



J&L Garden Center

The All Season Gift
and Garden Center

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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 for Winter.**



10. Clean all debris from your pond. Do not feed fish once the water temperature reaches 50 degrees.
9. Fertilize your lawn now if you didn't fertilize it in September or October. Fertilize just before it snows.
8. Remove all your dead flowers and vegetable plants. Do not let them stay in the gardens through the winter.
7. Add as much mulch to your gardens as practical and roto till if the ground is not soggy.
6. Mow your grass short for the winter.
5. Rake the leaves off your lawn and put them in a compost pile or in the garden.
4. Trim roses and raspberries as soon as they freeze.
3. Tie up shrubs to prevent snow damage.
2. Protect tender plants for the winter.
1. Water plants occasionally during the winter if Mother Nature does not do it for you.

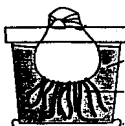
Amaryllis Bulb Care

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 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. 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.**



Amaryllis normally bloom in the spring, but the bulbs have been stored in cool temperatures of 55 degrees Fahrenheit for several weeks. The blooming timetable of the amaryllis bulbs were set ahead so they will be in full bloom this winter. Amaryllis bulbs are sometimes unpredictable. The bulbs may start growing immediately or the bulbs may wait several weeks to start growing. Once the bulb starts growing it usually takes four to six weeks for the blossoms to appear. After your blossoms have faded don't be too surprised if another blossom stem appears later in the spring or summer.

We have an Amaryllis Care sheet available, 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 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, 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 absorb water again.

Spray your tree with Wilt Prufe. This spray prevents moisture loss from the needles. Wilt Prufe will help your tree stay fresher longer. It is a nontoxic, odorless spray that really makes a difference.

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



Always use miniature lights; not C7 or C9 lights.

Spray your tree with Fire Retardant.

Thirty years ago, a Christmas tree was traditionally set up a week before Christmas and then taken down right after Christmas Day. Now, Christmas trees are sometimes set up three or four weeks before Christmas and left standing until after New Year's Day. If you like your Christmas Tree set up for the entire holiday season, you may consider buying a **permanent, Artificial Christmas Tree**; they don't dry out. Buy a fresh-cut Christmas tree or a Potted Christmas tree for another room in the house, for a shorter period of time.

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 root-ball dry out.

3. Spray your tree with **Wilt Prufe** 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.

By following these simple guidelines you can have a healthy tree to plant after Christmas.

Fun Facts About Christmas Trees

As people are hustling and bustling through the 'holly day' season, few take a moment to marvel over the history and life of a Christmas tree. These little tidbits might come in handy for small talk at your next party.



The first printed reference to Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1531.

The decorated Christmas tree can be traced back to the ancient Romans who decorated trees with small pieces of metal during Saturnalia, a winter festival in honor of Saturnus, the God of Agriculture.

In 1963, the National Christmas Tree was not lighted until December 22 because of a national 30-day period of mourning following the assassination of President Kennedy.

In 1979, the National Christmas Tree was not lighted except for the top ornament. This was done in honor of the American hostages in Iran.

Oregon produces the most Christmas trees, 8.6 million in 1998.

Growing Christmas trees provides a habitat for wildlife. Recycled live trees have been used to make sand and soil erosion barriers, placed in ponds for fish shelter and make great winter protection for perennial flowers.

Nationally, 59% of Christmas trees harvested are recycled in community programs.

Christmas trees take 7-10 years from planting, managing insects and diseases, shearing and weathering all kinds of environmental problems, to produce a saleable tree.

Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states including Hawaii and Alaska.

98 percent of all Christmas trees are grown on farms.

On average, over 2,000 Christmas trees are planted per acre. 2-3 seedlings are planted for every harvested Christmas tree.

32.4 million families purchased a real tree in 2000.

Other types of trees, such as cherry and hawthorns, were used as Christmas trees in the past.

Using small candles to light a Christmas tree dates back to the middle of the 17th century.

Thomas Edison's assistant, Edward Johnson, came up with the idea of electric lights for Christmas trees in 1882. Christmas tree lights were first mass produced in 1890.

What Christmas tree decoration did the government ban at one time? Tinsel. It originally contained lead, now it's made of plastic.

Keep your tree well watered. In the first week, a tree in your home will consume as much as a quart of water per day. You should *never* burn your Christmas tree in the fireplace. It can contribute to creosote buildup and cause a house fire.

Gift Ideas



For The Gardeners In Your Family

J&L has a good assortment of gift ideas perfect for the gardeners in your family and for the gardeners in your neighborhood. What does your gardener want for Christmas?

Amaryllis Bulb	A New Shovel
Bamboo Windchime	Gardening Books
Slogger Gardening Shoes	Candle Warmer
Gardening Gloves	Wild Bird Bell
Gift Certificate	Wild Bird Feeder
Pruning Tools	A CD Case or Blanket
Plant Stand	Sprinkler Timer

A Load of Manure - delivered next spring of course.

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 will also grow and bloom year after year, if you have the patience to take care of them.

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 blooming.

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 still 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 will.

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 that gives you more information about growing and keeping your poinsettias looking good. Stop by and pick one up or download a copy

Winter Lawn Care

This fall was extremely hot and dry. We told many people who asked if they should fertilize their lawn, to wait until the winter snow starts to fall. Fertilize your lawn now with **J&L Fall and Winter Lawn Fertilizer**, if you didn't already fertilize this fall.



"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 prevented in the fall than cured in the spring.

Mow your lawn short the last mowing of 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.

Winter Pond Care

During the freezing winter weather fish may die in a garden pond if a few simple precautions are not made. Fish do not die simply because a pond freezes over, however, it is a good idea to prevent the surface from freezing solid. A solid layer of ice prevents the exchange of gases from the water to the air. Fish can die from the lack of oxygen if the pond remains frozen too long. Fish can also die from the build up of toxic gases in the water. Organic material on the bottom of the pond (leaves, fish waste, etc.) decomposes during the winter, producing toxic gases. If these gases cannot escape into the air the fish will die.



One of the best ways to prevent the build up of these toxic gases is to eliminate the source.

1. **Cover** your pond with a net in the fall. Be sure to clean the net often to remove the leaves.
2. Skim the pond regularly to remove all the leaves and debris you can.
3. Vacuum the bottom of your pond regularly during the fall to remove any build up that might accumulate. You can also vacuum the pond during the winter if needed.
4. Use a sludge removing chemical early in the fall to remove as much of the bottom sludge before the cold weather arrives.
5. Stop feeding your fish as soon as the water temperature drops below 50 degrees.

Fish don't mind a frozen top layer, as long as there's nothing rotting on the bottom layer to poison them. However, just to be safe, try to keep the surface from freezing solid. Use an electric pond de-icer to keep a small opening in the ice or run a small water pump to circulate the water near the surface.

If your pond does freeze solid do not just knock a hole in the ice. The concussion caused by the hammering may injure your fish. Broken shards of ice are also dangerous to your fish. Set a hot pan of water on the ice surface to slowly melt a hole in the ice. During freezing weather ice layers can exert tremendous pressure on the sides of your pond. This pressure can damage or break your liner. To prevent damage from this ice pressure try floating a rubber ball or a log in the pond to absorb some of the pressure.

Bulb Forcing

Bulb forcing is not as simple as tossing a bag of bulbs in the refrigerator for a couple of weeks, pulling them out, potting them, and watching them bloom. However, paperwhites are practically foolproof and don't require much preparation or care. Paperwhites bloom six to eight weeks after planting - without much care.



If you would like to attempt to force other types of bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, or hyacinths, you will need to take a little more time and care. A rule of thumb is it takes eight weeks of cool weather to get the bulb ready to grow and it takes another 3 to 4 weeks for the blossoms to appear; for a total of about 12 weeks.

We started forcing a few hyacinth bulbs in September. They are growing in **Hyacinth Jars**. You can see the roots and watch them grow. They make great gifts and they are fun to watch grow and bloom. They won't be blooming by Christmas but they will bloom in January or February. Stop by for a more detailed bulb forcing handout or download a copy from our website.

Salt or Ice Melters?

Do not use fertilizer, salt, or any ice melter on concrete less than 1 year old. Use sand, kitty litter, or sawdust to control ice on new concrete.



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 with you 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, we have no control over the amount of salt used on the streets or how much salt gets plowed onto the park-strip. We can, however, control how much salt or ice melter that we use on our sidewalks and driveways.

The most common ice melter used, the type used on most roads, is sodium chloride (table salt, rock salt, water softener salt). This salt is very effective and inexpensive. Sodium chloride will melt ice even on the coldest days of winter. The sodium in this salt is harmful to plants and can also damage the soil structure. This salt can damage concrete if used excessively. Just look at many of the sidewalks and porches in your neighborhood to see the damage caused by salt.

Some people like to use fertilizer to melt ice. Fertilizers are safer for plants but some fertilizers are more damaging to concrete than salt is. If you use a fertilizer for melting ice make sure it does not contain any iron. Iron will make rust spots on cement that takes a long time to go away. **Urea** is probably the safest garden fertilizer to use to melt ice. It does not damage concrete, in fact, the airport often uses Urea on its runways because it does not harm the concrete or the airplanes. Urea has a drawback though, it will only melt ice when the temperature is above 11 degrees Fahrenheit. Below this temperature Urea will not melt any ice. **Ammonium Sulphate** is another common fertilizer that is often used as an ice melter. This fertilizer melts ice until the temperature is -25 degrees Fahrenheit. However, you must be very careful using Ammonium sulphate because it is very harmful to concrete. It reacts with concrete to

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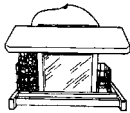
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create a mild acid that can damage your concrete. Ammonium sulphate can actually damage concrete worse than table salt does, so be careful applying it to melt ice on concrete.

We recommend **Ice Fighter Plus**. It is an excellent alternative to plain rock salt even though it does contain sodium chloride. The salt in this product is coated with a polymer, **Propolyce**, which prevents damage to concrete by inhibiting water from penetrating into the concrete. By keeping the water out of concrete, the freezing-thawing damage caused by salt is reduced. If used correctly, this ice melter will not harm concrete nor will it kill most plants. We have a handout that goes into more detail about the advantages of salt and other ice melters. Stop by for a copy or download a copy from our website.

Wild Birds

How do birds survive the cold winter nights (-20 degrees)? Mother Nature has taken care of all her creatures including the small "**Chickadees**". The chickadee weighs only 10 to 12 grams; about one-third ounce. These birds survive the long cold nights and cope with the winter weather in three different ways: physically, physiologically, and behaviorally.



They physically combat the worst of winter weather with a dense insulating coat of feathers. At the end of summer, chickadees molt - then they grow a new, dense set of feathers. They enter fall with the best insulation nature can provide.

Many animals combat the cold physiologically by adding layers of body fat. Chickadees do too, but they burn all their fat (every night) that they store during the day; therefore they cannot use their body fat to insulate them from the cold. Chickadees use their body fat to fuel their metabolic furnaces. Each morning they double their fat reserves and then burn the fat every night to keep them warm. Chickadees cannot consume enough fat each day to maintain their 107 F body temperature all night. So, on cold nights, they enter a controlled state of hypothermia. They lower their body temperature 20 to 30 degrees so they can make it through the night using far fewer calories than they would normally need.

Chickadees also adapt behaviorally by sleeping in small cavities in dense vegetation to get out of the wind, rain and snow. It takes much less heat to warm a small space than to heat themselves in open areas. Chickadees also fluff their feathers at night to cover their legs and feet. They tuck their faces into their shoulder feathers to help reduce heat loss. Chickadees fly less on cold, windy days and stay closer to the ground during bad weather. Chickadees tend to stay at individual food sources for longer times during the cold weather. Watch your bird feeders in the winter to see if your birds stay longer at your feeder on a cold day than on a warm mild day. You will probably be surprised at the difference.

The most remarkable skill Chickadees have learned is to store small amounts of food throughout their winter range during the fall and early-winter. They have these food reserves available in case of extended periods of inclement weather. Despite their small size, chickadees have learned to adapt and live through the cold weather while other, larger birds have learned to migrate to warmer areas.

If you are one of the 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. Birds love sunflower seeds; they are a "Bird's Dessert", but they are not the best food to feed them.

Birds will scatter all the other seed in the feeder just to get to the sunflower seeds, wasting most of the food in the feeder. Separate the sunflower seeds from the other wild bird seed. Put out one feeder of wild bird seed and one feeder with sunflower seeds. You will have less waste from your feeder and you can control when you give the birds dessert. Feed your birds suet or peanut butter once in a while, they love it and it is good for them. Many birds also enjoy nuts, berries, and fruit. The **Wild Delight Company** packages several high quality wild bird mixes. 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. During a cold winter one of the best ways to attract birds is to have an unfrozen source of water for the birds to drink.



Imagine a fast food restaurant where nobody cleaned the kitchen or tables. Now think about your bird feeder. When was the last time you cleaned it? 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

Dry winters cause more problems for plants than years of heavy snow. Snow is the best natural insulator that plants have. Snow protects plants from extreme temperatures (both heat and cold). Snow also helps keep moisture in the soil for plants to use during the winter. If mother nature doesn't provide the necessary insulation, you will need to provide it - to protect your tender plants.



Plants that do not lose their leaves in the winter (evergreens) use quite a bit of moisture each winter. Broad-leaved evergreens (**rhododendron, laurel, oregon grape, etc.**) are most affected by moisture loss because of their large leaf surface. Junipers and pine trees may also suffer during long, dry periods but they are much more tolerant of drought. When the sun shines on a plant the leaf 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 may 'freeze dry' which could kill the entire plant. **There are four things you can do to prevent this 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 them moist. A plant that freezes moist will be much healthier than a plant that freezes dry.

(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 soil. You want the ground to actually freeze lightly to help the plants go dormant before you cover the ground with mulch. Do not use grass clippings because they may cause fungal or disease problems. Apply one or two inches around hardy plants and up to six to eight inches of mulch around your tender plants. Newly planted shrubs need more protection than your older shrubs.

(3) Spray your plants with Wilt Prufe. Wilt Prufe is an anti-desiccant; it seals moisture inside the plants and it stops evaporation from the leaves. Wilt prufe is



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not poisonous and will not harm animals. Spray Wilt Prufe when the temperature is above 40 degrees and will stay above freezing until the spray dries, usually one to two hours. Wilt Prufe is good to use on all plants, especially on 'Broad-leaved Evergreens' and all newly planted shrubs. Wilt Prufe is also great to spray on your Christmas trees to prevent them from drying out so fast.

(4) Wrap the trunks of young trees with Tree Wrap to prevent sunscald and bark splitting. Sunscald and bark splitting are often caused by extreme winter weather; too hot, too cold, or extreme fluctuations in the temperatures. Newly planted trees, fruit trees and thin barked trees (locust, redbud, kwanzan cherry, etc) are especially prone to this type of damage during the winter. Many orchardists regularly spray the trunks of their trees with white paint (instead of wrapping them) in the fall to prevent this type of damage during the winter.

Lucky Bamboo

The Chinese say that Lucky Bamboo will bring good fortune to your home or business. In Asia, it is given as a gift to those starting a new business, or to someone moving into a new home, or to anyone at any time of celebration. Since Lucky Bamboo requires no natural light it is especially nice in a home or office; in an area where no other plants can grow. It is very easy to grow and will live for many years. Unlike its name, Lucky Bamboo is not a bamboo at all; it just looks like bamboo. Lucky bamboo is actually a dracena - *Dracaena sanderana*.



Curly. Many lucky bamboo have fancy curls or waves. They do not grow that way naturally. Growers have to lay the stocks on a table in a greenhouse. They cover three sides to keep them dark. One side has bright light. The plant naturally grows toward the light and then the grower rotates the stock to make it curl. It can take as long as a year to produce a complete curl.

Care. Keep your lucky Bamboo in 1"-3" of water, just enough to cover the roots. There is no need to transplant it into soil. This is not a winter hardy plant, so, it will not survive if you plant it in the garden. Add water to the container as needed and wash out the container regularly, at least once a month. Keep your lucky bamboo in temperatures from 45 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Water. Lucky Bamboo does not like chlorine so either use distilled water or let the water sit for at least 24 hours before adding it to your plant. Be sure to change the water about every two weeks so the water does not become stagnant. Wash off all the leaves and stalks of your lucky bamboo once every month or two to help remove spidermites. Fertilizer is not necessary to keep your Lucky Bamboo alive but it does help.

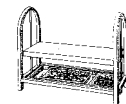
Light. Lucky Bamboo does not need natural light. In fact, it prefers to be out of direct sun. The low-light conditions in an office are great for Lucky Bamboo.

The main stalks of the Lucky Bamboo will not grow any longer than they are now. The leaves on the top of the stock will grow upwards. The more area the roots have to grow (the bigger the container), the faster and longer the leaves will grow, but the main stock will remain the same length. The leaves can eventually form stems of their own.

Ancient Chinese tradition has it that the number of lucky bamboo stalks in a container have different meanings and bring different beneficial factors into your life. Everyone loves to receive good luck and beautiful decorations for the home or of-

fice. Lucky bamboo is the perfect gift, it represents good luck and it is extremely easy to care for. Give one to your friends and neighbors.

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 usually include fluorescent light tubes; although incandescent light bulbs are better than nothing at all. Always buy full-spectrum light bulbs 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 will forget to turn them on and off as needed. **Plants need fourteen to sixteen hours of light and they need eight hours of darkness.**

Boxelder Bugs



Boxelder bugs, elm beetles, 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 unwanted insects from entering open doors so you will still have to contend with the occasional visitor.

Chemical control for these types of pests is difficult because they are not feeding on anything and they are preparing

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to hibernate for the winter. All chemicals must come in direct contact with each bug and there is no lasting effect for controlling these nuisance pests, so you have to spray often. The best chemical we have found to kill these unwanted pests is **Eight**, a safe organic insecticide. This chemical kills insects fast and does not stain your siding or brick. **Sevin** and **Diazinon** are also effective in controlling these insects and most other nuisance pests. Spray weekly until the insect numbers are reduced and then spray monthly to keep any stragglers under control.

Roses & Raspberries

Roses and raspberries have one thing in common this time of year: the way you prune them. Wait until after a hard frost to prune them. After the plants are completely dormant, prune the canes just enough so the snow will not break them during the winter. Prune raspberry canes to about 3' to 5' tall. Prune rose canes to about 3' tall, finish pruning your roses next spring. After pruning your roses, cover the base with 6" to 9" of mulch or soil to prevent winter injury. Tree roses require even more special care to survive our winters. Be sure to take the time to protect them before the weather gets too bad.



Wrapping Trees

The only time wrapping a tree is really necessary is when your tree is young - that's when it's most vulnerable. Wrapping a tree helps protect it from winter sunburn. Even though the temperature is cold, 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. Thin-barked trees such as peach, nectarine, locust, flowering cherry, linden, and some Japanese maples are especially sensitive to sunburn.



The best time to apply tree wrap is in the late-fall. To apply it, push about 1 to 2 inches of soil away from the base of the tree trunk. Start wrapping the tape around the tree just below the soil line. Wrap upward, overlapping at least an inch with every pass. Make sure the tape is tight enough that pests can't get between the strips but not so tight that it strangles the trunk. Keep wrapping the tree until you reach the lowest branches, then fasten the wrap with a string. Check the wrap to make sure it's tight and completely intact. Remove the tape early in the spring to allow for new growth during the season. If you leave your tree wrap in place year round it can hinder growth. It can also become a home for insect pests.

Plant Refuse

Many gardeners ask if they can compost plant refuse. Most leaf pathogens are destroyed quickly once crop refuse comes in contact with soil and the refuse starts to rot. However, some soil born pathogens, such as the wilt diseases of tomatoes and squashes, are soil inhabitants and are not destroyed by contact with soil or by the rotting of crop refuse. Composting will only kill these plant pathogens if the compost pile heats properly and the temperature is maintained long enough. The compost pile must have a minimum volume of one cubic yard and must be turned frequently to kill pathogens in the plant refuse. Turn the pile at least once a week to provide aeration. Keep the pile



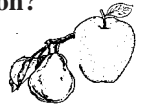
moist but not wet. Add water or dry sawdust to maintain proper moisture levels. These procedures help maintain high temperatures. Pathogens are only killed if the temperature in the pile is 120-160 degrees F for two to three weeks.

Check the temperature frequently. If the temperature is too low some pathogens will survive, particularly those near the edges of the pile. If high temperatures cannot be maintained, then plant refuse might be best destroyed rather than composted. In other words, compost leaves and most plant refuse but destroy tomato plants, squash plants and other plants with any viruses or diseases rather than trying to compost them.

Apples, Pears, & Cotoneasters

What do these three plants have in common?

These three plants, along with pyracantha, photina, hawthorn trees and several other plants can be infected with the **Fireblight Virus**. This virus has no chemical control and the infected portion of the plant must be physically removed to prevent the virus from spreading further in the plant and completely killing the plant.



Look for shriveled and black stems or branches. The infected plant parts will often look like someone has burned them with fire. Remove any infected part at least six inches below the obvious infection. Dip your pruners in a 10% chlorox solution between each cut to prevent spreading this disease.

If your plants have been infected with fireblight you will need to spray them next spring to prevent further spread of this virus. Spray your plants during the blooming period. Fireblight is spread by many of the pollinating insects as they pollinate the blossoms. It is most contagious if the weather is cool and moist (raining) during blossom time. Spray the entire plant with a fungicide that will not kill the pollinating insects. Use either Copper Fungicide or Fire Blight Spray (agromycin - the agricultural grade of streptomycin).

Winter Care Of Houseplants

Houseplants are a wonderful way to bring outside gardening indoors. Houseplants give us something to care for during the winter, something to decorate with, something to clean our air with, something to talk about, and even something to talk to. Some houseplants hang, some houseplants bloom, some houseplants are very small, and some houseplants grow taller than our ceilings. Houseplants vary in their care during the winter but remember that just as we slow down when the days shorten, so do our tropical houseplants. In order to keep your houseplants happy and healthy through the fall and winter, here are a few pointers to keep in mind.



Try to place your plants in their proper light conditions. They naturally go through a short acclimation period as the day length decreases, they may even drop some leaves. Don't place a plant that needs a high light level into a dark corner and don't put a plant that doesn't like a lot of light into a south window: the results may be fatal.

Don't be afraid to prune your plants. Houseplants such as hibiscus, ivy, philodendron, and bougainvillea, can tolerate quite a haircut to keep them in shape! Pruning also allows your blooming plants to take a short rest after their blooming period last summer.

J&L's Coupon of the Month

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Water and fertilize your houseplants less during the winter. You may have to readjust your watering schedule two or three times each winter. A plant that needed watering once a week during the summer may only need to be watered once every two weeks during the winter. One of the biggest "killers" of house plants is over-watering: too much **TLC**. While you should check your plants once a week, they won't necessarily need to be watered every week. When winter really sets in and you turn your furnace on, the furnace will affect the amount of water your plant requires. Dry, warm air dries plants out quickly. A rule of thumb is to wait until the soil feels dry before you water. Push your finger in the soil about an inch to test for moisture, or use a **Moisture Meter** to be sure.



Keeping the air humid is a great way to help keep houseplants healthy. Misting your houseplants is helpful, but the effects are often short term. A humidifier is the most beneficial way of increasing the humidity. Another way to increase the humidity for your plants is to group them together, or to place them on trays filled with gravel and water. Do not let the plants sit directly in water all the time.

Fertilize your plants about half as much during the winter as you fertilize them during the spring and summer: Fertilize them once a month instead of every two weeks. **Schultz All Purpose Fertilizer** is an excellent houseplant fertilizer to use during the winter.



Turn your houseplants every two weeks. Rotate the pot half a turn every two weeks to prevent them from becoming one-sided or leaning toward the light. Ficus trees are notorious for being lush and full on one side and flat and skimpy on the other if they are not rotated once every couple of weeks.

Hopefully, these tips will help your house plants thrive

this winter and help to convince you that you too can be a successful indoor gardener.

Insect Scouting

On a blustery, cold day in the middle of winter, insects seem scarce. But don't be fooled. Even though you might not see them, insects are all around you. They are overwintering somewhere. Just like many of us, insects don't like the cold, so they try hard to keep warm when temperatures drop. To survive the chilly days of winter, some insects lay eggs that will hatch in the warmth of spring. Some migrate to areas with warmer temperatures, and still others find a hiding place and sleep through most of winter. You might find eggs, larvae, pupae, or even adult insects overwintering in old tree stumps, in rotten bark, under fallen leaves, under the plastic you forgot to take out of the garden, or right in the ground your walking on.



When you're finished looking for insects outside, go inside and look for insects right inside your own house. Look in corners, house plants, stacks of old newspapers, recycling bins, piles of firewood, and cabinets, and you just might be surprised what you find. You might see a *house spider* crawl out from a dark corner into the light. House spiders are ideal for catching any flies, moths, or mosquitoes that have invaded your home. The common house fly is present in nearly every home sometime during the year, even during the winter. In our area, house flies overwinter as larvae or pupae. However, in heated buildings some adults may survive and continue to breed throughout the winter. If you keep fruit in your kitchen, you have probably seen a few *fruit flies*. These flies develop rapidly and can produce almost 25 genera-



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The Gardening Newsletter

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tions a year. Each female fruit fly lays up to 100 eggs. Another pesky insect that is easy to find is the *fungus gnat*. You will find this insect (it will probably find you rather than you having to go looking for it) living in the soil, or saucers, in and around your houseplants.



Silverfish are also likely winter visitors. The silverfish prefers damp places such as basements. Silverfish like to feast on book bindings, papers, cards, and boxes - they all make appetizing meals for this creature.

Earwigs may unsettle you when you discover them indoors. Luckily these creatures live most of their lives outside. Earwigs overwinter as either eggs or adults, and the adults will dig as deep as six feet beneath the ground to avoid the cold winter temperatures. If you find one in your home, it has probably come in search of warmth. Earwigs do not bite, but, if handled, they might pinch with their cerci. Watch out! The larger males can have a painful pinch.

Few insects have proved themselves more persistent unwanted houseguests than *ants*. Ants are social insects: they live in colonies (large groups) in the ground or in the foundations and walls of buildings. A colony contains numerous workers and a queen. The ants you see crawling around your house are workers attending to the needs of the colony and the queen. When an ant searches for food, it makes a trail for the other ants to follow by laying down a scent from its abdomen. That is why you usually see ants in a line - they are following the trail of the first ant.



During winter or at any time of the year, and no matter how hard people would like to, we can't forget about *cockroaches*! No one likes to see these brown, shiny, flat-bodied creatures scurrying around the house, but you need a lot of luck to eliminate them completely. Cockroaches boast a long and impressive history: they have been around for 350 million years and are among the earliest insects. In some parts of the country, people have to contend with three or four inch cockroaches. In this area the biggest ones are usually only one or two inches long. In prehistoric times cockroaches were six to ten inches long. We should all be glad we do not have to contend with those.



Now you know about a few of the insects that might join you during the cold days of winter. Sometimes we don't like the idea of insects sharing our space, especially if we find a small colony of ants in the kitchen. We have to realize insects always have been and probably always will be a part of our lives. If you do find yourself face to face with some unwanted winter visitors, just help them along to their natural overwintering site: catch it in a jar and release it outside.



Happy Holidays

