

Arrival of iris catalogue means spring has sprung

Earth Week finally brought some spring-like weather and many of us were able to rake away winter's debris and exclaim over little plants popping up in our gardens.

Time to get the composter or compost pile working again - garbage piled during the winter will break down quickly as the temperature warms up.

In a small garden it may be difficult to hide the composting area. Try placing a lattice screen and cover it with vines.

Perhaps this is the year you'll start keeping a garden journal - make a list of the plants in your garden and record their bloom times. As you do this jot down jobs that need doing e.g. "plant more blue crocus along the walk in autumn." Keeping a record is more helpful than you might think! (If you ever visit the garden of Siss-

inghurst in England be sure to read the pages from Vita Sackville-West's garden notebook which are on display).

Did you hug a tree this week?

The kindest thing you can do for your trees is to refrain from compacting the soil over their roots. Keep heavily used paths and walkways as far away from trees as possible.

This is one of the reasons that city street trees have problems - their roots are literally smothered by pavement.

Plan to use chemicals and fertilizer wisely.

Follow directions carefully - more is not better! Invite some toads into your garden - one toad eats 1,500 earwigs a year!

Birds and bats devour thousands of insects. Teach children the difference between good and bad bugs

and enlist their help in the techniques of "squishing and stomping" the bad guys.

Be waterwise this year - Durham Region is attempting to curb water use by seven per cent over the next three years. Learn which plants are drought tolerant and which like lots of moisture, then group them accordingly.

Drought tolerant plants have foliage that helps conserve water - small leaves, fuzzy or waxy leaves, silver (gray) colour or aromatic foliage.

When planting your annuals it is very important to break open the soil ball so the roots will grow out in search of water rather than relying on you to provide it. One thorough watering per week should be adequate for your lawns and gardens. Instead of hosing down your driveway with the water running into the drain, try



Let's Get Growing

Marjorie Mason Hogue

eties including some of his new introductions. You can visit his display garden on these dates from 1 to 5 p.m.

Dwarf Iris - May 25
Intermediate Iris - June 1
Tall Bearded Iris - June 14
The address is:
Chuck Chapman Iris
11 Harts Lane
Guelph, Ontario
N1L 1B1
(519) 823-8744

Send your comments and questions to:

Let's Get Growing
c/o The Tribune
88 Brock St. West
Uxbridge, ON L9P 1R4
Attn: Marjorie Mason Hogue

sweeping instead. Amy Hood has a very large iris collection but like true plant collectors she is always looking for more. So when Chuck Chapman's 1997 Iris Catalogue arrived this week, I decided to pass along his address to all iris lovers. The catalogue lists more than 1,500 vari-

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