



ADELAIDE & INLAND



mediterranean
adelaide & inland
trevor nottle



Several months without rain and some week-long bouts of extreme high temperatures have left gardens looking pretty sad – dry, crisp and brown. So do a quick tidy-up to at least keep things shipshape and ready to go when the cooler and, hopefully, wetter weather arrives. If you're in the market for an interesting, waterwise, potted plant, take a look at aloes. Aloe flowers, mainly spires of tubular red bells, look good and will attract native honeyeaters in winter. Water restrictions won't affect these tough South Africans. About

once a fortnight is all the watering they need so long as they are not out in the baking sun all day. Grown in full shade, the leaves will stay green, but part shade will ensure that the attractive bronze, ochre and rusty-red colorations will develop. A good range of new aloe hybrids is becoming available. Some are suited to pots and others do best as accent plants or wide-scale landscape plantings. You won't be disappointed by their flowering or their waterwise ways.

ALOES

Superb new hybrid varieties of aloe, such as these from Aloe-Aloe Horticulture, offer gardeners great colour and drought-hardiness.

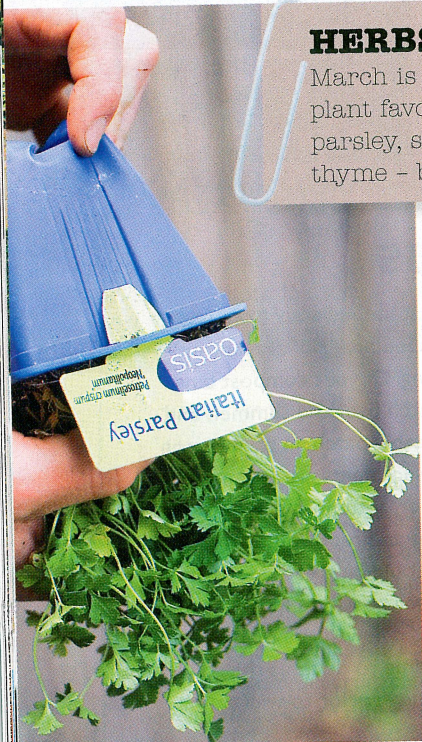


tidy up

Go over the garden now, removing plants which didn't survive summer, and cutting back those which thrived.

HERBS

March is a good time to plant favourite herbs such as parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme – but not basil now.



MUST DO JOBS

Utilise water allowances wisely, concentrating on summer vegies, if any were grown, and essential shade and fruit trees. If you can afford it, take action to recycle grey water by installing a grey water treatment system. Hold off planting spring bulbs, but order replacement trees and shrubs for those killed by the

drought, heatwaves and water restrictions. Autumn is an ideal time to plant almost anything, but only get stuck into planting once the soil has had a good soak from some rain. And if you have camellias coming into bud now, make sure they get their fair share of available water, to put on a good flower show.

Water camellias now



Photos by Brent Wilson, Photolibary, DW Stock Photo Library, aloe photo by Aloe-Aloe Horticulture, www.aloe-aloe.com.au