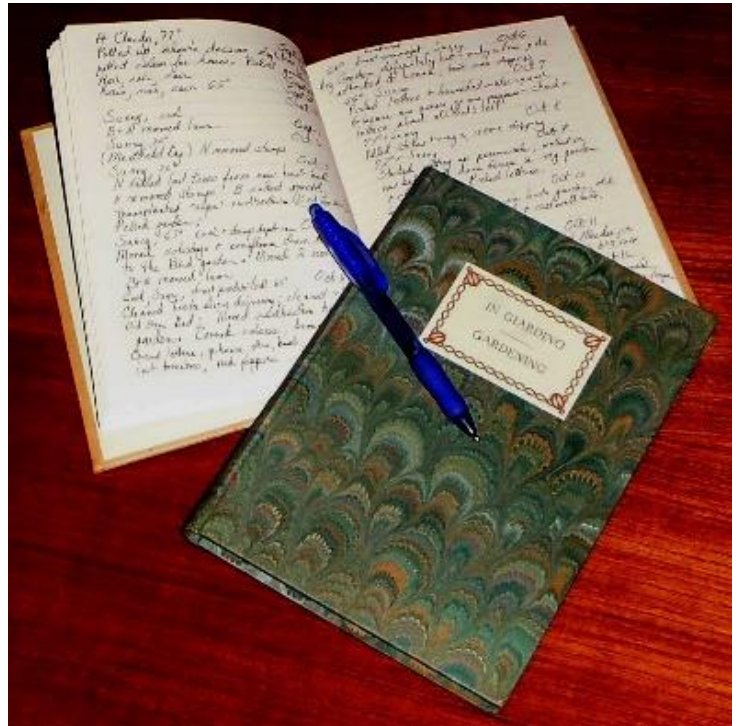


Garden Club Horticultural Hints January 2022

Let it snow!

Use this month to collect your thoughts. The start of a new year is an excellent time to begin keeping a garden journal. Start with your memories of what worked best in last year's gardens. Use those to guide your plans for this year, always remembering in no two years are the weather, insects or anything else ever the same.



Be kind to over-wintering birds. They need readily-available food; especially access to high energy food such as suet and seeds. Change water in bird baths frequently. Feeding the birds encourages them to stay around for spring when they'll eat insects as well as remaining weed seeds.

Branches from your Christmas tree can help protect perennials from ice and heavy snow loads. Using pruners, loppers or a hand saw, you can reduce a tree to its usable branches in a few minutes. The branches can stay in place until the first foliage from your garden bulbs or perennials appear.

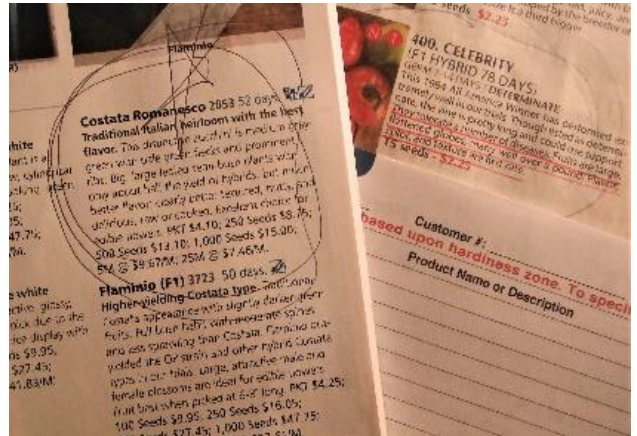
A 7-foot fir produced enough branches to cover about 75 square feet of perennial beds. At the top of the photo, burlap pulled loosely around garden stakes has been used to provide a barrier around a Daphne that might otherwise draw unwanted attention from deer.





Don't neglect your houseplants. Your houseplants may be inside and warm, but don't forget their need for light and humidity. Give each plant a quarter turn each week. If you use plant trays, clean those trays frequently to prevent bacteria and odors from growing in the water the trays collect.

If you have any doubts that this is the year to order seeds early, gardeners reports order that went out in early November, arrived in December with several favorites missing. They had already sold out!



Skip the salt. Now that we finally have snow on the ground, avoid using salt on sidewalks and driveways. Sand or kitty litter will provide traction and even assist in melting as it warms on sunny days. Best of all, there will be no damage to your plants now, or when the ground thaws in the spring. The sand or litter will disappear into the garden soil without damaging to roots or poisoning the soil.

Choose a relatively warm day this month to take down outdoor lights from trees and shrubs. It may be tempting to hold out for better weather but, by not waiting, you'll avoid the need for extra care to prevent damage to swelling leaf and flower buds.

No one wants to slip on a sidewalk or steps... but salt washed into your garden damages leaves and needles now and, next spring, poisons roots.



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