

## Things to do in February in the garden



From getting your garden ready for the year ahead to advice on seeds to sow and how to take care of the birds and the bees at this time of year, our gardening expert Chris has lots of advice on hand.

### Seeds you can sow in February

- If you are lucky enough to have a polytunnel or glasshouse you can start some seed off from late January. Some of the seeds you could start from late January under heat are cabbage, dill, lettuce, mangetout, onions, scallions and some oriental salads.
- From February onwards under some heat you could start tomatoes, chilli peppers, calabrese, celery, coriander, chervil, kohlrabi, leeks, bell peppers, perpetual spinach and swiss chard. During very cold spells it might be advisable to do your seeds in the house on the propagator.
- You can also start to sow some flowers for your garden. Some of the seeds you could start sowing now under heat include: calendulas, cosmos, bedding dahlias, lobelias, lupins, french marigolds, african marigolds, morning glory, nicotiana, petunia, sweet pea, candytuft, cerinthe, coleus.
- It's a good time to order your seeds. We have a full range of flower and vegetable seeds, seed potatoes and onion sets in stock.

### Get your garden ready for the year ahead

- Clean your tools, pots and seed trays before use. Do a stock take of what you have and what you need. We have lots of gardening tools and equipment in stock.
- Cover prepared beds with black weed barrier to warm the soil up quicker for spring planting.



- Buy a garden diary to record sowing dates and make a note of which varieties do better from year to year.
- Dig over any beds or plots that are still undug. (Avoid walking over very wet soil)
- Mulch around tender plants and shrubs to protect roots from freezing temperatures.
- Prune apple and pear trees, don't forget to seal all cuts with seal and heal (available in our garden centre shop). This is also a great time to plant fruit trees (also available in our garden centre shop) and fruit bushes.
- If we get a frost, try not to walk on the grass. I know it's tempting in the morning when it's silver and crisp with the crunching under foot as you walk, but it is actually damaging to the grass.

### **Don't forget about the birds and the bees**



- Keep putting out bird food to help our feathered friends over cold periods, we have a full range of all bird food in stock.
- This is the time of year you would put up your bird nest boxes and put up your insect hotels.
- Top Tips – Robin's favourite food is mealworms.
- Keep in mind the bees when planting and choose bee friendly plants. This is a very important time of the year for pollinators as they struggle to find food from flowering plants. We have lots of bumble bees here in the Garden Centre feeding on our range of late winter flowering plants and lots of advice on hand from our two resident beekeepers.

Chris O'Donnell is a horticulturalist, allotment owner, bee keeper and wildlife expert. Chris is on hand to provide advice on all your gardening needs at the Enable Ireland Garden & Gift Store on Sandymount Avenue, Dublin 4.