

Garden Club Horticultural Hints November 2022

Now is when we set the stage for a great 2023!



Asian bittersweet should not be used in holiday arrangements. When you see it, cut it down and send it to be incinerated.

A Not-So-Sweet Vine. If you come across bittersweet, look at it carefully. The oriental bittersweet (which is what we usually see) is a highly invasive intruder and should be cut down, bagged and sent to the incinerator. It covers and kills trees in the forest and around the edges of fields. It is illegal to sell items made of oriental bittersweet. The decorative wreath on your front door will be eaten by birds and then many bittersweet plants will invade your garden and your neighborhood for years to come. The difference between the nasty oriental and the friendly native bittersweet is remembering that on the native plant, the red berries hang in clumps while they are spaced along the vine on the oriental species.

Plant more spring bulbs. The catalogs and garden centers now have bulbs discounted, and it's not too late to plant them for spring. You'll be glad you did not just next April, May, and June, but for years to come and your bulbs multiply each passing year.



Mowing leaves into the lawn rather than raking adds nutrients to the soil.



Continue to remove leaves. The best and easiest way to get them off your lawn, and make them work for you, is to mow them into the lawn with a mulching mower. If you bag mown leaves, use them to cover flower and vegetable beds, to mulch around the base of trees and shrubs and finally to create leaf mold or compost for future garden use.

Garden clean-up—or not? If the perennials and annuals in your garden were not affected by disease, consider leaving seed heads of black-eyed susans, cone flower and similar plants standing. They provide an important food source for the birds that winter over here. Cleanup can be finished in the spring, and you get to enjoy the birds throughout the winter.

Don't forget to clean the vegetable garden. Removing all annual plants, vines and fallen fruit before adding any mulch, compost or planting a cover crop on your garden is always good gardening. Your vegetable garden should be stripped of all annual plants. Only perennials such as rhubarb should remain along with the garlic you planted last month to be harvested in June. You will be getting rid of disease and possibly insects before you begin gardening next spring.



Evergreens give twice. Late this month, plan to prune some of your evergreens. The cuttings can be used to make holiday arrangements for the house, fill window boxes or outdoor containers. And don't be concerned if pine or arborvitae are dropping some of their needles now. This is a normal part of their renewal. All evergreens shed their leaves at some time, just not all at once like deciduous trees.



The rudbeckia and black-eyed susans in this garden will be left up for the winter in order to provide seed for over-wintering birds

All of the greens and branches in this container can be found in New England gardens. Placed in moist soil in late November, they'll continue to be attractive well into the new year.



Written and created by Betty Sanders. For more horticultural suggestions for November and throughout the year, please visit www.BettyOnGardening.com