

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for January

*"Here's to the bright new year,
and a fond farewell to the old;
here's to the things that are yet to come,
and to the memories that we hold..."*

Winston Churchill said, "The optimist sees opportunities in every danger, while the pessimist sees danger in every opportunity!" As gardeners we'll look at life from a positive perspective. Failure is fertilizer. If something doesn't grow, we pull it out and dump it in the compost pile to start a new garden. Winter rains water our yards but won't dampen our spirits. We may not be able to choose exactly what happens to us, but we can decide how we respond to any occurrence. We'll turn our lemons into lemonade to enrich our souls. Here's to a bright new year with plenty of cheer. Welcome to 2013.

- **RECYCLE** your Christmas tree. Make sure to remove all decorations, stands, lights, and tinsel. Check your local curbside service for pick up dates.
- **CONTINUE** composting. Yes, it's January, but composting is necessary every day in every way to suppress weeds and add active organic matter to the soil.
- **PACK** in the phytonutrients with a green winter soup. Pick fresh kale, spinach, parsley, Swiss chard, broccoli, and beet tops, saute with onions, garlic, vegetable stock, white wine, blend and enjoy. Yummy!
- **COZY** up your interiors with a magnificent, colorful amaryllis from South Africa or the Netherlands.
- **COOK** quince in a simple syrup and add rose hips for a healthy boost.
- **PRUNE** roses, geraniums, vines, and crepe myrtle trees heavily before the end of the month. This is the time to cut back wisteria and passion vines to discourage overgrowth and accumulation of decaying layers.
- **PICK** up all fallen camellia blooms to avoid disease.
- **ENHANCE** the longevity of your holiday plants like poinsettias and Christmas cactus by fertilizing every two weeks. You can keep them colorful and beautiful through May or longer.
- **WATER** indoor plants more frequently if you have central heat. Test soil moisture by plunging a pencil in the pot. If muddy when retracted, don't water. If pencil comes out dry, it's time for a drink.
- **MIST** plants when they seem droopy. Heaters zap moisture out of plants just like it dries your skin. Misting in the morning and evening provides relief.
- **PERUSE** seed catalogues in the dark dreary days: www.rareseeds.com, www.kitchengardenseeds.com, and www.bountifulgardens.org are a great start!
- **PLANT** Chinese cabbage, bok choy, asparagus, eggplant, dill, celery, borage, kohlrabi, lettuce, arugula, snow peas, and indoor flower seeds to germinate for spring sowing.
- **REDUCE** erosion with three inches of wood chips or other mulches.
- **BUY** your bare root roses locally for a better selection. Your nursery will be able to advise you on the latest best buys.
- **SOAK** bare-root fruit trees, roses, and vines in a bucket of water for a full day before planting. Anything in a cardboard box must be removed to spread out the roots. Cut off any damaged or broken roots.
- **WARM** someone you love all winter long with dream-inspiring spearmint tea from your herb planter.
- **PROVIDE** food for our feathered friends throughout winter to keep them happy living in your garden.
- **PICK** tangerines and Washington navel oranges at their sweetest in January and February.
- **TRANSPLANT** azaleas, camellias, and rhododendrons now as this is the safest time to move them without inhibiting growth.
- **PROTECT** your precious plants from Jack Frost by covering them with cloth or plastic at night or moving containers closer to the house or overhangs.
- **PLUCK** snails and slugs or trap with plates of beer to keep the damage at a minimum.

The leafless trees signal that winter is in full swing as we begin to prepare for the birth of spring. Admire the bare bark. What are we waiting for? Put a smile on your face and spring in your step. Happy New Year! Let's get growing!

Happy Gardening to You!

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*Your friendly neighborhood
arborists Darren and Lew Edwards*

WINTER TREE TIPS

Winter brings cold and rainy weather. "While many trees will be dormant in the winter, exposure to the tough conditions can cause them major stress," says Darren Edwards, Certified Arborist with Advance Tree Service. "Minimize that stress by helping your trees through the cold months. If you take care of your trees in the winter, you will be rewarded in the spring."

Winter can be a good time for pruning most trees, while they are dormant, and pines should only be pruned in the winter months. Removal of large, dead, broken, poorly positioned limbs and corrective pruning can minimize winter storm damage, and maximize optimal spring growth.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you with your winter pruning.

*Advance Tree Service
Your Authority on Trees and Landscape.*



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