



Gardening Tips for Winter 2026

1. Recently saw that old post that using a glob of liquid soap on a cotton ball removes ticks. **NO.** For the **Australian paralysis tick (*Ixodes holocyclus*)** kill in place by freezing with an ether-based spray or dabbed with a scabies cream (**permethrin** base). (www.aap.com.au)
2. Now is the last best chance to subdivide strawberries. Gives them time to recover and grow new roots before it is too cold. (www.flowergardennews.com)
3. Your Zygocactus hasn't flowered? Their flowering is initiated by winter's shorter days i.e. they need long dark nights. Street lights and/or house lights may be preventing that. Give them **12–16 hours of complete darkness** each night for at least 6 weeks to encourage it to flower. (www.farmtilling.com)
4. Ornamental kale is appearing again in nurseries. It can be eaten but is bitter and tough. Beware as it is often heavily 'fertilised' and 'sprayed' so wash very well. Bake, blanch or boil to soften/reduce bitterness. (www.biologyinsights.com)
5. For winter flower colour last chance to plant (among others) seedlings of violas, primula, dianthus, cyclamen, geraniums & kalanchoe. (www.islandandsurrounds.com.au)