

Gardening Corner



Garden Expert Jane Bingham explains the importance of watering correctly...

During dry spells in summer, watering becomes the most important job in the garden, but there is more to watering than meets the eye. Many plants die each summer because they have not been watered properly.

Often those that succumb to pests and diseases have been weakened first by inconsistent watering. Irregular watering causes leaves to dry and curl, flowers and fruits to drop, or growth surges resulting in cracked or knobby fruits and vegetables. Over watering is equally bad news.



Remember, a little and often approach to watering can be disastrous. If you constantly just wet the soil surface when you are watering you will encourage plant roots to grow too close to the surface, which dries out quickly. Young roots will shrivel and die, and roots at deeper levels will be starved of water and unable to take up nutrients. It is much better to soak the soil thoroughly, maybe just once a week, ensuring water reaches the deeper levels in the soil.

Also, don't wait until you see your plants wilting, check the soil for dryness.

Quick tip: Protect plants from slugs and snails by using barriers that they do not like to cross such as sharp gravel, broken eggshells, soot, ashes, bran, yucca extract or copper foil. You can get self-adhesive copper tape to put around pots.



These photos are of *Leycesteria formosa* (Pheasant Berry, Himalayan Honeysuckle).