



Garden Time

Newsletter

DECEMBER 2022

**Gifts for the
Gardener**
Putting the
"Hoe-Hoe-Hoe"
in the Holidays



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**Garden Time Newsletter • December 2022
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PODCAST 009

Season 1
Episode 9

Nov. 12, 2022

On this episode of Garden Time we get into the holiday spirit with our large list of gifts for the gardener. If you are having trouble finding something for your local green thumb, we have plenty of ideas. We're bring the hoe-hoe-hoe and other great gift ideas right to you!



Ryan, Judy and Jeff with a gaggle of gardener gifts.

As we have talked about in the past on the Garden Time TV show, buying a gift for the gardener can be a tough thing, especially if you are not a gardener yourself. So we thought we would put together a few ideas to help you this holiday season with this episode of the podcast from the AI's Garden and Home in Sherwood. We have even added a few more ideas to the list that we didn't cover in the podcast. Check out the sponsors page on the Garden Time website for locations of some of our favorite places to shop.

Wildlife/Bird Supplies

Most gardeners are also animal lovers. So you can help out those people by purchasing things to help them attract wildlife and other critters to their yard.

Bird Houses, feeders and seed can be found at lots of stores and garden centers. The Backyard Bird Shop is one place where you can find the best selection. They can also help you pick the right bird food for your local birds so you don't waste seed or money on your purchase. If you like all wildlife, they also have feeders for squirrels and other garden visitors. They even have bird charts to help you identify your local feathered visitors.

Binoculars

Great for the bird watcher or hiker in your life. You can get these at local outdoor stores like Dick's Sporting Goods, REI or the Portland Audubon society store.

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(VIDEO)**

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Last-Minute Christmas

Gift Ideas are Found Here!



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Good tools are a much appreciated gift for any gardener.

Seeds – Bulbs

Seeds and bulbs are great stocking stuffers for the gardener. You can find a great selection of seeds at your local garden centers any time of year. Plus most of them carry different varieties of bulbs too. For other types of bulbs and flowers you can order them directly from the growers. For tulips and daffodils you can check out Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm. For irises and daylilies you can go to Schreiner's Gardens. Check out Adelman Peony Gardens for peonies and Swan Island Dahlias for summer dahlias.

You can also pick up the planting supplies for your gardener so they can start their seeds this coming spring to get a jump on the new gardening season. Pots, soil, lights and heat mats are just what they need to rejuvenate their green thumb in early spring. Also Season Starter plant protectors are a great gift since they will help protect those early plantings.

Tools

What gardener doesn't need tools? Ryan shared a few that you should think of for your favorite gardener. Pruners are a must and there are great products to choose from by Dramm and Felco. Felco's are an industry favorite and you can get one to fit

any need, plus you can find them at nearly all your local garden centers. The new Dramm ColorPoint Compact Pruner is new to the market, but is just as good. A good pruner, or any good tool, may cost a little more, but they will last longer and perform better than a cheaper knockoff. Dramm is also known for their great multicolored watering tools too. Check out their website for hoses, sprinklers and watering tools. Trowels are another must have. Look for a good solid one piece construction and not a folded metal blade that is easy to bend. We had a trowel from Corona, but if you are looking for a tool that will last a lifetime, check out Red Pig Tools. Seth hand-makes pretty much all his tools. He can even help fit you with a long handled tool so your body isn't as stressed and worn out from working in the garden. We also talked about the Hori Hori Weeding knife. This is a great tool in the garden, that can cut roots, dig holes, take out weeds and help you with just about any other garden chore. We also talked about pruning saws. Find a good one with nice cutting teeth so you get a clean cut. That will help your plants recover from the pruning sooner and it will be safer for you too. As for other tools, you can find a huge selection at your local independent garden center.

Garden Tool Organizer

You can find lots of different bags and benches to help you organize your garden tools. Home Depot has tool organizers that can be converted to hold tools, but some of the best organizers are at your local garden center.

Garden Art and Structures

Garden art is not just pink flamingos and garden gnomes. There are lots of different art pieces that you can add to your garden to create year-round interest. Some of it can even be functional. Consider garden gates, trellises and arbors. You can even look at adding structures like raised beds, tables and benches to enjoy your garden during the entire growing season. We would recommend Garden Gallery Iron Works to find some of those more permanent structures for your garden. You can even add a fire pit or outdoor heater. You can get a wonderful all-weather baja-chimney from Little Baja. Al's in Sherwood also has a new type of outdoor heater that uses wood pellets so you can burn cleaner, hotter and with less waste.

Weather Station

Are you or your gardening friends a weather watcher? What about a patio Weather station? You can find these at various places around the area, or online at WeatherShop.com.

Flowers – Plants

What gardener can turn down a plant -- or flowers for that matter? Cut flowers will bring a smile to anyone and they can be picked up at most grocery stores in addition to your local florist. Or if you want a gift they will enjoy for years, pick up a great plant at your local garden center. We looked at a couple from Al's as an example. Judy talked about the Chief Joseph Lodgepole Pine. This one has green colored needles in the summer and then they turn a bright golden color for the colder winter. There was also a hellebore on the table called 'Ice and Roses Merlot'. Hellebores are a great plant that blooms in the winter and brings some needed color to your garden. During the winter, indoor plants are also very popular. Ryan showed us an anthurium. This one has a wonderful waxy bloom that comes in various bright colors. It is just one of the great indoor plants you can find at your local garden center. You can also order a live plant to be shipped to you or your friends, but check with your local nursery to see if they offer the service for customers.

Holiday plants are also great gifts, and a couple of those are amaryllis and paperwhites. These are bulbs that people can force into bloom in their homes for the holidays or to brighten up those dark January days. You can find a good selection of those plants and the supplies to grow them at your garden center, too!

Containers

A new pot or container for the deck or patio is a great gift. Containers are becoming the 'in' thing because they are perfect for any type of gardening. You can use them on any deck and they can be moved if you have a small area. Why not put a bag of Black Gold soil in the container along with a great book on container gardening? You can find a great selection of planters, containers and other pots at your local garden center or Terra Casa in Damascus, just east of Portland.

Gloves

Every gardener needs gloves and there are tons to choose from. You will find a wide selection at your local garden center. There is one set of gloves that we have found that people just love, Garden Like a Girl Weedies! These great gloves are designed for women (sorry guys) and are reinforced to handle those tough garden chores. They also offer a line of garden clothing that uses recycled materials and benefit various charities and causes. Check out their website for the details. Right now they are offering a Holiday Bundle Special for gloves and clothing! Check out the link here!

Books

The true gardener enjoys a good garden book and we are blessed to have many top publishers in the United States. There are serious garden books like the book we had on 'Native and Ornamental Conifers in the Pacific Northwest', and there are more lighthearted books like 'Floral Libations' which is full of drink recipes based on floral ingredients. We even had a book, 'Garden Time', which we were kinda partial to based on our name, which was written for kids and was full of great colorful illustrations. This book was a favorite of the producer's grandson, and we're sure it will be a favorite for your young gardener. Be sure to check your local bookstore or garden center to see what they have in stock.

Gift Cards

This is a great gift for any gardener. Gift cards allow your friends to return to the garden center and pick out the gift they prefer. Most garden centers have gift cards. Some of the bigger garden centers also have member's clubs where you can get special offers all-year long. Check out the special clubs at Al's Garden and Home, Portland Nursery, Blooming Junction and Garland Nursery.

If you have kids and they want to get involved in



A good pair of gloves, like these from Garden Like a Girl, are a big help when working in the garden.

PHOTO CREDIT: GARDEN LIKE A GIRL

gift giving, you may want to have them make some handmade gift cards. These can be redeemed for time spent weeding the garden next year, or even spending time in the garden with grandparents for an afternoon. The 'gift' can be anything you want to offer. There are templates for these types of gift cards on-line so it can be easy to make and easy to give.

Load of Compost – Mulch

Nothing says Merry Christmas like a load of compost. But really, what could be a better gift than a healthier garden and that is what you get with garden mulch! We have a great local source at Grimm's Fuel. They can dump it in bulk or even apply it to your garden for you. They carry firewood, too!

Hammock

It may not be the right time to find one of these, but we can speak from experience. There is nothing like hanging out in your garden on a hammock during the summer! Check on-line or at your garden center to find one that fits in your garden.

Grill

If there is one thing we have learned while doing the Garden Time show, it's that you can grill year-round

in the Northwest. There are various grills that are available and some of your local garden centers do carry different brands. Once you get that grill/gift why not pick up some great meat (or a gift card) at Gartner's Meats to use on that grill.

Fountain

The sound of water is very soothing and you can get a fountain for any size space. One place you can find just the right fountain is at Terra Casa. We mentioned them earlier for pottery, but they can convert almost any pot into a tremendous outdoor fountain too. They even have tabletop fountains to bring that soothing sound even closer. Other places where you can find a good selection are Hughes Water Gardens, Tsugawa Nursery or most of your local garden centers.

Outdoor Furniture

You have spent a lot of time planting and perfecting your garden, so now get some nice furniture so you can relax and enjoy it. Al's Garden and Home has a great selection of quality outdoor furniture. You get what you pay for so make sure you go with quality when you buy. We purchased some very nice furniture many years ago and we are still using it over 20 years later, and it's a lot more comfortable than those weak plastic chairs that others use.

Subscriptions - Memberships

There are too many good garden magazines to mention, but the top ones include Better Homes and Gardens, Horticulture Magazine, Sunset Magazine, and Fine Gardening. There are also specialty publications for collectors of various flowers so you may want to research specific magazines about roses, perennials or other specialty groups.

If you want to enjoy a more 'hands-on' subscription, why not a membership to one of the local gardens? Lan Su Chinese Garden, The Oregon Garden, The Portland Japanese Garden, and Leach Botanical Garden all offer memberships so you can support these gardens and give a wonderful gift at the same time.

Personal Comfort Items

This is a broad category and includes items like hand creams, potpourri, infused soaps and oils and spa trips. Of course you can find a lot of personal care items at your local garden center, but the spa trip may need a little more research on your part (but will be a welcome gift when spring clean-up rolls around).

Picture Frame/Journal



The sound of running water from a fountain turns a yard into an oasis.

PHOTO CREDIT: FAYLYNE VIA FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS



Good patio furniture creates a nice gathering area and can last decades.

If you know a photographer who loves bringing their garden into their house, a digital picture frame is a great gift. You can find different models starting at \$40 and moving up to a couple hundred dollars, depending on the bells and whistles. These frames are a wonderful way to enjoy your garden long after the season has ended. A garden journal is also a good gift for the gardener that likes to write. A journal can let them capture the details of their garden, or the feelings they have when they are gardening. You can find both of these items at lots of local stores in the area.

Garden Gag Gifts

These can be the most fun especially if your gardener has a good sense of humor. A garden gnome, a chia pet, a cute garden plaque, or even a funny coffee cup can be a cute little reminder that you know about their gardening passion and you want to celebrate it.

We hope these ideas help you get off the ground with all your garden gift giving, but this is just a short list. For more ideas, stop by your local independent garden center.

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PODCAST 010

Season 1
Episode 10

Nov. 29, 2022

Why do we cut down trees and put lights on them? How did a tropical plant become a winter holiday icon? And what does a parasitic plant have to do with Christmas romance?

We look at holiday plants and their heritage on this episode of Garden Time!



It's story time with Uncle Ryan, Aunt Judy and Grandpa Jeff!

Ever wonder why we use holly in our holiday decorating? What is the story behind kissing under the mistletoe? Ryan and Judy covered the reasons why we use specific plants during the holidays.

Christmas Trees

Christmas trees are a staple in just about every home during the holiday season. Though there are references to evergreen trees going back thousands of years, Egyptians, Romans and Druids in Northern Europe all brought various cut green boughs and trees inside to mark the solstice and the light (and life) returning to the earth. The current traditions were starting to be established in the late 1400s. The symbol of

an evergreen tree represents rebirth, long life and strength. This is because it maintains its green color during the longest and coldest winters. Decorating became popular with Queen Victoria and started with fruit and candles. Now we use mass-produced ornaments and lights. The angel at the top of the tree reminds us of the good news of Jesus' birth.

Christmas trees are not only festive for bringing green indoors, they also bring green to local Christmas tree farms in the form of cash. According to Oregon Christmas Tree Growers, Oregon grows more Christmas trees than any other state in the country. It grows 31% of the United States' Christmas trees. There are

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more than 1,000 farms that grow the trees. Oregon sold over 4.5 million trees in 2017. Oregon grown Christmas trees were worth 107 million dollars in 2020. The counties that grow the most are Benton, Clackamas, Marion, Polk, Yamhill, and Linn. They are all on the western side of the state, The top producing states are Oregon, North Carolina, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Christmas trees dry out quickly if you don't water them, Be sure to give your tree a new, fresh cut after you purchase it. Then get it into a large reservoir of water as soon as you can, A 6 foot tree can use up to a gallon of water or more every day. Make sure that the tree doesn't run out of water or the trunk will seal up and then it cannot take in any more water. Use warm water when you first get your tree in the stand. This will help loosen any sap and allow the tree to take up water. Don't use bleach, aspirin, sugar or sugary sodas in the water. None of these help the tree and some may cause a bacterial growth in the water.

Wreaths



The circular shape of a wreath represents infinity.

PHOTO CREDIT: GARDEN GALLERY IRON WORKS

An advertisement for a holiday bundle. On the left, a pair of black gardening gloves with a circular logo on the back of the hand. In the center, a red t-shirt with a circular logo that says "GARDEN LIKE A GIRL" and "RUGGEDLY FEMINE", and a small tag that says "RECYCLED PLASTIC BOTTLES!". To the right of the t-shirt is a yellow gift box wrapped with a red and green ribbon, also featuring the "GARDEN LIKE A GIRL" logo. A green banner at the top left contains the text "GARDEN GIRL HOLIDAY BUNDLE \$49.95!". A green banner at the bottom right contains the text "Price Includes: Gloves, T-shirt, Free Shipping & Gift Wrap!" and the website "WWW.GARDENLIKEAGIRL.COM". The background is a festive winter scene with pine branches, red berries, and pinecones.

Wreaths are patterned along the same traditions as Christmas trees. Their evergreen color represents rebirth, and new life during the cold winter months. It was only natural that wreaths were added to the greenery of the holiday season. Their circular shape also represents infinity, with no beginning and no end, a reference to Christianity and everlasting life.

You can buy the traditional wreath at your local garden center or at your local tree lot. (Side note: if you live in the Portland, Oregon area, check out the Boy Scout lot in downtown Lake Oswego, Oregon at George Rodgers park, where Ryan's troop has a sales lot set up and you can get wreaths and trees.) Or, you can buy a dried wreath that you may be able to leave up long after the holidays are over.

Many wreaths can be treated with an anti-transpirant to keep it from drying out. Wilt Stop from Bonide (<https://bonide.com/product/wilt-stop-xmas-tree-wreath-rtu/>) is a great product for that. Be sure to read the instructions and watch for dropped needles which will indicate when your wreath needs to be removed from your home.

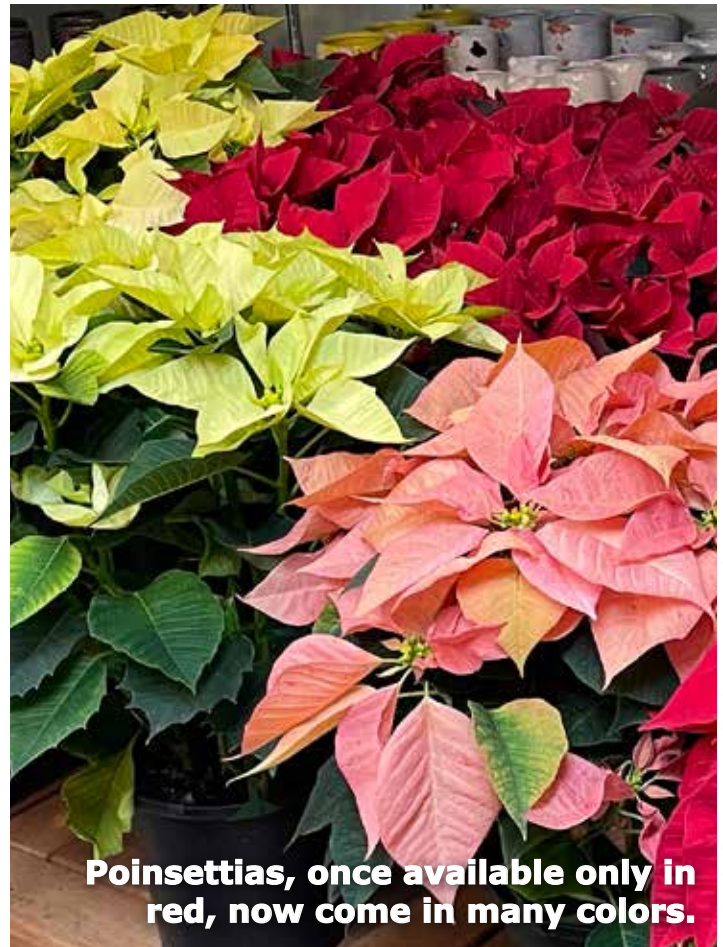
Mistletoe

Mistletoe has a history as well. It has various meanings that include fertility, immortality and love. The ancient druids and Vikings are credited with worshiping this parasitic plant for its everlasting color and life during the cold winters. Once again, these meanings are due to the fact that it stays evergreen in the winter. Of course the best meaning involved kissing. In proper English society you could not kiss your spouse-to-be in public. During the holidays you could kiss under the mistletoe, but you had to remove a white berry every time you did. Naturally, twigs with lots of berries were highly prized!

Mistletoe is toxic and so you should be careful if the leaves and berries drop off. That may be a sign that you need to get your kisses in quick and then remove the dried plant from your home.

Holly

Holly's origins are based on both Christian and non-Christian traditions. In one tradition, the



Poinsettias, once available only in red, now come in many colors.

PHOTO CREDIT: TSUGAWA NURSERY

holly protects the home from evil spirits per ancient traditions. In another, the holly represents the crown of thorns of Christ's passion and its berries represent the drops of blood.

Holly can dry out during the holidays, but it is slower to reach that dry stage due to its thick waxy leaves. If you use an anti-transpirant, be careful as it might change the color of your holly. Remember to read the instructions.

Poinsettia

Next, the poinsettia. This plant is relatively new to the holiday tradition list. This plant has a history dating back to the 16th century. The story is that a little girl wanted to bring a gift to her church for the Christ child. She had nothing to give but had a dream of an angel collecting weeds and leaves by the roadside, and giving them to the child. When she did it, they turned into the red blooms that we see today. The flower was named for Joel Poinsett a U.S. diplomat who fell in love with them and started promoting them in the U.S. Paul Ecke, a plant grower and breeder from California, helped popularize the plant and it has been a holiday



Buying your amaryllis bulb early assures it will bloom by Christmas.

favorite since then.

Here are some tips on how to pick a good plant. First look for good branching. A single branch plant will not give you the bunches of blooms that you want. And speaking of blooms, the bright colors you see are not the flowers of the poinsettia. The flower is the small center buds that are usually yellow. The bright colors are modified leaves. As for the blooms you will want small tight buds that are not yellow yet, which means they are early in their bloom cycle. Also look for good healthy green leaves under the brightly colored ones.

Now that you have picked out a good one, how can you make it last? We recommend that you treat your plant with tender loving care. Make sure that it doesn't get placed in too hot of a spot, that it doesn't get in too many drafts and keep it in bright non-direct sunlight. You will also want to water it regularly without over watering or having it set in water. Remember to remove the decorative foil sleeve when you are watering it.

Amaryllis

This is a bulb that has become a seasonal favorite. The plants can be bought in bloom, or you can grow one from the bulb itself with no problem. These are bulbs that are normal summer bloomers. They are one of the seasonal plants that people enjoy during the holidays, with paperwhites being the other bulb, that have to be forced into bloom. You can find the bulbs at your local garden centers starting in late September and early October. Buying them early ensures that you will have a bloom by the holidays. You usually get just the bulb in the early season and as we get closer to the holidays you will find them ready to bloom or already in bloom. At Al's Garden and Home, and other garden centers, they have them as just a wax covered bulb. These are cool and because all the energy for a bloom is in the bulb, you don't need to water them.

Can you get them to return to bloom year after year? Yes. When spring arrives, you can take it outside and water it through the summer in an area with afternoon shade. In late summer you can cut back the water and then pot it up in early October, cut back the leaves and wait for the blooms to return.

Christmas Cactus

This plant is one that we love! There are many types of late fall and winter blooming cactus and we won't get into the differences. This one is specifically sold in garden centers as a Christmas cactus. We let ours bloom during Christmas time and then keep it as a house plant until spring. Once warm temperatures return ours go back outside. When fall returns, and we are in the lower 40s, we move ours back inside and enjoy the blooms that the warm house brings. They also like moist, but well-drained soil and an all-purpose fertilizer once a month. All the cactus we saw were heat loving. They don't handle the cold very well; in fact the growers don't let their cactus grow in temperatures that are below 55 degrees. The final tip? The number one enemy of cactus is over-watering.

So next time you are decorating your home, take some time and appreciate these wonderful holiday plants now that you know a little more about some of their meanings. You can find most of these at your local independent garden center or nursery.

PODCAST 011 PREVIEW

December 2022

We're preparing for our next podcast, and here are some of the topics we plan to discuss. Since the Garden Time Podcast is a free-form format, we never know what might pop up as we talk, but the information below is a loose guide as to where we'll begin. We would love to have your input on topics for future podcasts. Send us your ideas and questions at gardentime@comcast.net.



Master Gardener Jan McNeilan will join Ryan and Judy to discuss winter tips.

PODCASTS 011 & 012 • INDOOR PLANTS FOR WINTER JAN'S WINTER GARDEN TIPS

For the month of December, these are among the topics we are planning to discuss in our two scheduled podcasts.

Indoor Plants for Winter

When the weather gets cold, we retreat to the warm indoors, but we don't have to leave our plants behind. There are many beautiful plants that thrive indoors during the winter (and year-round).

We'll share expert tips to help you choose the best plants for your home or, if you already have indoor plants, we'll go over the best ways to keep them healthy and happy.

Jan's Winter Garden Tips

Our friend and longtime contributor to the Garden Time TV program, Master Gardener Jan McNeilan, will join us once again.

This time she will share her vast knowledge to help you get your plants ready for the cold and rainy months ahead. If you think winter is the time to relax and get away from your garden, you might be surprised to find out how many things you can do to prepare your plants for next year. The efforts you put in now can help your plants to thrive when spring returns. Be prepared to take notes!

Watch for these topics and more in our next podcasts, coming in December!

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What To Do in the Garden

DECEMBER

Wow! Where did the time go? Another year over. The holiday season is always a busy time, and many of us find it hard to fit in a little work in the yard. But our plants need us, especially now. Carve out a few hours during December to make sure your plants are safe and warm for the winter. It will be the best present you can give them.

PLANNING

• Be ready for a cold snap. In case the temperature drops fast you'll want to be prepared to cover the plants. Using the Harvest Guard Protective Yard & Garden Cloth (AKA 'reemay') will protect the plants against severe cold temperatures. Cover only in the cold



ing green; a tree you can plant with the family after the holidays; a tradition that will grow with the family!

Some of you think it is better to use artificial trees as they are good for the environment. Nope! Artificial trees are generally made in China, pollute the atmosphere when being manufactured, fill up landfills and contain harmful chemicals. Instead of a fake tree this year, adopt a real one. Share the gift of life with the family with a live tree you can enjoy for decades.



spells, remove when temperatures rise again. Multiple layers will protect to lower temperatures.

• Plan a family trip to choose a live Christmas tree for this year's holiday. Live trees are just the best idea when think-

• Organize your garden journal. Go over the notes from the year and set some goals and plans for next year.



PLANTING

• If you find your spring bulbs in a sack in the shed, get them planted! They are not going to sprout roots and grow in the sack



and yes it's late but there is still time to get them in the ground. If you don't plant them this month, it really will be too late.

• OK to plant trees and shrubs now. In our part of the world, if you can dig a hole in

the soil, you can still plant. Roots will still grow a little all winter long, so getting them in now will allow some root development during winter.



TASKS, MAINTENANCE & CLEAN-UP

• Time to clean out the Mason Bee condos and clean up the cocoons and get the condo system ready for the new season.

• Turn the compost pile. Adding oxygen to the pile

when you turn it over helps to break down the organic matter faster. Keep the pile from getting too waterlogged with a tarp or cover.

• Make sure that weeds are pulled away from the

W**T****D****I****T****G**

base of trees and that bark or mulch is not too deep around trunks. Rodents like to chew on the bark and the hiding places the weeds or mulch provides should be eliminated.



- Make sure that any plant underneath big thirsty conifers or under the eave of the house is getting a good deep drink

of water once every 4-6 weeks. Plants can take more severe cold weather with hydrated cells than dehydrated cells.

- You can fertilize the lawn now if you haven't done so in the last two months. Lawns are still growing roots during the winter and you can improve the green color by applying a lawn food now. Using one with a moss killer will help kill off the moss over the winter. Apply a dose of dolomite lime to the lawn if none has been applied for a year. Don't use a weed-n-feed now, the weeds will just grow, not die. The chemicals in the weed killer need much warmer temperatures to work.

- Don't walk on frozen grass until it thaws. You will see your footprints on the turf in the spring otherwise.

- Watch for aphids on spruce trees. Often in the winter the spruces can get attacked by aphids. We don't usually notice until it's too late in the spring when all the old foliage falls off. Hose the trees off with a strong stream of water to knock any aphids from the needles. You can check and see if they are on the trees by holding white paper under a branch end and tap hard. Check for infestations by holding white paper under various branches and tapping. If they are present you'll see some on the paper.



ed if no disease or insect problem was detected this past season. Dormant Spray Oil is used to smother the overwintering insects

- Dormant spray the fruit trees as needed for control of overwintering insects and diseases. However, no spray is need-

and Copper Sprays are good for disease control. Spray according to directions on the label.



- Pruning: It is not time to prune but time to STUDY UP on the subject! Pruning fruit trees is discussed in many books

and articles. We highly recommend reading up on the subject before making cuts that you can't glue back on the tree. Read up and take good care of your trees. You'll get much more production from them if you do.

- Get after any weeds that are growing now before they go to seed. Covering the beds with thick mulch after the weed pulling can help deter them further.



VEGETABLE GARDEN



- Do a recap of the successes and the failures. Start to plan what you want to grow next year and begin the process of finding out what grows best together in regards to companion planting.

• Check on the veggies you are wintering over. Make sure the compost mulch is nice and thick over the crops you are storing in the ground.

- Make out your wish list of things you'd like from Santa, like seed starting supplies, pruners, gardening tools and gloves.



Maybe some beautiful outdoor pottery to feature pretty flowers near the front entry for guests. Or a big fat gift certificate so you can come pick out what you want this next year!

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