

This Month in the Garden

January Tasks

A gardener's work is never done. While it is cooler outside you might want to tackle some of those harder labor tasks. Alternatively, keep your feet up and make plans to maintain and improve your landscape. Here are some things that may need your attention this month.

- Do you have trouble keeping track of your plants and their needs? A gardener's journal may be just the solution you are seeking. Start one this month with notes about what plants are planted, where they are planted and then add information about what each one needs. Throughout the year, you can track plant fertilization, problems, bloom times and so much more information. These notes may help you make decisions in the future based on what works and what did not. Journals can be paper or electronic. Just make sure to use something easy for you. Learn [how to keep a garden journal](#).
- Evaluate your gardens for potential changes this year. Look for worn grass that might be replaced with paving stones, overgrown shrubs that block windows, and similar problems to tackle throughout the year.
- If you have St. Augustine grass, you will want to make sure you keep fallen leaves off it. It may not go completely dormant and still needs sunlight. Learn more about [year-round St. Augustine grass maintenance](#). If you have citrus trees, you should clean up any fruit that has fallen to the ground. Rotting fruit is not only unpleasant but attracts insect pests.
- Plant roses and bare-root fruit and nut trees. The longer these plants have to grow roots, the more resilient they will be during the heat of summer. Use the [Earth-Kind® Plant Selector](#) to help choose the best ones for your garden.
- If you have shrubs or small trees you want to relocate, this is the month to do so. You will work up less of a sweat while it is cooler and the plant will have more time to recover before summer.
- Prune your roses and other dormant trees and shrubs while they are not growing. Learn the [Earth-Kind® techniques to properly prune your plants](#).
- Prune dormant ornamental grasses to about 2 – 4 inches tall so they will be more attractive when the growing season begins.
- Many vines and groundcovers can also be pruned this month. Many groundcovers can be mowed at the highest setting to trim them back.
- Start seeds indoors for late winter or spring planting. These might include your spring veggies such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce and more. Learn [how to start seeds indoors](#).
- This article about [spring-blooming bulbs](#) might inspire you.



- Gather up materials to protect immovable plants during freezes. Learn [how to protect your plants](#).

January Color in Fort Bend County

Sometimes you just need a tree. If so, the Chinkapin Oak is a Texas Superstar® sure to eventually give you all the shade you need. This medium-to-large Texas native tree is heat and drought tolerant once established and adapts to most soil types. The leaves are a lovely bronze in the fall.



Chinkapin Oak. Photo courtesy of texassuperstar.com

- Grows in full sun
- Grows to height of 50 – 90 feet
- Grows to width of 20 – 40 feet
- Few pest or disease problems
- Deciduous
- Can be planted anytime from containers.

For more information, visit texassuperstar.com/plants/oakchinkapin/index.html

For more information about Texas Superstar® plants, visit <http://texassuperstar.com/>.

If you are looking to add some color to the dreary January garden, here are some cool season annuals to perk up your garden.

- [Ornamental Kale](#): Ornamental kale or ornamental cabbage is known for its lovely purple, pink, white, red-bronze, or yellow-green foliage. Growing to a size of 8 to 18 inches wide in a rosette that will eventually produce flowers. However, the foliage is really the best feature.
- [Narcissus](#): The narcissus family includes daffodils, jonquils, paperwhites, and narcissus. Plant these charmers in full sun and then enjoy the lovely blossoms.



Ornamental Kale

- [Pansy](#): These come in a wide variety of colors that are sure to fit into your garden but plant them up front because they only grow 4 – 10 inches tall. They do best in sun or partial sun.
- [Johnny-Jump-Up](#): These tri-color cuties typically have yellow, blue and purple on the same blossom. Like the other January color listed here, these will do best in sun or partial sun.

You are invited to visit the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners' Demonstration Gardens at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office located at 1402 Band Road in Rosenberg to be inspired by what is blooming there. Take a family-friendly, self-guided tour through the gardens during daylight hours, open seven days a week. Be sure to take a copy of the garden maps and garden information located throughout the gardens. Visit <https://fbmg.org/demonstration-gardens/> for more information about our Demonstration Gardens.



Pansy