

The Young Gardeners' Kalendar

Dollie Radford

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JANUARY

Trees look empty, branches bare,
When the busy months begin,
Gardeners all must have a care
Not to stay too much within.

Catkins, on the hazel, show
Garden work has well begun;
Snowdrops in a shining row
Blossom in the winter sun.

Brush the Old Year leaves away,
Make the New Year garden neat,
Gardeners must not stop for play
Till their labour is complete.

FEBRUARY

Of all sweet days that come and go,
The sweetest fall
When first the almond blossoms show,
Above the wall:
When through their flowers a cloudless sky
Shines clear and blue,
You know the spring will soon be by
With flowers for you.
Then sow your treasured seeds nor let

The month grow old,
Ere borage and sweet thyme are set,
And marigold:
Put larkspurs, too, beside the gate
Among the grass,
Like sentinels in blue, to wait
When friends do pass;
And sweet-peas in a gracious line,
To make a blaze
Of rainbow colours, rich and fine,
In summer days.

MARCH

Purple, white and yellow cup,
Now the crocus reaches up
Treasured blossoms, every one,
Fearless to the wind and sun.

Hyacinths with stately heads,
Make processions through the beds,
While the little squills dance by
In the colour of the sky.

Now beside the privet row,
Many dainty wind-flowers blow,
Strayed sweet dwellers of the wood,
Come to stay with you for good.

You must then sow speedily,
Hollyhocks and honesty,
Gilliflowers and columbine,
Sweetly scented eglantine

Canterbury bells, to ring
Summer in with triumphing,
And nasturtiums bright, to fill
Every empty window-sill.

Little slips of lavender
Where no busy feet do stir,
Southernwood for bushes high,
Rosemary for by and by

Plant them all while March is here:
While his crest and flashing spear
Shine throughout the happy land,
Do your work with joyous hand.

APRIL

Through the meadow April comes,
Leaving, as he passes,
Companies of daffodils
All among the grasses.

Tulips round about the door,
Ranged in martial order;
Violets in sweet array,
Up and down the border.

And beside the lily-pond,
Mindful of its sleepers,
Guards of light fritillaries,
For its fairy keepers.

Sow your fine chrysanthemums
While he blithely passes,
Dahlias too, and thrift, to blow
All among your grasses.

MAY

Red may and white may shine
All round the lawn,
Lilac and golden-rain
Show there at dawn:
There the big chestnuts stand
In a great row,
Mountains where fairies build
Castles of snow:
Down all the grassy slopes
Cowslips are gay,
Green banks are yellow where
Primroses stray.
Pear-bloom and plum now lie
Thick on the trees,
Cherry with lighter hold
Stirs in the breeze.
Now from their leafy beds
Lilies do bring
Rarest of all the rare
Perfumes of Spring.
Set all your seedlings out,
May sun is strong,
Through all the garden beds
Spread them along.
Carefully weed, and then
Sow mignonette,

Pinks and sweet-williams ere
May month has set.

JUNE

Roses pink and roses red,
Hold a court in every bed;
Stately lilies tall and white,
Pay them homage day and night.

Marigolds and poppies show
In a rich and radiant row,
And beyond their splendid line,
Irises in purple shine.

Honeysuckle scents the air,
Loveliness is everywhere,
And beside the border-grass
Venus's own looking-glass.

Now the privet bears its flowers,
Now the petals fall in showers
Where a white syringa-tree
Guards the homely honesty.

Bulbs must come from out the ground,
Young ones must be good and sound,
And with care be put away
For another gardening day.

Water well, and tie, and trim,
June fills quickly to the brim,
Fills with work for those who'd be
Helpers in her husbandry.

JULY

Jasmine blossoms round the arbour,
Elder spreads along the air,
Hollyhocks stand proudly tallest
In the fragrant thoroughfare.

Pansies, like a 'broidered carpet,
Through the garden ways are set,
And the sweet-peas catch the sunlight
In a tangled flowery net.

Sunflowers, with a kingly bearing,
Hold their golden heads on high,
Pinks breathe out a friendly welcome

Every time you pass them by.

Gather seeds while seeds do ripen
In the bounteous July sun,
Garner well the treasure—packets
In your store—house one by one.

And before the month is over,
Pluck sweet lavender and dry
All its tiny flowers for sweetness,
In the winter by and by.

AUGUST

Like a delicate sea coral,
Barberry shines here and there,
Through the brightness of a garden
Filled with all the summer's ware;
And the fuchsia hangs its blossom
In the richly scented air.

Passion—flowers in sober beauty,
Through the trellis twine and twist,
And the stocks breathe out their fragrance
Near the sweet love—in—a—mist;
Where the bees all day for gladness
In their honey—search persist.

Cut your box and mow your grass now,
Lest they grow too thin and high,
Gather herbs too, for distilling,
As was done in days gone by,
For the old ways are the wisest
When our gardening plans run high.

SEPTEMBER

September brings the ripening sun,
The clear sharp morning air,
And asters in a border wide,
And daisies for the garden's pride,
And foxgloves everywhere.

Among the rushes and the reeds
Long purples bend and sway,
Between the water and the land,
Beside the shining stream they stand
Till Autumn fades away.

Plant crocuses and tulips rare,
To bloom in next Year's Spring,
And crown imperials rich and fine,
To stand up in a glorious line
Amid new blossoming.

OCTOBER

Where the beech and maple grow
Leaves as bright as flowers show,
Every path, and garden bed,
Are ablaze with gold and red.

Down the lane, and through the stiles,
Berries shine for miles and miles,
Hips and haws and night–shade deep,
Do the hedge–rows festal keep.

For your happy wearing see,
Matchless wreaths of briony,
Fairer than a jewelled crown
For a child to gather down.

Now is pleasant work all–day,
In the orchard where you play,
Laden branches bid you sing
Of a plenteous gathering.

NOVEMBER

Still the garden blossoms bravely,
Though the Year is nearly done,
Fresh chrysanthemums are shining
In the pale and wintry sun.

Such a number of bright colours
Make the beds and borders plain,
We believe the summer roses
Must have all come back again.

Now's the time when great plantations
Must be planted, oak and fir,
Beech and elm, and towering poplar
That the wandering night–winds stir.

And the time when treasured fruit–stones,
In the summer stored away,
Must be set, that spreading orchards
May grow up another day.

DECEMBER

No gardener need go far to find
 The Christmas rose,
The fairest of the flowers that mark
 The sweet Year's close:
Nor be in quest of places where
 The hollies grow,
Nor seek for sacred trees that hold
 The mistletoe.
All kindly tended gardens love
 December days,
And spread their latest riches out
 In winter's praise.
But every gardener's work this month
 Must surely be
To choose a very beautiful
 Big Christmas tree,
And see it through the open door
 In triumph ride,
To reign a glorious reign within
 At Christmas-tide.