

George Landis Arboretum Newsletter

Volume 11 • Number 1

Winter 1992

Marco Polo Stufano to Speak

Plans are underway for the Arboretum's third Spring Benefit. Building on the two previous enjoyable (and successful!) events, the Desmond Americana Inn will be the site for the March 21 lecture, tea and auction of choice plants. The Desmond Americana has generously contributed the use of the room. After the lecture, guests will adjourn to the Orange Street Courtyard for tea (or a visit to the cash bar) and the auction. Peter Rumora will auction plants and other garden goodies that have been donated by local nurseries.

Marco Polo Stufano will speak on "Bones in the Garden", a presentation on what makes a good garden work. Gardens are a series of pictures and spaces - at best they are art - and as all art, there is an underlying structure which holds the creation together. The structural and sculptural qualities of

gardens are more enduring than mere floral display and can transcend the seasons. The bones of a great beauty remain well beyond her springtime.

Mr. Stufano uses his understanding of the fine arts and a bit of architecture to elaborate the point that all good pictures hold together due to their thoughtfully constructed framework. An award winning gardener/designer, Mr. Stufano has been Director of Wave Hill Gardens, outside New York City, for 25 years. A recent citation by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society describes Mr. Stufano as "a plantsman par excellence who has done a magnificent job in developing and caring for the landscape at Wave Hill. There are few people who understand and work with plants as well as Mr. Stufano, who is also dedicated and adept at communicating with the public."

Spring Treat in Store

Next spring Arboretum members and visitors will have a new reason to step into the Lape Homestead. The original dining room, currently the office, will be the home of our new gift shop. (The office will move to the living room.) To open on April 25, in conjunction with our Arbor Day festivities, the gift shop will specialize in good garden items, from books to tools, from art to birdfeeders, dried flowers and the occasional plant from our very own greenhouse.

This exciting new venture will be a lot of fun for all involved, and should help attract visitors, but, most important, it will be a source of income for the Arboretum. Member Joani Momberger, who will manage the shop, is currently planning the initial inventory and seeking suppliers as well as collecting all the paraphernalia needed to change an empty room into a charming store. In keeping with the feeling of an old farmhouse we hope to furnish it with a few pieces of country furniture and simple shelving. Also needed are a rug, baskets and old boxes to display things in, and (not historically appropriate, but necessary) tracklights. If you can loan any of these items to help the gift shop get started it would be greatly appreciated.

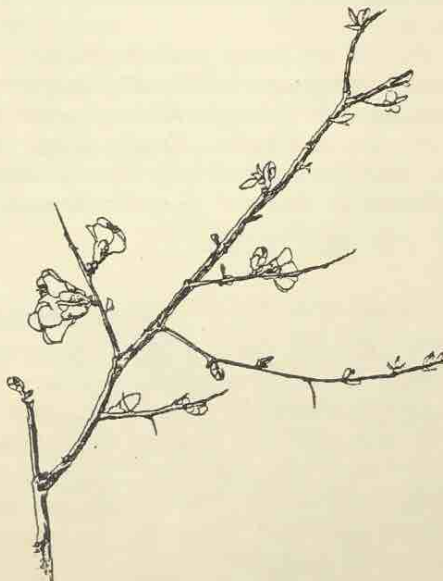
In the beginning the shop will be open on weekends and during special events. As business grows, the hours will expanded appropriately to the extent that can be staffed by volunteers. For those of you who like playing store, here's your chance! Volunteers are needed both for the repairs/painting/set-up stage and to staff the shop when it opens. If you're interested in helping, or loaning something, please call Joani Momberger at 346-3279 (evenings). We hope to see you on April 25th.

Endowment Campaign

Returning charter trustee Dr. William Huntley will head up a committee of the Board of Trustees whose focus will be the building of the Arboretum's endowment fund. Trustee Gil Harlow will serve with Dr. Huntley in this effort.

A campaign to build our endowment is long overdue. Currently the George Landis Arboretum has two endowment funds. One left by founder Fred Lape generates capital which contributed 13% (\$11,972) of our 1990 general operating budget. This fund is administered by Norstar Bank under the dictates of Fred Lape's will. A second, much smaller, endowment fund was established in 1987. This has been designated as a

Continues on page 2



Quince, by Anne Jaster

Endowment cont. from page 1
Growth fund and all proceeds generated are reinvested at this time.

Following a review of Arboretum operations by Institute of Museum Service consultant Dr. Donald Pfister an endowment goal of \$1,000,000 was suggested. Capital generated from a fund of this size would assure the financial security of the Arboretum for many years to come.

This winter the committee will be working out the various details of the upcoming campaign. Resultant information should be available in the spring of 1992.

The George Landis Arboretum Newsletter

is published quarterly for members of the Arboretum. The GLA's mission is to provide natural history and horticultural education through programs and through its plant collections.

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Andrea Modney, Pamela H. Rowling,
Eugenia Wade

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At the Garden

Director's Report

by Pamela H. Rowling

The slow onset of winter has allowed Arboretum volunteers and staff time to complete many projects.

Volunteers continue to be our most valued resource. The Lape Homestead and barn are presenting a much more welcoming image due to the efforts of Chuck Huppert and Bill Vetter. Master gardeners from Albany County Co-operative Extension have tugged in the perennial beds for the winter and planted drifts of daffodils above the lower parking area. Fallow fields and hillsides are being cleared of woody weed species by Dave Vermilyea and Gurden Huntington. Richard Law continues to create art from stone in his walls and hearths. Behind the scenes Natalie Dinsmore and Mary Riley keep our membership files, reminders and acknowledgements up to date. Dick Charles engraved numerous identification labels! Many hours of labor donated by Chuck Huppert, Florence Grimm and Wallace Johnson are enabling us to correct a serious drainage problem in our lower parking area. The drainage pipes are in their trenches; we expect final grading to be done this spring. The amount granted through this NYS Legislative Member grant was reduced so much that the project would not have been possible without the 'free labor' provided by caring friends.

Individual donations, both those designated toward a specific goal and undesignated, provide critical assistance to the Arboretum. We have been fortunate in this last quarter of 1991 to have received a number of gifts:

The Ellis H. and Doris B. Robison Foundation of Troy, New York, has made a contribution again this year to our general operating budget. Their generosity is both needed and appreciated. A gift from Mabel Harkness is allowing work to continue on the library, insulating and finishing the walls. Dr. and Mrs. Robert Raymond have generously donated funds toward a number of finish up projects in the William Thomas Raymond Greenhouse complex. Two of the major items will be a poured concrete floor in the propagation area and installation of underground oil tank.

We are extremely pleased to announce the receipt of a NYS ZBGA grant for 1992. This year's award will provide partial salary support for the position of Science Educator. Laura Lehtonen has agreed to stay on part time while we seek funding for our educational programs. Laura is currently working on a fantastic array of programs for both children and adults for the 1992 season. Encouraging the use of Arboretum collections and facilities by students will continue to be a focal point of her efforts.

We will see many positive changes in 1992. From greater public involvement through program attendance and garden visitation, to building our endowment fund, to making major improvements to our plantings, we stand poised at the doorway to our future. Despite rough economic times the many devoted members and friends of the George Landis Arboretum are looking forward with great optimism to 1992 and the years beyond.

Volunteers Wanted!

Do you enjoy learning about plants, working in the outdoors and exploring with children? If so, we need your help as a weekday volunteer to work with children in kindergarten through grade 5 who visit the Arboretum for spring field trips.

We will train you to teach three different lessons; "Inside-A-Tree", "What Tree Am I?" and "Adapt-A-Plant". All classes incorporate participatory activities for children and adults. The training will be offered on two Thursdays, March 19 and 26, from 9:30 - 3:30. Please call the office to sign up. *Be sure to bring a bag lunch and dress for the outdoors!*

Garden Exotica

The Goldenrain Tree

by Eugenia Wade



Koelreuteria paniculata (kel-roo-teer-ia), the Goldenrain Tree, also known as Panicked Goldenrain Tree, Chinese Rain Tree, China Tree, Pride of India, and the Varnish Tree.

Originally recorded in China in 1763, this tree was also discovered in Japan and Korea. It was not introduced to America until 1932. The Goldenrain Tree is a wonderful, yet under-used garden specimen. Fast growing in its youth, it can reach 15' in five to seven years, then slowing down to a maximum of 40' in as many years. The neat dome-shaped crown can get as wide as the tree is high in the right location.

Spring buds open a light purplish-red. Leaves are coarsely toothed, pinnate or bipinnate, arranged 12-18 per stem with a single one on the end. The soft fans of green leaves are enhanced in June and July by 8-15" erect panicles of bright yellow, 1/2" four-petaled florettes. These lovely splashes of color point out in all directions like shooting stars, lasting a good six to eight weeks. Best flowering has been noted during hot, dry summers. Hummingbirds and honeybees seem to relish the fragrant nectar.

In August, clusters of seed pods form. Each is a three valve capsule with round, black, pea-size seeds inside. They look very much like large bouquets of 2-3" Chinese lanterns. Pods start out green changing to yellow. By October the lanterns become bronze and papery.

This is the time to look for chick-a-dees, as they delight in this fall offering. By now the leaves will be yellow-gold. As the leaves drop, the pods will hang on, prolonging the ornamental value of this treasure. For an even longer display, many people cut two or three "lantern bouquets" for indoor ornamentation throughout the holidays.

Having become enchanted with specimens they've seen, gardeners are often disappointed with local nursery offerings. It is well to know ahead of time that the Goldenrain Tree is always very gaunt when young. Happily, only two to three years of care will produce the pride of your garden.

Clay soil is what makes Rain Trees happiest, but they'll take just about anything. Not fussy about pH, but thrive in acid soil. Tolerates moist soils, but flowers best in dry. Known to be very tolerant of both salt and air pollution. Hardy in zones 5-9 and possibly the warmer side of zone 4. Younger trees are more susceptible to winter damage than those acclimated for a year or two. Once acclimated they are quite tolerant of high winds and drought. Virtually pest and disease free, but may be visited by Japanese beetles if they are already a problem in your area. Albany's Capital buildings are hosts to several beautiful specimens.

Eugenia Wade is co-owner of Yunck's Nursery, on Route 9 in Newtonville.

Calendar

JANUARY

- 4 Volunteer Work Day
- 31 Star Party, 7:30 p.m.
(Cloud date, Feb. 1)

FEBRUARY

- 1 Volunteer Meeting & Sign-ups, Work Day
- 28 Star Party, 7:30 p.m.
(Cloud date, Feb. 29)

MARCH

- 7 Volunteer Work Day
- 13-15 Capital District Garden Show, Knickerbocker Arena
- 19,26 Weekday Volunteer Training, 9:30 - 3:30: see box on page 2
- 18 Trip to Boston Flower Show
- 19 Trip to New York Flower Show
- 21 Spring Benefit: Marco Polo Stufano to speak, at Desmond Americana
- 28 Growing in the Greenhouse: two classes, see box below
Apple Tree Rejuvenating, 2 hours

SNEAK PREVIEWS

APRIL

- 4 Volunteer Work Day, Building and Running a Home Greenhouse, 3 hours
- 25 Arbor Day Celebration Gift Shop Grand Opening
- 30 Keys to Learning Spring Wildflowers, first of four sessions

Growing in the Greenhouse

This class is for kids who like to get their hands dirty! We will learn about plant parts and how plants grow, while working in the Arboretum greenhouse. Children will learn how to test soil pH, plant seeds, make cuttings, and build a terrarium. Each student will take home two projects to observe long after the class ends.

Date: March 28
Cost: \$5.00 members
\$7.00 non-members

For 5 - 6 year olds: 9:00 - 10:30
For 7 - 9 year olds: 11:00 - 12:30

Instructor: Laura Lehtonen
Call the office to register.

Book Review

"I'd Enter Your Garden, If I Dared . . ."

by Betsy Blaustein

In recent years gardening has become one of our nation's favorite pastimes. Many people are naive enough to believe that this is a result of the therapeutic effects of working the soil. Some misguided souls even believe it represents a desire for a return to simpler times, a garden of Eden in your own backyard, so to speak. But, as any mystery reader can tell you, a garden is just about the most sinister place imaginable! Why, who knows what or who could be buried under the petunias? Just think of all the weapons that are ready to hand; shovels, rakes, stakes and various weed killers. There are even plants and vegetables that the garden variety murderer can use as substitutes for the healthy ones. So, if you have just had an argument with a gardener and he or she suggests a conciliatory cup of their own herbal tea, it might be better to give it a miss.

Now, just when you were thinking of doing away with your maiden aunt, who made you her sole heir, or your husband, who just took out a large life insurance policy, you ought to realize that gardens afford the amateur sleuth some unique opportunities for observation. You never know who might be eavesdropping from the other side of the hedge. In fact, stooping and kneeling are favorite occupations of gardening detectives. They always claim that they were innocently weeding in case their quarry gets too suspicious. Anyway, I think you get my point. It's probably better just to avoid gardens altogether.

Here are a few suggestions for your reading pleasure:

The Bulrush Murders, by Rebecca Rothenberg
The Menacing Groves, by John Sherwood
The Deadly Ackee, by Joan Hadley
Garden of Malice, by Susan Kenney
Dead Heads, by Reginald Hill
Black Orchids, by Rex Stout

Murder at Teatime, by Stephanie Matteson
Black Widower, by Patricia Moyes
A Ragged Plot, by Richard Barth
Wrack and Rune, by Charlotte MacLeod
The Murder of My Aunt, by Richard Hull
The Mirror Cracked, by Agatha Christie

Our thanks to Betsy Blaustein, proprietor of *Haven't Got a Clue*, a mystery book shop on Western Avenue, Albany, for this delightful new perspective on winter reading for gardeners!

Volunteer Notes

You volunteers have worked wonders for the Arboretum in the past year. Some highly visible projects were undertaken (like re-siding the barn's front side and painting the house.) Some absolutely invisible jobs (to the average visitor's eye) were accomplished (hauling years of debris out of the Homestead basement.) Some tasks were of the occasional type (changing oil in various machines) and some were of the weekly grind type (dozens of hours of garden maintenance.) And, a brief aside, the volunteers themselves vary, too. Our oldest is 82, and Joshua Modney, at six, is our youngest. Some live nearby, most have to drive about 40 minutes to get here, and Alan Rand "takes the cake", coming all the way from Clinton for the Work Days!

The Work Days will generally be on the first Saturday of the month, with the first on February 1. On that day we will start at 9 a.m. with a brief meeting and coffee hour to kickoff the season. Even if you can't stay for the rest of the work-day we urge you to come for the meeting. It will be the time to sign up to volunteer at specific events (like the Garden Show) and to lay plans for special projects for the year. The calendar for the Saturday lectures will be on hand, for those of you who would like to be Hospitality Volunteers: sign up to assist at a lecture that you want to attend anyhow. Volunteer teachers for the children's programs are needed as always (see page 2) If you've never volunteered here before, but are interested, the February meeting be a good way to meet some other volunteers, ask questions, and get started!

This year we hope to start an Adopt-a-Garden system where volunteers (in-

Arboretum Wish List

Educational supplies: old socks (men's sizes, white or light colors), magazines and posters with nature photos, dissecting microscope. (Thanks for your inquiries: we have enough toilet tissue tubes!)

Office: laser printer, computer workstation

Gift shop: some simple country furniture, like a sideboard or cupboard, etc. Could be a loan from your attic to help us get started in style. Call for specifics!

Thank you...

Phyllis Rosenblum, for two staff development courses at SCCC.

Fran Finkbeiner, for a word processor and a squillion flower pots.

John Abbuhl and his son John, President of Repeat Business Systems, Inc., for a Fax machine.

individual or a group) adopt an area and take care of it for the whole season.

An example of an adopted garden is the three perennial beds in the Van Loveland Garden that the Albany County Master Gardeners rehabilitated three years ago. A small group of them have maintained the beds ever since. The sign for their work will have not only their names, but that of their organization. Other groups or clubs might also enjoy working together on a project like this.

An area in desperate need of a loving caretaker is the Quarry Rock Garden, from which Kathie Lippitt recently "retired". The Rock Garden has the elements to be charming but needs very regular attention. It is more difficult than some areas to maintain, especially because of the necessity of keeping the stone steps in safe repair. Other gardens to consider adopting would include the peonies, rhododendrons and azaleas, Meeting House, or lilacs.

If you think you might be interested in adopting a garden, why not call Pamela (at the office) or Florence (at 842-7436) and discuss the possibilities.

This Native Plant

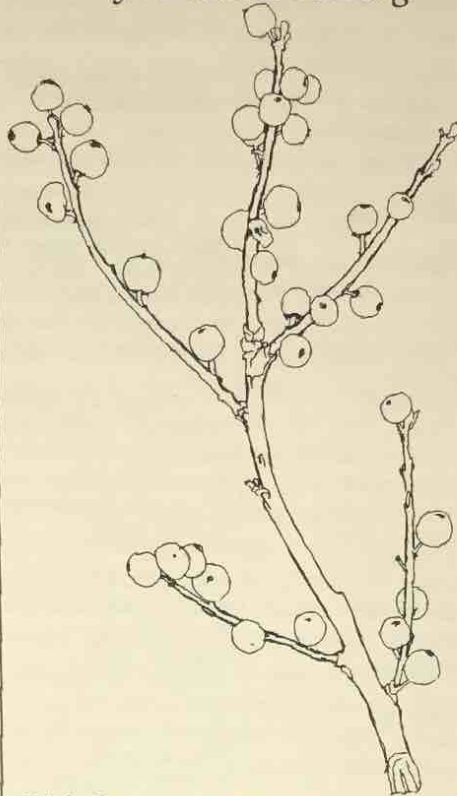
Winterberry Holly - *Ilex verticillata*

by Pamela H. Rowling

With winter come dramatic changes in our landscape. Colors change, the warm brilliant hues of autumn are traded for the soft whites and grays of winter. There is great appreciation for spots of color in this muted winter world. Deciduous woody plants are now recognized for their persistent colorful fruits, bark colors and textures and interesting branching patterns.

The winterberry holly or *Ilex verticillata* is much admired now. This native deciduous holly is easily recognized at this time of year by its black stems heavily clothed with brilliant red fruits. It is most typically found growing at the margins of ponds or swamps or along drainage ways. It prefers heavy soils rich in organic matter and with ample moisture. It is tolerant of flooded conditions. The normal growth habit is that of a suckering (not at all rampant) shrub ranging in height from 5 - 10 feet. Plants growing in full sun will be shorter and more densely branched while those found in understory situations will be taller and more open. Flowers of *Ilex verticillata* are both inconspicuous and unisexual. Generally one only becomes aware of their blooming by the presence of numbers of honey bees (the main pollinators of winterberry.) As with other members of this genus, winterberry is dioecious. Male and female (berrying) flowers are borne on separate plants. It is recommended that a male plant be placed within 200 feet of female plants to provide adequate pollen for fruit production. In the wild *Ilex* is propagated by seeds and by production of vegetative offshoots or suckers. Plants may also be increased by softwood cuttings which root fairly readily under high humidity conditions.

Best success with native plants such as *Ilex* tamed to the garden is generally achieved when an attempt is made to simulate the natural habitat of the plant. For example sandy soils will benefit from the addition of organic matter such as leaf mold, composted sawdust and peat moss. Modifying the pH of the soil to slightly acidic (5.5-6.0) will also be bene-



ficial. Organic mulches spread thickly over the roots of the plant will conserve essential soil moisture and add vegetable matter to the soil through decomposition. Culturally a fertilization using a N-P-K ratio of 3-1-2 (ie. 12-4-8) at a rate of one pound per inch of trunk diameter as a topdressing in early spring will encourage vigorous growth. Although a very tolerant plant these bits of special attention will reap great rewards in growth and fruiting for many winters to come.

From a garden standpoint winterberry holly is valuable for two major reasons. It is an outstanding plant for winter color and it provides a natural food source for an estimated 20 species of song and game birds. Here at the Arboretum it appears to be a favorite food of cedar waxwings.

Although I have yet to encounter a wildling in fruit that I did not consider lovely, there are many named cultivars of winterberry holly available. These particular forms have been selected, named and propagated vegetatively because of one or more particularly outstanding characteristics. These may

be fruit color or size, earliness or lateness of fruiting, plant habit or summer foliage characteristics. There is at least one yellow fruited form (*Ilex verticillata* 'Chrysoarpa'). These fruits glow against darker colored evergreens and are curiously overlooked by the waxwings who gobble up all of our red fruits by early January. Some red fruited cultivars to consider growing include 'Earlibright', 'Stoplight', 'Winter Red' and 'Red Sprite' to name just a few. In 1991-1992 we will have added fifteen new cultivars of *Ilex verticillata* to our plantings at the George Landis Arboretum.

For further information about *Ilex verticillata* and other members of this fascinating genus I recommend joining the American Holly Society. They publish a wonderful quarterly journal and have a number of test gardens where plants may be viewed. The address: American Holly Society, c/o Mrs. E.H. Richardson, 304 North Wind Rd. Baltimore, Maryland 21204.

Long Range Plan

As Fred Lape's 97 acre public garden is getting back on its feet we find it is time to evaluate what we have and what we already do for people, and find out in what direction we should be growing in the future.

The Arboretum's Statement of Purpose, adopted in the 1990 revision of the by-laws, describes the general mission: The purpose of the George Landis Arboretum is to preserve, maintain and develop the Arboretum in order to provide education in natural history and horticulture and to encourage its use as a public garden. Within these broad guidelines a more specific long range plan that will help the Arboretum better serve this community needs to be formulated.

Input from the members will be most helpful as you are active members of your community as well as being familiar with the Arboretum, its recent changes and potential for growth. In this issue of the newsletter is a Membership Survey. Please take a few minutes to think about the Arboretum and fill it out. Try to mail it back to us before the end of January - and, thank you.

How Does Our Garden Grow?

New Members (*)
and Renewals
September-November 1991

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Country Garden Club of Clifton
Park
Gade Farm

In 1991 an Annual Fund Raising Campaign goal of \$10,000.00 was established to help bridge the gap between year end anticipated income and expenditure. The response from our membership towards this ambitious goal was gratifying. As of 31 December 1991 a total of 94 members and friends have responded with contributions of \$7,481.00. These donations, assigned to the general operating fund, will provide a strong beginning for the new year.

Generosity is a reflection of your confidence in the Arboretum and its programs. Thank you for your support.

\$5-\$49

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Village Ice Cream Parlor
Carol Wock
\$200-\$999

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Kathie Lippitt
Peter G. TenEyck, II
David Vermilyea
Jane Vermilyea
Ernest Walk
\$1,000+
Ellis H. & Doris B. Robison
Foundation

Gardener's Workshop

Perennial Pleasure

by Andrea Modney

Ah, perennials! Their color and form are enchanting, their varieties endless. Little wonder that the number of people captivated by their charm grows each year. I meet a fair number of such budding perennial lovers. Desire is strong, yet they lack the basic information that will start them on the path to fulfillment. The pent up longing is poorly concealed in their voices when they ask "Where do you get your perennials?"

This naive question may cause laughter on the part of those who have ever once ordered a plant from a catalog. For to do so is to open the floodgates of a vast mail order industry anxious to fulfill one's wildest horticultural dreams.

The most pleasurable way to get one's name on catalog mailing lists is to subscribe to a gardening magazine. These magazines make their subscriber lists available to mail-order nurseries, and the nurseries sell their lists to other nurseries, and so on in ever-widening circles.

A few postcards will have the same effect as a subscription. Many fine companies offer their catalogs for free, but do treat yourself to a couple that come with a small fee as they are full color encyclopedic treasuries.

My favorite source for perennials is the local nurseries during the spring buck-a-pot extravaganzas. The fun begins early in the year with the waiting and watching of nurseries for signs of

outdoor herbaceous life. When those pots hit the stands, it's the early bird that gets the best selection. In addition to the large nurseries, remember to check out discount stores and Mom and Pop roadside operations. The novice will find a marvelous variety of plants which can be purchased with great confidence in price, vigor, and classic durability. As demand for perennials grows, nurserymen are offering more varieties each year, so the veteran perennial gardener may also find a new treasure or a long lost favorite at the spring sales.

The local nursery scene also includes nurseries offering bigger potted plants, farmer's markets, the Arboretum plant sale, and perennial farms where plants are freshly dug to order. Some field nurseries are wonderful for their extensive offerings, others are remarkable for an old-fashioned price. Use them both.

If many plants of one variety are desired, consider growing perennials from seed. So many varieties grow well when seeded directly in the garden that it isn't really necessary to bother with indoor germination unless to give the plants a head start on the growing season. This way, too, the beginner will have something to share or exchange with other gardeners.

And, speaking of other gardeners, don't overlook them as a source which is often more extensive than that of any nursery. Don't be embarrassed to ask a gardener for a division of something fancy. Nurseries and catalogs are relatively new ideas, but gardener-to-gardener is an ancient and honored method of plant exchange.

And so, in answer to the question,

that's where I get my perennials. From gardening catalogs and friends who garden. By scouring the continent through catalogs. Bargain hunting and scanning every potted plant offered for sale everywhere I go. Leave no stone unturned. The hunt is half the fun of perennials.

Perennial Duties

-The ground will be well frozen by now - time to mulch late season transplants and marginally hardy plants (and as much else as you have mulch to cover.) The boughs of discarded Christmas trees are wonderful for this purpose.

-If we have a dry winter, it may become necessary to water. Plants in light soil are most likely to need such attention.

-Make garden plans. This is the best time to consider what would give your garden more winter interest.

-Send in plant orders. Consider native species for their strength, beauty and drought hardiness.

-Clean pots and set up for seeding plants indoors if you plan to do so.

-Sharpen, clean and oil garden tools.

-It may be a temptation during those first glorious days of spring, but don't clean up the plant mulches until the first week of April. The cold of winter may make a comeback and burn off new shoots.

-Cut back ornamental grasses to 4" - 6" before new growth.

Editor's note: Our thanks to Andrea Modney for writing us through four seasons of perennial gardening. While this column will move on to another garden topic and writer next issue, we hope Andrea will continue to contribute other articles.

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In the Shade of the Oak

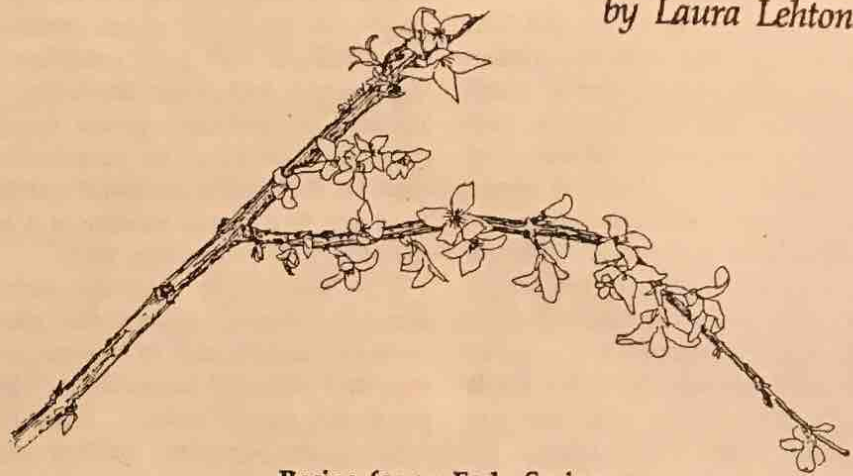
An Early Spring

by Laura Lehtonen

It's the middle of winter and all traces of fall color are gone. The flowers we grew last spring have made seeds, faded and turned brown. The leaves that will shade us this summer are curled up tight until warm weather and long days arrive. But wait! We can still enjoy flowers and leaves if we take notice of buds.

If you look at tree and shrub branches in January or February, you will notice the buds on the twigs. Buds are formed in the summer months while there is sun and warm weather. If you open a bud with your fingernails you will find layers of bud scales which keep the developing flowers or leaves from drying out. You might also see the tiny beginnings of the young leaves or flowers.

To explore buds further and to see them open and we have to bring a branch with buds on it into the warmth and light. Then by adding water to the stem we will "force" the buds to burst. You will be able to observe the flowers or leaves and if conditions are right you will be rewarded with a bit of spring on a cold and cloudy day.



Recipe for an Early Spring

2 - 4 tree or shrub branches
Water
Hammer (optional)

Vase, waterproof container
Magnifying glass/hand lens
Patience

1. Cut your branches and arrange them in your vase or container. For hard branches it may be necessary to crush and mash the cut end with a hammer to make sure water will reach the stem and buds.
2. Place the container in a warm, sunny window and wait.
3. Once you see flowers or young leaves starting to show, use your magnifying glass to see the details of the petal or unfolding leaves.
4. Enjoy your early spring!

Note : All trees and shrubs (except for conifers) have flowers. Apple, dogwood, quince, cherry and forsythia have large or colorful flowers to attract insect pollinators like bees. But don't forget wind-pollinated plants like maple, oak and willow that have small but interesting flowers.

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