

# SPRING INTO ACTION



In the garden  
with  
Wendy Matheson

Time to put away the books, stop the daydreaming and get your wellies on. After such a long, hard winter now is the time to start interacting with your garden again.

Having enjoyed the snow drops, aconites and crocuses we are now beginning to see the buds of daffodils, narcissi and early tulips.

The fresh green of the new grasses are beginning to show and the buds on the trees and shrubs are bursting with life once again emerging from their long, dark hibernation.

Before the beds and borders begin to fill up with bulbs, annuals and herbaceous plants Spring is a good time to look at the basic structure of the garden. Now is a perfect time to reshape borders, lay new lawn and once the frosts have disappeared, implement any hard landscaping projects you have been thinking about all winter!

This is a favourite time to think about introducing art into the garden which can be anything from a simple willow structure to an investment piece from one of the many splendid Scottish sculptures. Eclectic objects d'art can be sourced from Auldearn Antiques (01667 453087) on the outskirts of the village. It has a surprising array of unusual and diverse artefacts which make for quirky interest. Scottish sculpture can be sourced from [www.sculpture-scotland.co.uk](http://www.sculpture-scotland.co.uk) or from



the various galleries around the Highlands; the local arts website [www.hi-arts.co.uk](http://www.hi-arts.co.uk) lists most of them.

Place art so that it can be discovered by chance and create an element of surprise in the garden. If exterior lighting is installed this can be a great opportunity to emphasise any structures creating interesting shadow and highlighting form.

## Things to do this month

- Plant up spring flowers in baskets and tubs for some instant early colour such as primroses and forget-me-nots
- If you missed the autumn clean up – now is the time to pressure wash green and slippery surfaces such as patios, paths and decking

- Prepare your tools for the new season, clean off soil and rust with a wire brush and sharpen edges on hoes, shears and secateurs
- Now is a good time to get the mower surfaced
- Start a wormery. Let the worms turn your kitchen waste into a valuable plant food and soil conditioner. They can be kept close to the back door in purpose built containers for convenience as they should be hygienic and odourless if used correctly. Visit [www.wigglywiggles.com](http://www.wigglywiggles.com) for a good selection of wormery products
- Prepare the lawn for the new season by raking out moss and thatch. Give it a spring feed and neaten the edges. Now is a good time to sow grass seed and lay turf to repair damaged areas
- Some wooden structures such as sheds, fences and trellis age gracefully. If yours is more shabby than chic now is a good time to re-paint and freshen up. This can also help to create a makeover effect with new colour schemes, some very creative and subtle colours are supplied by [www.farrow-ball.com](http://www.farrow-ball.com)
- Remember now is a good time to keep on top of the first flush of annual weeds. A quick, 10-minute hoe now and again will keep on top of the problem. Nothing more daunting than starting the season with a weed-infested border

## This month's must-have books

*The Wild Garden* by William Robinson and Rick Darke (ISBN 978-0881929553).

A mix of modern and ancient ideas, a new edition with a twist on the 1895 classic with a modern touch supplied by Darke with colour photographs to compliment Robinsons engravings.

Gardeners owe much to William Robinson, a tour de force in the gardening world throughout the later part of the 19th century.

Two books for the price of one. A must for readers to see just how up to the minute Robinson was.



*Right Plant, Right Place: Over 1,400 Selected Plants for Every Situation in the Garden* by Nicola Ferguson (ISBN-13: 978-1844031481).

For those of you who are thinking of designing their own beds and borders this month, this is a must for ensuring you have the chosen the right plant for the job.

## CONTACT WENDY

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