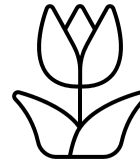
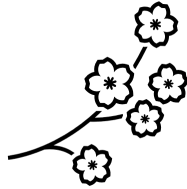


WHAT ARE OUR STAR GARDENERS DOING IN DEC?



Janet Schulz:

Scout out spring bulbs on sale and plant to force for early bloom. After planting, water well and place in the garage or other cold place for winter. As soon as you see growth, bring them in and enjoy.

If you have a special Amaryllis, (White Flower Farm or Nursery Purchased bulb) cut the stalk after bloom and grow it in a sunny window until it can go outside in summer. Fertilize and grow till September, tip it on its side and allow it to rest till new growth appears. If you bought one at the supermarket, toss it. It's not worth the effort. Think about it, you buy cut flowers ,keep them a week and then compost them, why go through all the trouble?

Don't forget the birds. Keep your feeders full. Give them a special treat. Take a large pinecone, tie a string to the top, fill it with peanut butter and hang it outside.



Marina Kunkera:

I really hope to take a break from gardening in the month of December. January is the month I'm obsessed with reading, researching, learning, and watching ALL about GARDENING.

Enjoy the Holiday Season.

Paul Sisko:

Dear WAGC Gardeners.

Again, we have been blessed with pretty decent weather to finish preparing our gardens for winter.

I've put material like chicken wire over my newly planted bulbs to keep the varmints from digging them up. The few that I didn't do got dug up. Nasty critters. I've got all my hoses drained and put away in the basement along with any sprayers and water timers I use. Gas operated equipment should be run dry of gas or put fuel stabilizer in the gas and run it for a few minutes. Any painted steel furniture you have outside should be cleaned and covered to prevent paint from peeling leading to rust. Aluminum tends to hold up better but still helps to put it in a sheltered place. Wire brush all your hand tools and spray them with WD 40 for the winter. Also it's a good time to spray the ones that might get lost or misplaced with DayGlo paint so you can find them easier. Messy digging through your compost or scrap piles looking for your pruners. Treat yourself to a Pruner Holster and belt for next season and get into the habit of using it around your waist. See me in the spring if any of your pruners need sharpening and you're afraid to do it yourself.

I've got about one or two more leaf blowings in mind with some of the leaves going into circular baskets to cover plants like my banana trees which have been cut down to ground level. This helps protect them a bit from the winter snow and freeze.

Final pruning of shrubs and roses should be scheduled or wait until midwinter or early spring to do that. I've cut down all my grasses already and pruned most of my perennials which I want to keep to a certain size. I've just topped my Hydrangeas of the flower heads and will wait until spring to decide on which stems to prune further although I have pruned all Hydrangeas and Viburnum down that grow on New Wood already or just want to keep them to a certain size.

I've also planted my Fig trees in the ground for the first time ever and wrapped them in burlap with other protective material. Google for full directions.

Hope these reminders help.

Wishing you a wonderful safe and healthy holiday season with the same for the New Year.

Paul



Joan Rottkamp:

This spring I decided to plant marigolds and sweet alyssum in our flower boxes. To my surprise, the sweet alyssum still looks great despite several nights below freezing.



We have a large Thanksgiving cactus that spent the summer on our front porch. It tipped over when I brought it indoors. I took the broken budded branches and planted them in a pot. I now have a lovely new plant! The buds continue to grow and open and I know it will root. The secret is to keep the soil moist, not soaking wet, and avoid direct sunlight.



Sharon Ma:

During the winter months, I fill my days with plenty of gardening activities indoors. Besides watering my indoor jungle, I love to get inspired and learn everything about gardening. Below are plenty of resources to keep me busy:

1. Read gardening articles posted on the Master Gardener of Bergen County website: <https://www.mgofbc.org/>
2. Watch TV programs: On Prime, there are a lot of gardening shows to watch. Janet Schulz highly recommends "Gardeners' World"
3. Janet also listens to the podcast by Margaret Roche called "A Way to Garden".
4. Watch videos: Paul just shared with me that he enjoyed a movie called Greenfingers which is available at the Wyckoff Public Library.
5. Reading gardening books and catalogs.
6. For anything related to orchids: go to AOS.com
7. On social media: I joined many groups on Facebook. Some groups are local gardener groups, many are related to succulents, houseplants, dahlia, figs, etc. There are groups for anything that you are interested in. By following the postings of these groups and their conversations, I get to learn many things. I sometimes post pictures and questions and members will answer with good recommendations.
8. On Youtube: There are unlimited videos to learn about everything. My favorite plant person on Youtube is Summer Rayne Oakes. She has a series called "Plant One On Me". I learned a lot about raising houseplants from watching her. I met her in person at the Philadelphia Flower Show in 3/2020, just before COVID started to spread.
9. Webinars: There are plenty of recorded webinars offered by Friends of The Frelinghuysen Arboretum at minimal fee. You can pick the one you would like to watch and choose whenever you want to watch it. <https://www.arboretumfriends.org/prerecorded-events/>

