, lime, lemon, grapefruit and Clementine.

REDEEM a planting offer from David Austin roses for 15% off with offer code UKA or UKB before March 6 at www.davidaustinroses.com

PERUSE spring catalogs for ideas on planting then regift them to a fellow gardener.

PROTECT plants from frost or freezing by covering with burlap or tarps.

HARVEST potatoes and beets.

REPLENISH bird feeders with nutritious seeds keeping our avian visitors nearby while supplementing their dietary requirements during the cold season.

REFRESH your vitamin D requirement by spending 15 minutes outdoors daily.

RESOLVE to utilize the power of RE in 2020.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy New Year!



Refresh yourself by a lily pond in a public garden.



Illuminate a line of birdhouses to spruce up the winter nights!



A cement pig adds whimsy amidst the ivy in the rain.



Azaleas add color to a dreary day.



Bright bergenia is always a welcome January perennial.



Cynthia Brian welcomes 2020 with optimism!

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[back](#)

