

Express News Gardening Tasks

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- If you have an open patch of ground in full sun turn it into a sunflower patch by spreading some of the *Helianthus annuus* seed in the area. It is a summer wildflower that will grow to 7 feet tall and attract butterflies to the foliage and blooms, and seed eaters like lesser goldfinches for the seed.
- Esperanza, poinciana, thryallis, firebush, lantanas and salvia transplants in full bloom can be planted in the shrub border in full sun with minimal transplant shock. Water them in and then hand water them twice weekly for the first summer.
- Chinch bug damage shows up in the hottest part of the lawn. Verify that it is chinch bugs by hand watering the spot every other day for a week. If it greens up with the watering, the browning is caused by drying out due to compacted soil or poor irrigation distribution rather than chinch bugs. Treat chinch bugs with a soil insecticide.
- Reduce your water bill by tolerating browning of a portion of your lawn. Bermuda grass, zoysia, and buffalo grass will go temporarily dormant without water. Even St Augustine can survive with 3 weeks between irrigation episodes.