



GARDEN DELIGHTS

ISSAQUAH GARDEN CLUB

"There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter. One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues."

Hal Borland, American author, journalist and naturalist (1900–1978)

January Meeting

January 8, 2020 10:00 A.M.

Tibbetts Creek Manor

"Plant Propagation and Division"

Our speaker, Mary Fry, was scheduled to speak to us in May. She's coming to us, this month, instead.

Ms. Fry has been a Master Gardener for nine years, after retiring as a professor of Maternity Nursing.

She'll speak to us about propagating plants, so that we might have something blooming all year. Propagating is important, too, when saving money or getting a desired plant from a friend.

Ms. Fry will also tell us about winter dividing of plants, especially hosta. Both subjects will get us started in thinking about and planning for our annual plant sale in May.

Please don't forget your contributions for the Issaquah Food Bank, this month.

And don't forget, too, your plate, cup and utensils!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Embrace Nature in All Seasons

It's after the Holidays and with snow falling in the mountains, it's a great time for outdoor winter fun. It's also a great time of year to make plans for your spring garden.

In 2020, Terra Tillers will be hosting a Spring Flower Show at Bellevue Botanical Garden and in June, WSFGC will be hosting a State Flower Show in Ellensburg Washington. Now is a great time to plan what type of flowers or vegetables to start indoors or plant in the spring to possibly enter in the shows.

Now is also a great time to plan for the IGC Spring Plant Sale. Besides caring for potted-up perennials through the winter, you can plan what veggies, annuals or herbs to maybe start indoors this late winter. You can also place an order for the King Conservation District Plant Sale for plants for your yard and pot-up extras for our plant sale.

I'm thinking (and planning) to buy more deer-resistant native plants this spring and dig up all my hostas for the IGC Plant Sale because the deer have just been eating my hostas to the ground.

Planning your garden in winter is a way to Embrace Nature in All Seasons.

Happy New Year!

Debbie DeFilipps

PLANT THERAPY FOR CHRISTMAS

On Friday, December 20, seven ladies met to create flower arrangements for the patients at Issaquah Nursing and Rehabilitation: Joan Harris, Dianne Tanner, Shadi Wang, Gale Baullinger, Joy Jackson, Georgann Lennon and her sister, Angela Pierevencenti.



THE HELLEBORE TEA

It's your Editor's understanding that ten people, the maximum, have already signed up with Joan Harris, to attend the Hellebore Tea on March 8. If you have not yet contacted Joan to confirm your name, as requested in a recent Email, you will want to do so.

If you are a new member, unfamiliar with the Tea, you might like this information from the Arboretum website: "An always sold-out fundraiser event, the Hellebore Tea brings together many of the area's garden clubs and Foundation supporters for an afternoon of entertainment and socializing, when the beautiful hellebores are in full bloom. The Tea features food, drink and live music at Lake Wilderness Lodge, overlooking beautiful Lake Wilderness. The Arboretum raises funds through ticket sales, a silent auction and donations."

Milk Jug Winter Sowing: How To Start Seeds In A Milk Jug

For gardeners, spring can't come soon enough and many of us have been guilty of jumping the gun and starting our seeds way too early inside. A terrific method for starting seeds that can be done earlier is milk jug winter sowing, which is basically sowing seeds in a milk jug that becomes a mini greenhouse. Keep reading to learn about milk jug seed pots.

About Sowing Seeds in a Milk Jug

Sure, you can recycle plastic milk jugs, but a better use for them is to repurpose them for milk jug winter sowing. This is a low maintenance way to start seeds earlier than you thought possible. The sealed jug acts as a greenhouse that allows the seeds to germinate several weeks ahead of direct sowing.

The plants are sown in their mini greenhouse outside, eliminating the need to harden seedlings off. The seeds also go through a period of stratification which is necessary for some types of seeds to germinate.

How to Make Milk Jug Seed Pots

Milk jugs are usually the preferred vehicle for this type of sowing, but you may also use any semi-transparent plastic container (apparently the semi-opaque milk containers work as well) that has room for at least 2 inches (5 cm.) of soil and at least 4 inches (10 cm.) for growth. Some other ideas are juice jugs, strawberry containers, and even rotisserie chicken containers.

Rinse out the milk jug and punch four drainage holes into the bottom. Cut the milk jug horizontally at the bottom of the handle working your way around the circumference; leave an inch (2.5 cm.) or so to act as a hinge at the handle.

How to Sow Seeds in a Milk Jug

Use either a soilless seed starting mix or an potting mix that has been sifted to remove any large chunks of bark, twigs or rocks and has been amended with perlite, vermiculite or, ideally, sphagnum moss. If using a potting mix, make sure it has no fertilizer which can burn the seedlings. The most ideal seed starting medium for milk jug winter sowing is 4 parts screened aged compost to 2 parts perlite or vermiculite, and 2 parts peat moss.

Fill the bottom of the jug with 2 inches (5 cm.) of slightly damp medium. Plant the seeds ac-

ording to the package instructions. Replace the top of the milk jug and seal it as best you can with tape; packing tape works best. Place the containers in an area of sun outdoors.

Keep an eye on the containers. If temperatures dip, you may want to cover the jugs with a blanket at night. Water the seedlings lightly if they dry out. When temperatures hit 50-60 F. (10-16 C.), especially if it is sunny, remove the tops of the jugs so the seedlings won't fry. Cover again in the evening.

When the seedlings have produced at least two sets of true leaves, it is time to transplant them into individual containers to allow the roots to grow and then transplant them into the garden.

What to Sow in Milk Jug Seed Pots

Seeds that require cold stratification, hardy perennials and hardy annuals and many native plants can be started in milk jug seed pots in early to mid-winter.

Cold crops like brassicas, native plants and wildflowers that require short periods of stratification, heirloom tomatoes and many herbs can be started using this method in late winter through early spring. Tender annuals and summer vegetable crops that require warmer temps to germinate and don't reach maturity until late summer (tomatoes, peppers, basil) can also be started in milk jugs during this time or later.

Information on seed packets will also help you to figure out which seeds should be planted when. 'Direct sow after all danger of frost has passed' becomes code for plant in late winter/early spring, and 'start indoors 3-4 weeks before average last frost' means sow in milk jugs in mid to later winter, while "sow 4-6 weeks before average last frost" indicates planting time in early to mid-winter.

Lastly, but most importantly, remember to clearly label your pots as you sow them with a waterproof ink or paint.



Article printed from Gardening Know How:
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com>

TO DO IN JANUARY: GARDEN PLANNING

January is the perfect time to rethink your garden design. The “bones” of the garden are easy to see. You can imagine the garden as you’d like it to be in spring and summer and you can think of improvements you’d like to make. Catalogues from nurseries are beginning to arrive—you can review these for plants to enhance your garden.

Take a walk around the garden, observing the architecture of the garden, the vertical and horizontal structure of the plants and hardscape elements without the distraction of foliage and flowers.

Take a few photos of your garden from different angles, from both inside the house and outside. (Looking through a camera lens offers an entirely different perspective.)

Make a plant “wish list.” Review your plant catalogues, noting any plants you’re interested in. Write the list down on a piece of paper or in your garden organizer or journal for future reference.

Paste the photos you took onto large sheets of paper, or download to your computer and print these. Leave room to add notes and ideas around the pictures.. You might lay a piece of tracing paper over the photographs and sketch out some ideas.



FLOWER CATALOGS

It’s the time of year when flower and seed catalogs begin to arrive in our mailboxes. In fact, January has been named “National Mail-order Gardening Month” by the Mailorder Gardening Association, your headquarters for gardening by mail. What’s great about perusing flower catalogs at this time of year is seeing all the wonderful pictures. In gardening, a picture truly is worth a thousand words. This is a chance to review new varieties that won’t appear for months and months in the Garden Centers. Having a catalog in hand gives one a chance to study each plant with its particulars, and make choices, if only “wish for’s” for our spring and summer gardens.

[reprinted from 2011 January IGC newsletter]

WINTER GARDENING TIPS AND CHORES

Get ideas for winterizing your garden and creating four season interest

By Janet Loughrey

From GARDEN DESIGN

Winter may not seem like the time to think about your garden. But take advantage of this break from the growing season to catch up on tasks that were put off during the rest of the year. Whether it’s protecting plants from severe cold, decorating the yard for the holidays, or planning for next year, there’s plenty to keep you busy while you dream of spring.

(continued on page 5)

WINTER GARDENING TIPS AND CHORES, Continued

Winterize the garden

To protect plants from cold winter temperatures, water the garden thoroughly before the first hard frost. Once the ground has begun to freeze, mulch around the base of more tender plants with several inches of shredded leaves, ground bark or evergreen boughs. Newly planted trees or shrubs can be wrapped with a layer of burlap stuffed with insulating material such as straw or dried leaves.

Four season interest

Evaluate your garden for winter color. There's nothing like winter-blooming plants to lift your spirits during the colder months. Shrubs such as winter hazel, witch hazel and honeysuckle offer color and fragrance at a time when you need it most. Early bulbs including snowdrops, species crocus and winter aconite will even pop up through a shallow cover of snow, giving you hope that spring is not far away.

Think nature

Make sure your feathered friends have a steady source of food and water so they'll stay year-round to help with pest control and balancing your garden's ecosystem. Place nesting houses by February if you want to increase your bird population. Make sure each house has the right sized hole and dimension and is sited properly for the kind of bird you are trying to attract.

Order catalogs

Diehard gardeners look forward to those luscious mail order catalogs that begin arriving in January almost as much as they do the Christ-

mas holiday. Poring through glossy pages filled with colorful plant photos is a great way to beat the winter blues and get inspired for the upcoming growing season. Make sure to include your favorite nurseries, and order a few plants so you have something new to try in your garden come spring.

Take stock

While making your personal New Year's resolutions, take time to evaluate your yard. What are your goals for next year? Do you want to simplify so you can spend more time enjoying your yard? Tackle a big project? Whether you decide on a new pathway, gazebo, arbor, fire pit, water feature or patio, get inspired on sites such as Pinterest or Houzz to check out the latest trends.

Educate yourself

Winter is a great time to learn more about gardening and design. Take a workshop from a neighborhood garden center, an online class, or a course from your local college. Master Gardener training is an option for those serious gardeners who want to give back to their community. Join a garden club or attend a flower show.

Catch up on reading

Now is the time to catch up on your reading. Did you get new gardening books for Christmas or subscribe to a magazine that you haven't had a chance to peruse thoroughly? Curl up by the fireplace with a cup of hot chocolate and your favorite book or magazine, and dream about next spring.



“Janus was a Roman deity with two faces who presided over the threshold of endeavors. As Janus, looking forward and looking back, you can use both foresight and hindsight to plan your garden.”

*-The Maritime Northwest Garden Guide,
Seattle Tilth*

“The most noteworthy thing about gardeners is that they are always optimistic, always enterprising, and never satisfied. They always look forward to doing something better than they have ever done before .”

-Vita Sackville-West



REMINDER: The NORTHWEST FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL begins on Wednesday, February 26 through Sunday, March 1.

GARDEN DELIGHTS

c/o Cate Mueller, Editor
24205 SE Tiger Mtn Rd
Issaquah, WA 98027-7336



January Program:
Propagation and Division