

Tender/Half-Hardy Perennials Bulbs-Corms-Tubers

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Tender or half-hardy perennials usually will not over winter in our area, which is hardiness zone #5. Many of these plants are used as annuals others are dug out of the ground and stored in a dormant state.

General way to handle this group:

- After the first frost dig the clumps of bulbs. The term bulb will be used to cover all of the subterranean storage structures.
- Cut the tops off to the base of the remaining plant.
- Remove any dead material with out damaging the bulb. Wash the plants to remove all of the soil. The cleaner the better (don't scrub). A hose works well for this purpose.
- Let the bulbs dry and clean again.
- Division is better in the spring.
- Store in either a cool dry environment or a slightly moist one.
- I have used "shake and bake" fungicides to help protect the bulbs from decay. These can be purchased at most garden centers.
- Divide and pot up in April/May to get larger plants to plant in the spring or plant directly into the ground when the temperature warms up.

Some plants:

Cannas

- Cannas are hardy to zone 7-10. They can be dug late into the fall as long as the frost doesn't penetrate the soil deep enough to freeze the rhizomes. I have dug these plants when the surface of the soil was frozen but the rhizomes where untouched and they survived. Store in a cool place and mist with water when the rhizomes look like they are dehydrating. Never let them stand in water. I have stored them in peat moss and open to the air, both with equal success.

Glads

- Glads are hardy to zone 9-10. After these are dug the old shriveled up corm should be removed. I store these in a cool dry spot. Onion bags are great storage bags for these plants. After cleaning a number of these corms you may end up with a plethora of cormlets.

Dahlia

- Dahlia are hardy to zone 8-10. I treat these the same as Cannas. They tend to dehydrate quicker than Cannas and may need a few more sprayings, maybe storing in moist sphagnum moss will help.

Tuberous Begonia

- Tuberous Begonia are hardy to zone 9-10. They can either be stored cool and moist or grown as a flowering houseplant. They need a dormant or rest period between periods of growth and flowering.

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