

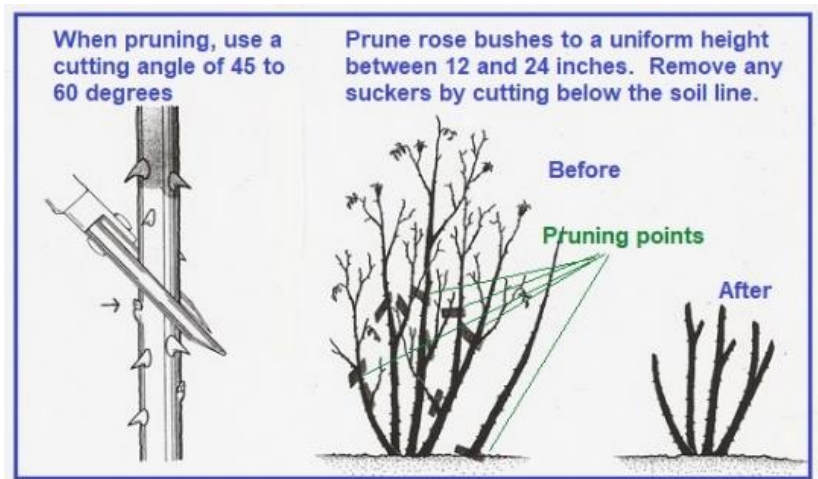
# Garden Club Horticultural Hints

November 2018

## Late autumn in the garden



**Avoid 'plant mush' next spring** by removing frost-killed annuals from your gardens. Similarly, when your hostas get hit by a hard frost and collapse, cut them to the ground. And clean out and store for the winter those containers you filled with annuals this past summer. If you want to re-create one of your outdoor containers from this year, make notes of what you loved and put in your 2019 calendar for April or May.



**Begin planting up paperwhite narcissus** now so they will be in bloom for the holidays. They make thoughtful gifts, and they'll also brighten up your home.



**November is the time to prune** down rose canes and buddleia (butterfly) bushes. Prune them just enough to prevent damage from winter storms; save the hard pruning for early spring. While it is tempting, now is *not* the time to trim grape vines. They should be pruned in mid- to late-winter when they are dormant.

**Mother Nature's blanket.** Let leaves that have fallen around the base of plants stay there—they are Mother Nature's mulch protecting roots. Blowing leaves out of shrubs destroys the habitat for many beneficial insects that winter over in leaf litter, and exposes roots to frost and thaw cycles. Leaves that have fallen on the lawn are best run over by your mulching lawn mower. By spring they will have returned the nutrients they needed to grow to your soil. Your mower should be set at 2 inches for the balance of the season.





**Clean up bird feeders** and bird boxes before the weather get colder. Feeders encourage migrating birds to stop by to fuel up before continuing their migration. A steady supply of food means a winter's worth of entertainment from the year-round residents.



**Trees and shrubs.** Lately, gardeners have been reminded to water trees and bushes in November because they can't take up water once the ground has frozen. However, we are several inches above normal due to our wet summer (and capped off by the late-October Nor'easter). Trees and shrubs won't need your help with water this year, but they still need the usual winter prep. Check for any broken branches from the storm. Prune them out now to prevent further damage.



**Finish the clean-up of vegetable gardens** to prevent disease or troublesome insects from overwintering in old vines, weeds, stalks and other debris. Once the top few inches of soil freeze, your clean-up window has closed

**Animal repellents** (insects aren't a problem now) help deter rabbits, chipmunks, deer and others who find the bark and branch ends tasty eating. Sprays based on putrefied eggs, garlic, and mint oil such as Bobbex (available at nurseries and online) should be sprayed monthly to convince critters to dine elsewhere.



*Don't invite  
Bambi or Thumper  
to dinner*