



J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift
and Garden Center

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The Gardening Newsletter

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Winter Gardening

Just because winter has arrived doesn't mean you have completely finished gardening for the year. You probably still have one or two projects left before the ground freezes or before you put your lawn mower away for the year. Listed below are my **Top 10 Outdoor Garden Projects to prepare for Winter.**



10. Clean all debris from your pond. Do not feed fish once the water temperature reaches 50 degrees.
9. Fertilize your lawn if you didn't fertilize it in September or October. Fertilize just before it snows.
8. Remove all your dead flower and vegetable plants. Do not let them stay in the gardens through the winter.
7. Watch the weather. Water outdoor plants occasionally during the winter if Mother Nature does not do it for you. Container plants are especially prone to winter dehydration.
6. Add as much **Bumper Crop** or **Compost** to your gardens as practical, and roto till the garden if the ground is not soggy.
5. Mow your grass shorter for the winter.
4. Rake the leaves off your lawn and put them in a compost pile, or in the garden. Add a little extra nitrogen for composting.
3. Wait to trim roses and raspberries until after they freeze.
2. Tie up shrubs to prevent snow damage. Protect your tender plants for the winter. Add mulch, or spray with Wilt Pruf
1. Buy a new houseplant to enjoy this winter. Remember to water and fertilize houseplants less during the winter, many houseplants die from too much TLC.

Amaryllis Bulb Care

Amaryllis are one of the popular winter blooming flowers. They are very striking and colorful. Amaryllis bulbs are extremely easy to grow, even for people that normally kill their other houseplants.



Amaryllis bulbs make the perfect gift to help keep your family gardeners busy during the winter. They also make great gifts for friends and neighbors. Amaryllis bulbs are easy to take care of and you can almost watch them grow. With the proper care, you can have your amaryllis bulb bloom year after year.

Amaryllis are available in many different colors ranging from white to pink to red. **Red Lion** and **Orange Sovereign** are two of our most popular varieties, but we also have 12 other varieties to choose from. Amaryllis bulbs are available in different bulb sizes, ranging from 26cm to 40cm size. This year we even have some 44cm size bulbs available - they are big! The number of blossom stems and blossoms will vary with each amaryllis bulb, but you can expect more blossoms with bigger bulbs. One or two blossom stems are common on the small (28cm) size bulbs, while three or four blossom stems are usual on the medium size

(34cm) and four or five blossom stems are possible on the larger size (40cm) bulbs. **The blossoms will not be any larger on bigger bulbs, you will just have more of them.**

We have an Amaryllis Care sheet available. Stop by and pick one up, or download a copy from our website.

Poinsettia Care



Poinsettias are perhaps the most popular house plants in the United States. Most everyone has at least one or two poinsettias in their home during the Christmas season. Unfortunately, most poinsettias get thrown away right after Christmas. Poinsettias will grow and stay pretty through April and May if they are properly cared for. They can also grow and bloom year after year, if you have the patience to take care of them. The first thing to remember is that the red color you see are bracts, not the flowers. Poinsettia flowers are the small yellow features in the center of the bracts. Poinsettia flowers only bloom for three to four weeks. The bracts, however, can maintain their color until the beginning of spring, if the plant is properly watered and fertilized, yes the plant needs fertilizer.

Most people that throw their poinsettias away right after Christmas wonder why all the leaves turned yellow and fell off a week or two after they bought them. **Several conditions may cause poinsettias to drop their leaves, most of which can be prevented.**

1. **Poinsettias need plenty of light.** They have been grown in greenhouses under optimum conditions. Reducing the amount of light makes the plant drop some of its leaves.
2. **Poinsettias need plenty of fertilizer.** They have been fertilized every few weeks in the greenhouse, so you need to keep it up. Fertilize your poinsettias every two weeks with **Blooming and Rooting Fertilizer** while they are under your care.
3. **Poinsettias need plenty of water,** but they do not like to stay wet all the time. Give your poinsettia plenty of water; enough to fill the saucer. Let your plant sit in water for 30 minutes then drain any excess water remaining in the saucer. Do not water your poinsettia again until the soil feels dry. The pretty foil pot cover acts like a saucer, be sure to drain excess water left in the pot cover after 30 minutes. Too much water will kill your plant as quickly as not enough water can.

4. **Poinsettias do not like drafts;** neither hot nor cold. Keep poinsettias away from doors and away from furnace vents.

We have a **Poinsettia Care Sheet** available with more information about growing poinsettias. Stop by and pick one up, or download a copy from our website.

Christmas Tree Care

Fresh cut Christmas Trees are a common holiday tradition. With the proper care, they can stay fresh and



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be safe through Christmas. However, you need to remember that **a Christmas tree can always be a fire hazard.**

Always put your tree in a water stand. Be sure to cut off at least one inch of the trunk and put it in water within 10 minutes of making your cut, or you will have to make another cut.

Never let the water stand run out of water. Check the stand daily. The tree will use more water when you first bring it in the house than it will use a week later. A tree can use up to a gallon of water per day. If the water stand runs out of water you will need to make another 1" cut before the tree will be able to absorb water again.

Spray your tree with Wilt Pruf. This spray prevents moisture loss from the needles. Wilt Pruf will help your tree stay fresher longer. It is a nontoxic, odorless spray that really makes a difference. Wilt Pruf is not a fire retardant, it just helps the tree from drying out as fast.

Do not put your tree near a fireplace or in front of a furnace vent. Do not put a Christmas tree in the same room with a fire; even a small fire in the fireplace can dry a tree out fast. Try to keep the tree as cool as possible.

Use miniatur or LED lights; never C7 or C9 lights.

Spray your tree with a Fire Retardant.

Potted Christmas Tree Care

Many gardeners buy a potted spruce or pine tree, use it for their Christmas Tree, and then plant it in the yard after Christmas. **As long as you follow a few simple guidelines you can have a successful experience with a potted Christmas Tree.**



1. Do not keep a potted tree in the house more than 10 to 14 days. A tree may start breaking dormancy or start growing when it is kept warm.

2. Water your tree regularly while inside the house and water it thoroughly when you take it back outside. Do not let the rootball dry out.

3. Spray your tree with **Wilt Pruf** to help prevent moisture loss. Spray the tree again just before you put it back outside.



4. Put your tree in a protected area when you take it back outside. The tree may have started to grow, so it needs to be climatized before putting it directly in the cold.

We have a detailed Christmas Tree Care Guide. Stop by for a copy, or download it from our website. By following these simple guidelines you can have a healthy tree to plant after Christmas.

Winter Lawn Care

"Don't Leave The Leaves." Rake all the leaves from your lawn. Try to remove the leaves within three to four days after they drop. Some trees drop their leaves all at once, while other trees may drop their leaves slowly all winter. Sycamore trees, oak trees, beech trees, and willow trees, are probably the worst at dropping their leaves. Leaves left on the lawn may cause fungus or mold problems in the lawn that are much easier to prevent in the fall than to cure in the spring. Snowmold is often caused by a layer of leaves left on the lawn too long. If snowmold is a yearly problem, you should apply a fungicide to your lawn after you rake the leaves, after you mow it for the last time, and just before a long-lasting snowfall. If it does snow before you have a chance to apply your fungicide, you can apply it on top of the snow, or wait for the snow to melt and apply it anytime during the winter.



Cut your lawn short the last time you mow in the fall. By cutting the grass a little shorter in the fall you reduce the chance of it laying down and creating a snowmold problem during the winter. Do not cut your lawn short until the last time you mow it for the year.

Container Plants in Winter Weather

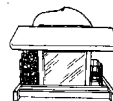


Many gardeners want to grow plants in containers for their decks and patios. Unfortunately, many of these containers will not offer your plants enough protection to survive the winter. Example. In many areas, Japanese Maples and Rhododendrons are used extensively in containers on the porch or patio. In our climate they do not survive without some major winter protection. The roots of these plants may die if the soil temperature drops below 14 degrees F.

If you can protect your container plants from getting too cold, you might be able to grow many different kinds of plants - in pots - on your patio. You can try moving the pots into an unheated shed, putting them right next to the house, burying them in straw, or making a structure to hold straw around them during the winter. This extra protection may help to keep the roots above their critical temperature, if not, your plants may not survive the winter weather.

Another important part of winter protection is water. Do not let the container completely dry out during the winter months. Water them when they start to dry out. The best way to water plants in containers, during the winter, is with snow. As the snow melts just give the container another shovelful.

Wild Birds



If you are one of many bird feeding enthusiasts, be sure to take time to learn more about the birds you are feeding. Feed your birds high quality food and food that is also beneficial to them. Most birds love sunflower seeds. They are a 'Bird's Dessert', but they are not always the best food to feed them. If you have too many birds and you want to reduce the quantity, be more selective about the types of seed you put in your feeder. Sunflower seeds will attract all types of birds; safflower seeds and nyger seeds attract only a few types. Nuts and berries attract some of the larger birds. Try different mixes until you attract the birds you want to come to your yard.

Many birds are particular about the food they eat. Some birds will scatter most types of seed just to get to the sunflower seeds, wasting most of the food in the feeder. If this is a problem, separate the sunflower seeds from the other wild bird seed. Put out one feeder of just wild bird seed and one feeder with just sunflower seeds. You will have less waste from your feeder and you can control when you give them 'dessert'. Feed your wild birds suet or peanut butter once in awhile, they love it, and it is good for them. Many birds also enjoy nuts, berries, and fruit.



There is little or no regulation with regard to wild bird food products. This makes it difficult to know exactly what the bag of bird food contains. Are you purchasing the cheaper milo and millet seed, or the more expensive vitamin-enriched seed. The **Wild Delight Company** packages several high quality wild bird mixes. Each of their mixes contains vitamin enriched seed. They even have one mix that all the seeds are completely shelled, so there is no mess to clean up. Moldy seed and bread are not beneficial to birds, so do not just throw out table scraps to feed the birds.



During cold winter weather, one of the best ways to attract birds is to have an unfrozen source of water for them to drink. Water will attract wild birds faster than food when the ground water is frozen.

Imagine a fast food restaurant where nobody cleaned the

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kitchen or tables. Now think about your bird feeder. When was the last time you cleaned it? Salmonella can grow in moldy, wet seed, and in bird droppings. While you don't have to wash your feeder daily, you should clean it regularly. Now is a great time to check your wild bird supplies and make sure they are ready for the coming winter season.

Protect Your Tender Plants

Plants that do not lose their leaves in the winter (evergreens) need more winter protection than deciduous plants (plants that drop their leaves). Junipers and pine trees may suffer during long, warm dry periods but they are fairly tolerant of cold and drought. Broad-leaved evergreens (**rhododendron, laurel, oregon grape, etc.**) are affected both by extreme temperatures and by moisture loss, because of their large leaf surface. When the sun shines on a plant's leaf, the temperature can get as high as 70 degrees, yet the root system remains frozen. As water evaporates from the leaf, no water is able to replace it. The leaves then 'freeze dry'. If enough leaves die, the entire plant could also die. **There are several things you can do to prevent this type of winter damage.**

(1) Don't let the soil dry out. Water your plants occasionally during the fall. Don't keep your plants wet, just keep the soil moist. A plant that freezes with moist soil will be much healthier than a plant that freezes in dry soil conditions.

(2) Put mulch around the base of your plants to help insulate the soil from hard freezes. Mulch also helps keep moisture in the soil. Wait until the ground freezes to mulch plants with **Soil Pep**, leaves, or with compost. You want the ground to actually freeze lightly, to help the plants become dormant, before you cover the ground with mulch. Do not use grass clippings because they may cause a disease problem. Apply one or two inches of mulch around hardy plants and up to six to eight inches of mulch around your tender plants. Newly planted shrubs need more winter protection than your older shrubs.

(3) Spray your plants with Wilt Pruf. Wilt Pruf is an anti-desiccant; it seals moisture inside the plants and it stops evaporation from the leaves. Wilt pruf is not poisonous and will not harm animals. Spray Wilt Pruf when the temperature is above 40 degrees and will stay above freezing until the spray dries, usually one to two hours. Wilt Pruf is good to use on all plants, especially on 'Broad-leaved Evergreens' and all newly planted shrubs. Wilt Pruf is also great to spray on your Christmas trees to prevent them from drying out so fast inside the house.

(4) If you need to cover your tender plants, cover them with burlap or with a bed sheet. Do not cover plants with plastic. Black plastic absorbs the heat while clear plastic traps the heat. Excessive heat variations during the winter are often fatal to the less hardy plants you are trying to protect.

Indoor Plant Lights

The gardening season is far too short for many gardeners. By using indoor plant lights, the gardening season can continue despite the weather conditions or the light limitations. You can use plant lights to start seedlings and cuttings, to overwinter tender plants, or to grow a special collection of plants, such as succulents, orchids, or African Violets.

The basic requirements for indoor plant lighting are either fluorescent light tubes or incandescent light bulbs. The fluorescent lights are much better than the incandescent bulbs. Always buy full-spectrum light tubes when possible. These tubes are more expensive than the common fluorescent tubes but they have the full complement of light rays that plants utilize during their growth cycle.

You can buy pre-built light carts. We have many styles to

choose from, ranging from table top fixtures to moveable carts on wheels. You can also build your own light cart to meet your specific needs. Be sure you can adjust your light fixtures, whether you buy a pre-built cart or build your own. You will need to be able to change the light placement for different kinds of plants.

You must consider the light requirements of your plants to determine the correct light placement. The closer plants are to the light source, the higher the intensity of the light they receive. Seedlings and other plants with high light-intensity needs, such as blooming plants and cacti, need the light to be within four to six inches of the leaves. Foliage plants, tolerant of lower light levels, will tolerate the light being a foot or more away from the leaves and still grow well.

Wherever you choose to place your plant lights, make certain the air temperature is suitable for the plants you're cultivating. It would be futile to grow tropical orchids, which like warmth, in a cold basement even with lights. Annual seedlings may germinate more rapidly in a warm environment, but their growth will be stockier and healthier if the temperature is kept cooler after germination.

Since plants require a period of darkness for good health it's wise to put your lights on timers, otherwise you may forget to turn them on and off as needed. **Plants need about fourteen to sixteen hours of light, but they also need eight hours of darkness.**

Spiders and Boxelder Bugs

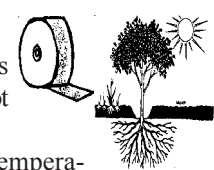
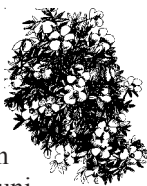
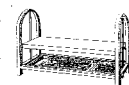
Boxelder bugs, elm beetles, spiders, and root weevils are all looking for a nice warm home for the winter. Most insects are harmless, but they can become a nuisance. They often congregate in large numbers on the south side of your home and then try to migrate inside, where it is a little warmer. As the temperature gets cold they will find any crack, hole, or open door to crawl through to find warmth. Prevent these bugs from getting inside by making sure all the cracks and crevices are properly caulked or sealed; the door threshold is notoriously a major entry point for many insect invaders. Check your screens to make sure they are secure. Unfortunately, you cannot keep all unwanted insects from entering open doors, so you will still have to contend with the occasional visitor.

Outside chemical control for these types of pests is difficult because they are not feeding on anything, and they are preparing to hibernate for the winter. All chemicals must come in direct contact with each bug to kill them. There is no long-lasting, chemical for controlling these nuisance pests. You have to spray often to kill *boxelder bugs*. One of the best chemicals we have found to kill these unwanted pests is **Eight**, a fairly safe, organic insecticide. This chemical kills insects fast and does not stain your siding or brick. Spray weekly until the insect numbers are reduced, and then spray monthly to keep any stragglers under control.

White Paint on Trees

Many gardeners wonder why fruit farmers paint their tree trunks white in the winter. Why not black, or some other color that attracts heat?

Plants do not produce heat. Each plant's temperature is at or near the air temperature all the time. Paint, tree wrap, and blankets serve a different purpose for plants than for animals. These protective devices help prevent the plant from getting too warm in the winter, not too cold. If a plant gets too warm



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in the day and then gets too cold at night there is a much greater risk of winter injury than if the plant stays cool all the time. You will often notice that more plants die on the south side of a house than die on the north side, for this very reason.

The purpose of white paint, or white tree wrap, is to reflect, not absorb, the sun's warmth. Snow reflects the sun's rays onto the brown tree bark, making the bark warmer than it should be. Your goal with white paint is to reverse the effect of the snow. Try to reflect the heat away from the tree trunk.



The only time wrapping a tree is really necessary is when your tree is young - that's when it's most vulnerable. Young trees can get sunburned on a sunny day. If you have ever been ice fishing or skiing on a bright, sunny day, you know how easy it is to get sunburned during the cold winter weather.

Thin-barked trees such as peach, nectarine, locust, flowering cherry, linden, and some Japanese maples are sensitive to sunburn even when they are older. Wrap your trees in the late-fall and remember to remove the tree wrap early in the spring to allow for new growth.

Where do bugs go during the winter?

As fall fades into winter, yards and gardens should have been cleaned up and plants should have gone dormant. **What about the insect pests?** Most insects will be protected and will be ready to reappear next season. Many common insect pests actually overwinter in plant debris left in the garden, so it does pay to clean the garden at the end of the season. For example, cabbageworms that may have infested your cabbage and broccoli plants during the summer, spend the winter as pupa in plant debris left in the garden. Cucumber beetles overwinter as adult beetles in the same debris. The tomato hornworm also spends the winter as a pupa in plant debris. Lawn grubs safely rest as a larvae in the soil just below the frostline in the soil.



Other nuisance insects (boxelder bugs, snails, centipedes, earwigs, millipedes) overwinter in sheltered areas such as under plastic or weedcloth left in the gardens, in the siding of your house or in a pile of firewood. These insects may also become active pests during the warm spells of winter.



Some caterpillars overwinter on the actual tree they eat during the summer. Eggs are deposited in cracks in the bark or in the crotches of branches, ready to hatch next spring. Aphids also deposit their eggs in these same areas. You may have seen a willow branch completely engulfed with large black aphids in the fall, or an apple tree completely covered with the cottony covering of the woolly apple aphid. They are laying their eggs for next year.

Most borers that attack trees and shrubs spend the winter as larvae inside the host tree. They spend much of the warm weather, during the winter, tunneling around and eating the tree.

During winter, or at any time of the year, we can't forget about *cockroaches*! No one likes to see these brown, shiny, flat-bodied creatures scurrying around the house, but you would need a lot of luck to eliminate them completely. Cockroaches have been around for thousands of years and are among the most persistent insects. Be glad that the cockroaches we have in Utah are not as big as the ones found in the southern US, and in Central America. A six inch cockroach is not unheard of.

Spend some time this fall controlling these pests, you may save yourself some time and money next spring.

Household Ants

Have you ever noticed a crumb from yesterday's sandwich sprouting legs and moving across the kitchen counter? What was yesterday's crumb is now a feast for an army of ants. Ants usually take regular routes to and from their nest and their food source by creating a chemical scent trail. Instead of leaving a trail of bread crumbs to find their way back home, they leave a scent trail to find their way back to the bread crumbs.



Ants can be common pests in homes. Most ants are primarily just a nuisance; they cause little damage. However, carpenter ants can weaken wooden structures. Unlike termites, ants can nest in wood but they do not eat the wood. Ants have a wide range of nesting habits and food preferences. Some ants build nests in soil producing characteristic mounds, while other ants nest in homes behind moldings, baseboards, under countertops and in other similar places. Still others, like carpenter ants, nest in decaying wood.

Not all ants found outdoors become pests indoors. Outdoors, ants are important in aerating the soil and in seed dispersal of many wildflowers. Outdoor ant colonies generally do not require any kind of control.

Inside, ants become a nuisance. They like to eat sweets, fats, starches, grains, and other foods, including meat. That's why they hang out in the kitchen. They may be nesting either inside or outside. They can nest in walls, under floors and even in potted plants. Fortunately, most indoor ants do not cause any structural damage to buildings.

Spraying a pesticide on the occasional ant foraging for food is only a temporary fix. However, spraying ant crawl ways, tunnels, and the actual ant nest may help eliminate the problem. Permethrin pesticides provide a safe chemical control for ants if used correctly. Two other excellent indoor sprays are **Bayer Indoor Insect Killer** and **Concern Citrus Home Pest Control**. Ant traps and baits can also be effective. Put the traps under the sink, in the food closets, or behind the drawers in your kitchen. The **Grant Company** makes an excellent ant trap that attracts ants and then sends the poison back to the ant hill with the soldiers. Do not set bait traps where small children or pets can reach them.

Winter Chemical Storage

Your chemical storage area should be secure from unwanted visitors, both human and animals. Good lighting and ventilation are important to consider. Proper ventilation can prevent volatile chemicals from contaminating other materials in storage. Store flammable products outside living areas and away from ignition sources. Keep chemicals and fertilizers cool and dry. Extreme temperature variations can cause unwanted problems such as frozen, ruptured containers, or hot, volatile gases. Too much humidity or moisture may cause paper bags and metal containers to disintegrate prematurely. Do not store bags of fertilizer directly on the floor as it can absorb moisture. Wet fertilizer turns into hard bricks making it unusable.



Store all chemicals in their original containers that have legible labels. Do not ever transfer chemicals into an empty food container. Do not use an empty pesticide container to store food or water, even if the container has been thoroughly washed. Do not store pesticides near food, medicine, or cleaning materials.

One way to minimize pesticide storage problems is to plan

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ahead and buy fertilizers and pesticides one season at a time. The small containers that seemed 'expensive' in the spring may actually be the 'best buy' in the fall.

Houseplants can 'Clean the Air'

Do you remember what you learned about plants in your high school biology class? The part where you learned that all plants absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen?



Besides absorbing carbon dioxide, many houseplants can also absorb other chemicals that are common inside houses. **Formaldehyde, Benzene, and Trichloroethylene** are three of the most common chemicals found inside our houses. These chemicals, if present, are usually only found in very small quantities. They may not even be detectable in most homes, especially during the summer months when the windows and doors are open. Winter, when the doors and windows are kept closed, is the most likely time these chemicals may build up in the air. Many houseplants can absorb these chemicals and eliminate them.

Formaldehyde may be found in particle board, plywood, insulation, paper products (paper bags, paper towels, tissue paper), and in permanent press fabrics. **Benzene** may be found in inks, paints, oils, plastics, rubber products, dyes, pesticides, detergents, pharmaceutical products, and in gasoline. **Trichloroethylene** may be found in inks, paints, lacquers, varnishes, and in adhesives.

Some of the most popular houseplants are excellent air fresheners. Poinsettias can help remove formaldehyde. Chrysanthemums can remove benzene. Spider plants, Philodendrons, Aloe Vera, and Dieffenbachia can all remove formaldehyde. English Ivy, Pothos, and Dracena can remove trichloroethylene.



It's hard to imagine that something as simple as a houseplant can keep your home a little healthier; but it can. Of course, houseplants by themselves can't make your home completely chemical free, but they can make a difference. The more plants you have in the home the cleaner the air will be. The longer you keep your plants inside your house the more effective they will become. No matter where you live you can breathe a little easier when you surround yourself with **Mother Nature's Natural Air Fresheners - Houseplants.**

If a Houseplant could speak

A plant can't speak, but luckily you can usually tell what's ailing it by looking for a few warning signs. Signs that a plant is ready for repotting are some of the easiest to recognize. When your houseplant wilts too quickly after being watered, this is a good indication that it needs to be repotted. Gently lift the plant from the pot. Are the roots encircling the inside of the container? If your plants looks stunted, deformed, or pale green, they're telling you that it's time to repot them.



Rootbound plants need more water, more often because there isn't as much soil, compared to roots, to maintain the needed moisture. And if you let it go for too long, a big, fat root system may even start to strangle itself.

Although this symptom may be the most common sign that a plant needs repotting, each plant tells you it's time in its own way. Some plants, with extensive roots, may naturally send their roots riding up over the soil. Others may begin to yellow or die from the center, especially in spring. Sometimes you just have to

make a judgement call. Take a step back and look at your plant. Does the foliage look overly large in proportion to the pot? But remember - some plants actually prefer being rootbound. African Violets, for example, will bloom best in small pots.

How often should you plan to repot? A good rule of thumb is every year. And sometimes, when a plant's suffering for no apparent reason, repotting helps, even if it's not rootbound. In this case, you don't need to move the plant to a larger container, it may benefit from a simple change of soil to freshen up the nutrient supply, and to improve the drainage.

Since different potting soils absorb water slightly differently, try to repot with the same kind of potting mix that the plant has already been growing in. Of course, if you're unhappy with the soil your plant is in, this is a good time to brush off the bad soil and start over.

Certain plants, such as African violets, orchids, and cacti, require their own specially formulated potting mixes. But with most other houseplants, it's more a matter of personal preference. **Black Gold All Purpose Potting Soil** is an excellent soil for most houseplants in your home.



If a plant's health is in danger you can repot it almost any time of year. But if you're simply doing routine maintenance, spring is best. This is when plants are entering an active growth phase, so they'll readjust and begin to grow new roots quickly.

Once you've examined your plants and decided that repotting is just what the plant needs, gather up a new container; your potting mix, a watering can, a small trowel, and you're ready to begin. Happy repotting!

Fungus Gnats - A Nuisance Pest



Controlling insect pests in houseplants can be aggravating and frustrating, especially fungus gnats. Fungus gnats generally do not kill houseplants. The adults are considered a nuisance pest because they just lay eggs, torment people, and die; they do not feed on the plants. Before they die, however, they do make themselves a nuisance. Adult fungus gnats are attracted to sources of carbon dioxide, which is why they like to fly around your mouth and nose. Use **Yellow Sticky Traps** near your houseplants to help catch these pesky critter.

The first step to get rid of adult fungus gnats is to eliminate their source. Fungus gnat larvae live in the soil and feed on fungus that naturally grows in the soil and in plant saucers. The adults will eventually disappear if you can eliminate the eggs and larvae. Wash all your plant's saucers and the outsides of all your pots with a disinfectant such as clorox and water. Put a penny in the saucer after you clean it. The copper in water will sometimes help control this insect. You can also apply an insecticide in the potting soil to kill the larvae. Some people will mix an insecticide, such as Permethrin, in water and drench the soil every two or three weeks. We also recommend spreading **Bonide Systemic Houseplant Insecticide Granules** on the surface of each pot, covering it with a thin layer of soil, and watering it in. Both of these treatments produce an undesirable odor that may linger around the house for a few days so be sure to move the plants to an appropriate area before treating the plants.



Sometimes you can control fungus gnat larvae by just letting the soil dry out between waterings. The larvae need moisture to survive. Another method of fungus gnat control is to cover the soil with a 1/2" layer of coarse sand or fine gravel to

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smother the eggs and young larvae. This covering also prevents adults from laying more eggs in the soil. This method is probably the best solution for a long term control.

Snow - a mixed blessing

Snow is a mixed blessing in the yard. When snow comes early, before the leaves are raked and the gardens are roto-tilled, it is a nuisance. When it comes at the right time it is one of the best, and cheapest, winter protectors available. Fluffy and light, freshly fallen snow is an excellent insulator. Snow contains millions of tiny air pockets that trap soil warmth in and keeps cold temperatures out. Snow helps protect perennials, bulbs, groundcovers, and most other low growing plants from the alternating freezing and thawing cycles. Snow can also help prevent tender shrubs, such as azaleas, rhododendrons, hydrangeas, and other borderline-hardy shrubs from struggling, or dying, during extremely cold temperatures. It provides insulation from the cold weather and supplies the much needed winter moisture that most evergreen plants require.

Plants that have stems above the snow line may suffer some winter injury on the exposed parts. Some winter injury may simply be the lack of spring flowers. The first part of a plant that dies from winter injury are the flower buds, then the leaf buds, next the stems, and finally the roots.

Mulch is often used for the same purpose that snow provides, to help insulate plants from extreme temperatures, to help prevent the soil from heaving during the winter, and to help keep moisture in the soil. If we don't get enough snow to protect your plants then you need to provide some extra mulch.

Fall Leaf Color - Did You Know?

The particular shade of orange, red, and purple fall color that is developed in leaves is related to the acid or alkaline condition of the sap inside the plant. If the sap is acidic, the color will be orange or red. With neutral sap the pigment turns light purple. When the sap is alkaline, a dark blue or purple color is evident.

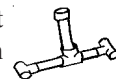
The soil and water in this area is alkaline. If your plants aren't as bright red as you would like them to be, try watering them with a little vinegar and water solution. Mix one cup vinegar in five gallons of water. Apply this mixture once a month during the spring and summer. You must apply it at least six weeks before the fall colors start to show to influence the color.

Mice, Gopher & Vole Problems

Last winter was a good example of what happens when we get a snowfall that lasts for an extended time. Rodents love it, it makes their life much easier. They can dig tunnels through snow instead of frozen dirt. They tunnel between the snowline and soil line, eating the grass crowns as they tunnel. The lawn recovers from this damage quite easily, but flowers, shrubs and trees are not as forgiving. Mice, rabbits, gophers, and voles can do a considerable amount of damage during the winter, and you will not notice the damage until the following spring, when the snow starts to melt.

If you think you might have a rodent problem this winter you should put some rodent bait out early. Do not put it where cats and dogs will find it. You should put it somewhere that it will not get wet. Rodents will not eat spoiled rat bait when there are fresh grass roots or peony roots nearby.

Build a bait station out of PVC pipe to protect your rodent bait from the weather. The bait station will keep the poison dry and it will attract the rodents. They will think they have just found a place to make a home. Buy 3 pvc tees, 1 pvc cap, and 3 feet of PVC pipe. Any size pipe from 1" to 2" will work because rodents are not claustrophobic, they like to live in tight places. Do not glue any fittings together, just push them together. Put the bait inside the pipe and place the bait station in the yard near the shrubs and trees you are trying to protect. You may want to make two or three of these bait stations.



Garden In A Can

What happens if you cannot buy garden seeds? **Garden In A Can** is a storage can that contains enough non-hybrid garden seeds to plant a 3/4 acre garden. You can then harvest the seeds, if necessary, and plant them the following year, since they are not hybrid varieties. **Garden In A Can** contains 16 different varieties of vegetables that will grow well in this climate. The **Garden In A Can** seeds are an excellent supplement to your emergency preparedness food storage program and make excellent gifts.

Storing garden seeds for future years is always a good idea but is sometimes difficult.

1. Seeds can not be 'too wet' or 'too dry' when put into storage.
2. Seeds need to be kept cool and dry once they are put into storage. Do not keep seeds in the freezer.
3. Seeds need to be rotated every few years, seeds will not maintain a good germination rate indefinitely.
4. You need reliable varieties of vegetable seeds.
5. You need a good selection of vegetables to grow.
6. Some seeds will not store and germinate as well as others.

Mountain Valley Seed Company packages especially selected and specially dried seeds in air tight cans. These seeds should store up to 4 or 5 years and still maintain good germination. The cooler the storage temperature, the longer the seeds will last.

Deer Controls

Have you ever watched out your back window as a Doe and her two fawns stroll into your garden? They are so cute, the kids would love to watch them walk through the yard. They look so sweet; they wouldn't hurt anything. You watch as one of the fawns takes a bite of the lamb's ear growing on the edge of the garden: hasn't he learned that deer do not like plants with fuzzy leaves? - Lamb's ear was on the list of plants deer will not eat. The other fawn takes one bite out of your prize pumpkin and then strolls over to look at a bright red tomato. Meanwhile, the doe devours all of your pretty pansies, pulling each plant out by the roots as she gulps them down. Now, all of a sudden, these cute deer are not as welcome as they were a minute ago. Part of you wants to run for a camera while another part of you wants to look for the shotgun.

Unfortunately there is not a good solution to the deer problem. The only 100% control is to use physical barriers such as seven to eight foot tall fences around the yard, or cages around each plant. Some gardeners have used chicken wire, shade cloth, burlap, or nylon netting to build protective cages.

Dozens of repellents have been tried by inventive and very desperate gardeners. They all work, for a short time, but deer get accustomed to them. The trick therefore is to switch repellents occasionally.

Some common repellents you can try are **1. Ultra Sonic Pest Chasers**. These electronic devices use ultrasound waves to repel many different types of pests. **2. Motion sensors** can activate either a light or a loud radio, (be careful or your neighbors might not be neighborly very long). **3. Dogs** are a good way to keep deer out, if the dog is fairly large, noisy, and has free rein of the yard. **4. Blood Meal** and **Milorganite** are two fertilizers that have an odor deer do not like, sprinkle them lightly around the yard every week or two. **5. Human Hair**, Chunks of



J&L's December 2008 Newsletter Coupon

One

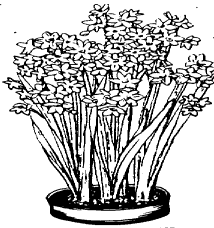
Paperwhite Narcissus Bulb

25¢

Buy More
Paperwhite
Narcissus Bulbs

88¢ Each

Regular Price \$1.49



One

Poinsettia Plant

1/2 Price

Buy More
Poinsettias

20% Off



Choose from Any Size or Any Color

Coupon Valid through January 1, 2009 Limited to Quantities in Stock.

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Soap, Fabric Softener Sheets, Garlic Spray, an Egg and Water Mixture, or Cayenne Pepper are household repellents that tend to repel deer. **6. Commercial repellents** are also available such as Liquid Fence, Hot Pepper Wax, Not Tonight Deer, Deer Away, Shake Away, and Predator Urines.



Another possible choice to control deer is to use "**Deer-Proof**" plants, but don't get your hopes up. The Utah Division of Wildlife, Sunset Western Garden Encyclopedia, and several other publications list plants that deer will not eat. The problem is that deer cannot read and many of the plants on those lists have been munched on by deer in this area. Deer will try eating most anything at least once, even if they don't like it and spit it out. Read the 'Deer Resistant Plant' article on the next page.

Growing Paperwhite Narcissi

Paperwhite bulbs don't need a cold treatment to bloom. After planting, they will bloom in six to eight weeks.



Planting In Soil : Plant 5 - 6 bulbs in a 6" pot. The pot should be at least 5" to 6" deep. The bulb tips should just peek through the soil surface. Make sure the bulbs don't touch each other or the sides of the pots. Water the bulbs occasionally but do not keep the soil soggy wet. The plants will need more water as the leaves begin to grow, and the plants will need even more water once the flowers begin to appear. Keep pots cool (50° to 55°) and dark until top growth begins. When shoots are about 2" tall bring pots into light to develop flower stalks. Tall plants need support. Bright light and cool temperatures (60° to 70°) will help keep narcissi compact. Bulbs started in mid-November will bloom late-December.

Planting in Gravel & Water: Put a layer of gravel in a decorative bowl. The bowl needs to be at least 5" to 6" deep. Arrange bulbs and fill the bowl with gravel. The gravel may be any size or color. Be sure to completely cover the bulbs with gravel to prevent the bulbs from tipping. Add enough water to only touch the base of the bulbs. Do not let the bulbs sit in water. Check the water level often - too little will dry the roots, and too much will invite decay. A little charcoal mixed with the gravel will help keep the water fresh. Keep the pot cool (50° to 55°) and in the dark until top growth begins. When shoots are about 2" tall, bring the pots into the light to develop flower

stalks. Tall plants will need support. Bright light and cool temperatures (60° to 70°) will help keep the paperwhites compact.

Plants for Winter Interest

Year after year we plan our garden with an eye toward spring and summer. Too little consideration is given to the long winter months and achieving year-round beauty in the landscape. Many plants display winter attributes that are every bit as attractive as their summer characteristics. Though conifers and other evergreens provide green beauty throughout the cold season there are several deciduous trees and shrubs with striking bold and colorful twigs and fruit.



Red Twig Dogwood. This native shrub adds a splash of color to the winter landscape. The young stems are bright red in the cold months, the old stems are not very colorful. To encourage the growth of young stems, do not be afraid to cut the older stems to the ground early each spring. Pruning will serve two functions: it can control the size of the plant and it will stimulate growth of more colorful stems.

Yellow Twig Dogwood. This shrub is not native to Utah, but like the redtwig dogwood, it too will add a splash of color to the winter landscape. The young twigs turn a brilliant yellow during the cold winter weather. Remember to remove the older branches if you want to encourage more young, bright yellow branches for next year.

Contorted Filbert. This plant adds a unique and interesting twig design to the yard. The naturally curling branches are especially noticeable when the leaves have dropped from the plant. Occasionally this plant will produce "straight" twigs instead of the traditionally curly twigs. Don't be afraid of removing the straight branches in favor of the curly ones.

Witchhazel. This small tree, or large shrub, is among the most exciting plants for the winter garden. In autumn they have splendid leaf colors. By the very end of October the limbs are bare, except for a few, old, horned nuts that still cling from the year before. During the winter, they have beautiful, gnarly limbs and scaly bark. They bloom a couple weeks after Christmas and many of the blossoms persist well into February.



Unfortunately, most gardeners never get to see

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these unique blossoms because not very many people visit our nursery during the cold winter months, and even fewer people are looking for plants during January and February. This is definitely a plant to consider for your winter garden.

Cranberry Viburnum. Has masses of red berries during the winter that serve as a food source for birds. The green foliage turns brilliant red to purple in the fall. Viburnums grow 2 feet to 10 feet tall, depending on the variety you plant.

Sumac. Is one of the most underrated bushes for providing fall colors on the landscape. The colorful leaves of the many varieties of sumac provide fall colors ranging from red or maroon to gold. Two taller varieties are staghorn and smooth sumac. Dwarf varieties are also available for the yard. Sumac are considered 'Deer Proof' but deer still seem to munch on them.

Perennial Grasses. Don't forget the *Perennial Ornamental Grasses* in this category of winter gardening. Many grasses are their prettiest after the grass blades have died for the winter. Do not be in too big of a hurry to remove these leaves. They will give you a nice contrast to the white winter color. These grasses also attract many birds with their seeds.



Winter Pruning

Winter is a good time to get your yard into shape for spring. You can trim and shape most of your shrubs, hedges, trees, and raspberries this winter. Trim your "summer flowering" shrubs (mock orange, potentilla, spiraea, etc.) now, but don't trim your "spring flowering" shrubs (forsythia, quince, lilac, etc.) until spring. If you prune your "spring flowering" shrubs now, you will remove most of the flowers for next spring; wait until after the "spring flowering" shrubs bloom to prune them. Prune roses just enough to keep the canes from breaking in the snow (cut them off to about 3' tall). Finish pruning your roses next April, just before they start to grow. Prune raspberry canes to about waist high, to prevent the snow from breaking them. Give your hedges, and other formally trained plants, their final grooming for the season.



You can prune most shade trees this winter, after the leaves drop off. Maple trees, birch trees, willow trees, and many other shade trees respond well to winter pruning: many shade trees may bleed if you prune them in the spring. The best time to prune fruit trees is early in the spring, just before they start to grow, but you can start pruning them anytime after they go dormant in the fall, usually after November. You normally prune grapevines in January or February, but you can prune them after they have gone dormant in the winter. Prune your grapevines a little earlier this winter and make a grapevine wreath for your home. Pruning isn't as complicated as it sounds, once you learn the basics. If you have pruning questions be sure to attend one of our pruning classes next March.



Salt and Ice Melters

De-icing salts are a vital part of winter road maintenance, but they can be harmful to most trees and shrubs along the roadside or even along your driveway. You would be amazed how much salt you bring home on your car every time you go to the grocery store or to work. This salt has to go somewhere, just try to make sure it doesn't end up in your flower gardens or on your shrubs.



Unfortunately, you have no control over the amount of salt

used on the streets, or how much salt gets plowed onto the parkstrip. You can, however, control how much salt or ice melter that you use on your own sidewalks and driveways. Salt and Ice Melters can harm or kill plants. Use it sparingly and use gypsum in the spring to help reduce its harmful affects on plants. Fertilizer is an alternative to salt, but it can damage concrete even more than salt can. Use fertilizer sparingly as an ice melter.

'Deer Resistant - Not Deer Proof' Plants

Whether deer will target a particular plant variety depends on their habits, nutritional needs, plant palatability, seasonal factors, weather conditions, geographic area, and availability of alternative foods. Deer are creatures of habit, and previous movement patterns or foraging experiences can determine where damage will occur. Also, one plant species may be rarely damaged in one area, but highly preferred in another due to differences in deer pressure and other physical factors.



In general, damage from browsing is most severe when snow cover, or extreme cold, has reduced food availability. Another problem time is early spring, when the young succulent growth of ornamentals provides attractive food, before other spring growth is available. When food is in short supply, deer will browse even the most undesirable plants. Under such conditions, combine damage control measures, along with careful plant selection. Damage control measures include repellents and physical barriers (fencing). A few shrubs and trees that deer seem 'not to enjoy', but will 'still eat occasionally' are:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Amelanchier</i> spp. (Serviceberry) | Perennial Flowers |
| <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> (Bearberry) | Soapwort |
| <i>Aronia melanocarpa</i> (Black Chokeberry) | Artemisia |
| <i>Berberis</i> spp. (Barberry) | <i>Salvia greggii</i> |
| <i>Buddleia</i> spp. (Butterfly bush) | Bearded Iris |
| <i>Buxus</i> (Boxwood) | Candytuft |
| <i>Caryopteris</i> | Dusty Miller |
| <i>Cotinus coggygia</i> (Smoke tree) | Garlic Chives |
| <i>Cotoneaster</i> spp. (Cotoneaster) | Sedum |
| <i>Forsythia</i> spp. (Forsythia) | Santolina |
| <i>Juniperus chinensis</i> | Hibiscus |
| <i>Pinus Mugho</i> (Mugho Pine) | Chrysanthemum |
| <i>Potentilla</i> spp. (Cinquefoil) | Yarrow |
| <i>Rhus</i> (Sumac) | Russian Sage |
| <i>Spiraea</i> spp. (Spirea) | Delphinium |
| <i>Syringa</i> spp. (Lilac) | Lamb's Ear |
| <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i> (Tamarix) | Gailardia |
| <i>Taxus</i> (Yew) | Monarda |
| <i>Viburnum</i> | Poppies |
| <i>Wisteria</i> | Obedient Plant |
| <i>Yucca filamentosa</i> | Rudbeckia |
| <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> (Horsechestnut) | Ornamental grasses |
| <i>Betula</i> (Birch) | Annual Flowers |
| <i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i> (Green Ash) | Ageratum |
| <i>Ginkgo biloba</i> (Maidenhair Tree) | Salvia |
| <i>Larix deciduata</i> (European Larch) | Marigolds |
| <i>Picea abies</i> (Norway Spruce) | Periwinkles |
| <i>Picea glauca</i> (White Spruce) | Zinnias |
| <i>Picea glauca</i> var. <i>Densata</i> (Black Hills Spruce) | Cleome |
| <i>Picea pungens</i> (Colorado Spruce) | Amarantha |
| <i>Picea pungens</i> 'Nidiformis' (Bird's Nest Spruce) | Euryops |
| <i>Pinus Nigra</i> (Austrian Pine, Black Pine) | Lantana |
| <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> (Scotch Pine) | |
| <i>Quercus</i> (Oak) | |

This is not a complete list but it will give you a few ideas for next spring as you start planning you 'Deer Resistant' gardens.