

Armstrong & District Garden Club



Welcome! While we are observing the current health guidelines to reduce the spread of COVID, we will not be holding meetings in person until further notice. This newsletter shows that we can still share our stories and love of gardening! And enjoy gardening in our own yards!

Executive 2021

President:

Glenn Gytenbeek

Vice-President:

Paul Peacock

Secretary (Interim):

Carolyn Farris

Treasurer:

Judi Cogan

Membership:

VACANT

Newsletter Editors:

VACANT

Directors:

Judi Cogan

Heather Freeman

VACANT

Brenda Hobbs

Mary Jackson

VACANT

Judy Wilde

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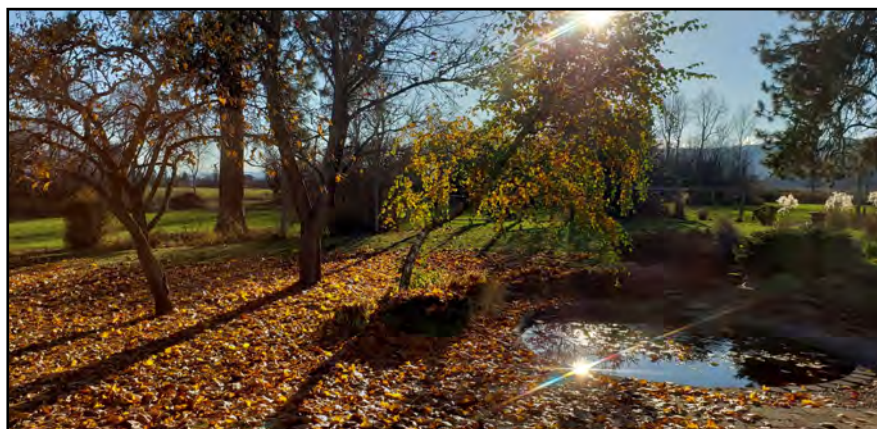


Learn more about growing Christmas Cactus—pages 7 and 8.



Call For Nominations:

If you are interested in the position of Vice-President or in being a Director of the Garden Club, please submit your name to President Glenn by November 15.



Update from the President:

Winter is a time of promise because there is so little to do - or because you can now and then permit yourself the luxury of thinking so. *Stanley Crawford*

Yep, winter is just around the corner, my garden is seriously fading away; the beautiful fall colours are mostly brown and the garlic is planted.

For the first time this year our clay soil is so wet that it sticks to everything. It has transformed from concrete to gumbo in the past month.

The mulch bins are full of chopped leaves, enough for another year.

The garden club executive has completed handing out our donations to the three breakfast programs in our local schools, Food bank, Good Food Box,, brown bag lunch program, Community Gardens, and Community's in Bloom. Money for two bursaries was set aside for PVSS or garden club family member. Four thousand dollars in total. They are all very appreciative.

A big thank you to everyone who helped out at the plant sale to make these donations possible.

Last but not least, please consider volunteering in some capacity with the club there are many holes to fill now, to keep the club operating.

We Need: -Newsletter editor

Membership person

-Vice President

-Plant sale organizer

-Petunia planting co-ordinator

-garden tour co-ordinator

-meeting speaker organizer

-door greeting at meetings

-sunshine person sending thank you cards, get well cards, etc. and

-and it would be nice to have a few more Directors.

Glenn

**Call For Nominations:**

If you are interested in the position of Vice-President or in being a Director of the Garden Club, please submit your name to President Glenn by November 15.

Community Giving:



Highland Park Breakfast



Communities in Bloom



Armstrong Food Bank



AES Breakfast program



Good Food Box - Armstrong



Glad Tidings Breakfast Program (PVSS)



Len Wood Breakfast Program



Community Garden

Plants to Cut Back in Fall: Source: <https://distefanolandscaping.com/perennial-maintenance-cut-back-fall-spring/>

There are a variety of perennials that should be cut back in the fall. Prune foliage down to just a few inches from the ground and make sure to clear away any debris from the garden to help prevent disease and rot in the early spring.

If perennials (like Bee Balm or Phlox) were diseased this past season, cut the foliage all the way down to the ground and don't compost it. Throw it away or dispose of it in an area far enough away from the garden that other plants won't be subject to the disease. Make sure to clean your pruners with a mixture of bleach and water after dealing with any diseased plants.

Hydrangea is an illusive shrub that can be pruned in the late winter/early spring or just after they've finished blooming, depending on the variety. Hydrangeas that bloom on old growth (like "Endless Summer") should be pruned immediately after they've finished flowering. Hydrangeas that bloom on new growth (like the popular "Annabelle" and "Limelight") should be pruned in the late winter or early spring. This is why it's always good to save plant tags or write down which varieties you have in your garden!

Plants To Cut Back In Fall:

- Bearded Iris
- Bee Balm (Monarda)
- Phlox
- Lilies
- Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
- Catmint (Nepeta)
- Columbine (Aquilegia)
- Daylily (Hemerocallis)
- Peony (Paeonia)
- Salvia
- Solomon's Seal (Polygonatum odoratum)
- Yarrow (Achillea)
- Hostas
- Astilbe

Plants to Cut Back In Spring:

- **Annual wildflowers.** If you planted annual wildflowers like Cosmos, Zinnias, or Sunflowers, leaving them up through the winter helps them to drop their seeds and come back the next year. If you can't stand leaving them up (or are part of an HOA that makes you cut them back), cut them back and leave the debris on the ground. This should help them drop some seeds for the next season.
- **Echinacea (Coneflower)** and **Rudbeckia (Black Eyed Susan)** should be left up until spring to attract and feed birds throughout the winter.
- **Sedum** and **Ornamental Grasses** should be left throughout the winter to add height and interest.
- **Butterfly Weed (Asclepias)**, **Ferns**, and **Heuchera (Coral Bells)** should be left until spring because the foliage helps protect their crowns.

A reminder to garden club members to pot up some plants for next year's plant sale while you are doing your fall clean-up.



Source: <https://distefanolandscaping.com/perennial-maintenance-cut-back-fall-spring/>

A Garden Retrospective by Heather F.

Would we tire of gardening if the results of our yearly endeavours were always the same?

I am always amazed at my successes – like the fabulous pole bean crop I had last year; and the abysmal failures – the lacklustre pole bean crop this year I am sure that most gardeners would agree, it has been a challenging growing season!

I have had tremendous success with some of my crops - My tomatoes exceeded my expectations in both volume harvested and crop quality, especially the miniature varieties like Tiny Tim. I continue to enjoy the sweetness of this variety both raw and cooked. But I must admit, I almost took the shears to the sprawling plants when they took over sizable areas of my fenced garden but fortunately didn't as other vegetables weren't as prolific.

While last year I enjoyed a bumper crop of pole beans and peas, these crops were only middling this year. Raspberries suffered from a lack of water during the extreme heat in June but picked up later in July and the overall volume and berry quality were good. Strawberries were large and juicy and enjoyed not only by me but by a local quail family and a couple of toads that have made that part of the garden their home. Crookneck squash also loved the heat and took over the unused corners of the garden, hiding until too large to be disguised and too woody to be edible.

Pears and quince did well, in fact all the pears are eaten but if anyone wishes some quince, I would happily give them away!

Let's hope our next gardening season is not as challenging!

Ancient ideas about plants and use: Emperor Charlemagne recommended planting sempervivum (hens and chicks) on roofs to ward off lightning and witchcraft.

Source: The Gardener. Spring 2001



How to Winterize Your Garden Tools: (Source: <https://thegardeningcook.com/winterize-garden-tools/>)

Preparing the tools for winter storage is not as difficult as you might think. Just follow these 14 handy tips to winterize garden tools and they will love you for it in the spring!

1. Cleaning.

The most important thing to do, if you do nothing else, is to remove all of the dirt, soil and caked on mud that accumulates on the tools. To do this just use a wire brush, and then rinse and dry thoroughly.

Really dirty tools may need to be soaked in warm water first. Once dry, store them inside so they will stay this way. Cleaning them and making sure they are dry will insure that they won't rust.

2. Rust.

Rust happens over time when tools are exposed to moisture. If you do find some rust, remove it first with some fine sand paper. If it really heavy, a wire brush will be needed first. Once the rust is gone, oil them. You can use a special [winterizing oil](#) or rub over the tool with a mixture of 2 parts motor oil and 1 part kerosene. You can also rub the wooden parts of tools with a bit of paste wax at the same time, to keep them from splintering.

3. Pruning shears

Anyone who uses them knows how useless they become if they are allowed to get dull. To sharpen pruning shears, you will need an oil stone or a high carbon steel honing tool. Open the shears and place them in a vise and run the stone or honing tool over them in one direction until they are sharp.

4. Garden Gloves.

One might not think of these as garden tools, but I go through them in droves, so anything I can do to save a pair work for me. Hose off lightweight garden gloves outside and run them through the washer and dryer. Heavy garden gloves can have the dirt cleaned off before storage with a rough towel.

5. Shovels and Spades

These tools also become dull with use. Sharpen the edges with a file or sharpening stone. Just hold the file or stone at an angle over the beveled edge and push in one direction away from the blade. Turn them over and lightly file the back of the blade on the edge to remove the "burr" that will occur with sharpening.

6. Dried on Sap

Pruning trees can mean that your shears will accumulate the sap from the trees. Remove this with turpentine. An emery board also helps to remove debris from the tight places on pruners.

7. Hand Tools

Clean first, and then store hand trowels and other small tools in a bucket of sand soaked in oil to further deter rust which would otherwise form over the winter.

8. Motorized tools

Lawn mowers and weed trimmers need some special TLC for the winter. Drain the oil before you store them. Oil becomes thick and sludgy when it is stored in the cold and tools won't run well next spring if you neglect this step. You can drain the oil under the motor and place a pie plate under it to catch the oil. Replace worn part, and fuel filters. Clean spark plugs and replace if needed. Sharpen your lawn mower blade and oil it.

9. Gasoline

Avoid storing gasoline over the winter. Old gasoline does not ignite easily, and will make the machines using it work harder. Funnel out the gasoline and use it in your car.

10. Hoses

Drain hoses and if you find any small holes or have leaky attachments, repair them. Store hoses loosely so they won't kink.

11. Sprayers

All sprayer parts should be thoroughly washed and then rinsed and dried. Most pesticides recommend that you do a triple rinse of sprayers used for them. Apply oil to moving parts. Finally, hang the sprayer upside down when not in use so that it can drain and dry thoroughly.

12. Pots and Soil

Pack up the pots and bags of potting soil and store in your shed. Clean the pots first with a hose and allow to dry.

13. Wheelbarrows

Remove rust from wheelbarrows with a file or sand paper. Oil the handles with a wax paste to keep from splintering and check the nuts and screws and tighten them. Repair any flat tires.

14. Storage

Once you have done all these steps, it is important to make sure that the garden tools are stored in a clean, dry place for the winter. Tool caddies, or tall metal containers (like galvanized tubs) are great places to store tools with tall handles. Hooks on the inside walls of your shed will hold smaller tools. Small tools can also be stored in drawers, but make sure they are very dry if you do this so they won't rust over the winter.

Taking these steps to winterize garden tools can take a few hours if you only have a small number of garden tools, or a few days if you have a larger farm style property. But the rewards of doing so are so many.

You will have the satisfaction of seeing them all neatly stored for the winter, as well as the knowledge that, next spring, all of your tools will be in good shape and ready to go. After all...next spring, you will want to be planting, not messing with rusted tools. (or even worse, replacing them!)

<https://thegardeningcook.com/winterize-garden-tools/>

Plant of the Month: Christmas Cactus

(Source: <https://www.almanac.com/plant/christmas-cactus>)

The Christmas cactus is a very popular houseplant—and for good reason! When they bloom, they produce colorful, tubular flowers in pink or lilac colors. Their beautiful flowers, long bloom time, and easy care requirements make them a wonderful plant. We'll bet someone in your family has a Christmas cactus!

ABOUT CHRISTMAS CACTI

Unlike other cacti, the **Christmas cactus** (*Schlumbergera x buckleyi*) and its relatives don't live in hot, arid environments such as deserts or plains. In fact, these epiphytic succulents are native to the tropical rainforests of southern Brazil, where they grow on tree branches and soak up the high humidity, dappled sunlight, and warm temperatures.



PLANTING

POTTING CHRISTMAS CACTI

- When selecting a pot for a Christmas cactus, be sure to choose one that has a drainage hole in the bottom. This helps to keep the soil from getting too wet.
- Christmas cacti grow well in most potting mixes that are formulated for succulents. The important thing is that your potting soil drains well.

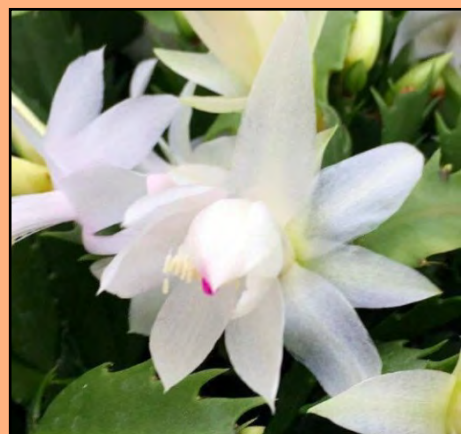
WHERE TO PUT A CHRISTMAS CACTUS

- Plants should be kept in bright, indirect light. An east-facing window or a bright bathroom is ideal. Too much direct sunlight can bleach the sensitive leaves.
- A daytime temperature of 70°F (21°C) and an evening temperature of 60-65°F (15-18°C) is preferred.
- Christmas cacti prefer a more humid environment, which makes a bright bathroom or kitchen a good spot to keep them.
- In the summer, Christmas cacti can be placed in a shady spot in the garden or in an unheated porch until temperatures get below 50°F (10°C). Keep them out of direct outdoor sunlight.

CARE

HOW TO CARE FOR CHRISTMAS CACTI

- Plan to water every 2-3 weeks, but **only water when the top one third of soil feels dry to the touch**. For example, if the plant is in 6 inches of soil, water when the top 2 inches feel dry. (Use your finger to check!)
 - When the soil is sufficiently dry, soak the soil until water runs through the pot's drainage holes. Place a tray underneath the pot to catch the water. After 10-15 minutes, discard any excess water in the tray so that the pot doesn't sit in water.
 - It's especially important to water well while the plant is flowering.
- From spring through early fall, feed every 2 weeks with a balanced houseplant fertilizer. During the fall and winter, feed the cactus monthly to encourage successful blooming.
- Prune plants in late spring to encourage branching and more flowers. Simply cut off a few sections of each stem; the plant will branch from the wound.
 - If you wish, place the cut pieces in a lightly moist potting soil—they root easily after a few weeks and make for excellent Christmas presents!



Plant of the Month: Christmas Cactus contd.

There are three main types of "holiday cacti" available:

- **Thanksgiving cacti** (*Schlumbergera truncata*) bloom from late fall to mid-winter and are often mislabeled as Christmas cacti.
- **Christmas cacti** (*S. x buckleyi*) bloom from early winter to mid-winter.
- **Easter cacti** (*S. gaertneri*) bloom from later winter to mid-spring.

HOW TO GET YOUR CHRISTMAS CACTUS TO BLOOM

The blooms of Christmas cacti and its relatives are triggered by the cooler temperatures and longer nights of fall. The three main types of holiday cacti generally bloom according to this schedule:

- **Thanksgiving cacti** are the earliest and longest bloomers, typically producing flowers from late fall through mid-winter.
- **Christmas cacti** tend to bloom from early winter to mid-winter.
- **Easter cacti** bloom from late winter to mid-spring.

If your cactus is not blooming, it may be receiving too much light or too-high temperatures. Here are some tips to encourage yours to produce flowers!

- To trigger blooming, nights need to be at least 14 hours long and days between 8 to 10 hours for at least six weeks. If you have strong indoor lighting that's on at night, you may need to cover your cactus or move it to an area that's exposed to the natural light cycle.
- Flower buds form best when the plant is kept in temperatures between 50 and 60°F (10 and 15°C).
 - You can kickstart the budding process by exposing the plant to temperatures of about 45°F (7°C) for several nights in a row.
- Make sure that you are consistent with watering while the plant is in flower. If the plant dries out too much, it may drop its buds.
- If the cactus sheds its buds one winter, don't worry: it should bloom the following year!



Garden Tasks for November: (Source: Farmer's Almanac)

- Check your vegetables in storage and remove any diseased or rotting ones.
- Place a cold frame over your winter vegetables.
- Cover rhubarb and asparagus beds with composted manure and straw.
- Place mulch around berries.
- Now is a good time to plant trees and shrubs; be sure to water new plants.
- Check your garden and lawn for any problems and treat them when necessary. Water sparingly from now through early spring, making sure that soil dries out between waterings.
- Remove any fallen fruit from your yard and prune all dead or diseased branches.
- Till any crop debris into your vegetable garden; be sure to dispose of any diseased materials.
- Protect tender evergreens from the winter winds.
- Tie up any loose evergreen shrub branches to protect them from ice and snow damage.
- Remove mulch and tall weeds from around your fruit trees to discourage mice and other pests from hiding there.
- Remove old and dead plants to help eliminate weeds, diseases, and pests in your garden.
- Service mowers and sharpen blades.
- Ensure that firewood isn't stored near the house or inside.
- Try seeding some herbs indoors and place near a sunny window. Chives, sage, and parsley may be good choices.
- Try growing amaryllis for the holidays! Plant the lower half of the bulb below the soil line in light potting soil. Water sparingly. Place the plant in bright light at 50 to 70 degrees. Once you see the stalk, rotate the pot twice a week and water to keep the soil barely moist.

Recipe of the Month: (Courtesy of Sue L.)

allrecipes!

Absolutely Ultimate Potato Soup

★★★★★

I have made this for many whom have given it the title. This takes a bit of effort but is well worth it. Please note: for those who do not wish to use bacon, substitute 1/4 cup melted butter for the bacon grease and continue with the recipe. (I generally serve this soup as a special treat as it is not recommended for people counting calories.)

By Karen S

Prep: 20 mins

Cook: 30 mins

Total: 50 mins

Servings: 8

Yield: 8 servings



Ingredients

1 pound bacon, chopped
 2 stalks celery, diced
 1 onion, chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 8 potatoes, peeled and cubed
 4 cups chicken stock, or enough to cover potatoes
 3 tablespoons butter
 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
 1 cup heavy cream
 1 teaspoon dried tarragon
 3 teaspoons chopped fresh cilantro
 salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Step 1

In a Dutch oven, cook the bacon over medium heat until done. Remove bacon from pan, and set aside. Drain off all but 1/4 cup of the bacon grease.

Step 2

Cook celery and onion in reserved bacon drippings until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, and continue cooking for 1 to 2 minutes. Add cubed potatoes, and toss to coat. Sauté for 3 to 4 minutes. Return bacon to the pan, and add enough chicken stock to just cover the potatoes. Cover, and simmer until potatoes are tender.

Step 3

In a separate pan, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in the heavy cream, tarragon, and cilantro. Bring the cream mixture to a boil, and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened. Stir the cream mixture into the potato mixture. Puree about 1/2 the soup, and return to the pan. Adjust seasonings to taste.

Nutrition Facts

Per Serving: 594 calories; protein 12.6g; carbohydrates 44g; fat 41.5g; cholesterol 91.2mg; sodium 879.4mg.

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Armstrong's newest mural



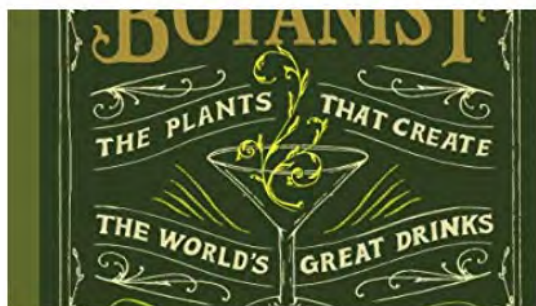
Christmas Gift Ideas for Gardeners:

What do you give a gardener for Christmas that has almost everything they need? Is it garden gear, garden tools and gadgets, garden related books and journals? Here's a few ideas and some websites to visit if you're still searching for that perfect something.



The Dickinson Press

Christmas gifts for gardeners | The Dickinson Press



THE DRUNKEN BOTANIST



Above: The *Natural Wonders Gift Set* (\$90) from The Line includes *The New Herbal*, an illustrated guide of more than 500 plants and their healing properties, plus a clear resin dandelion head paperweight.

ADGC member Mary Jane created a list of 57 garden related gift basket ideas; Visit her blog for all the details:

<https://www.homefortheharvest.com/gardening-gift-basket-ideas/>

Here are the six main categories that she identified:

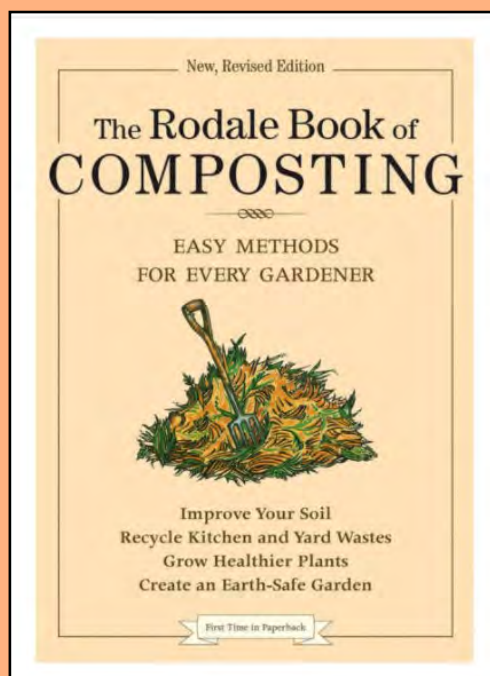
- Baskets and Creative Containers
- Books and Magazines
- Tools for a Gardener
- Gardening Supplies
- Plants and Seeds



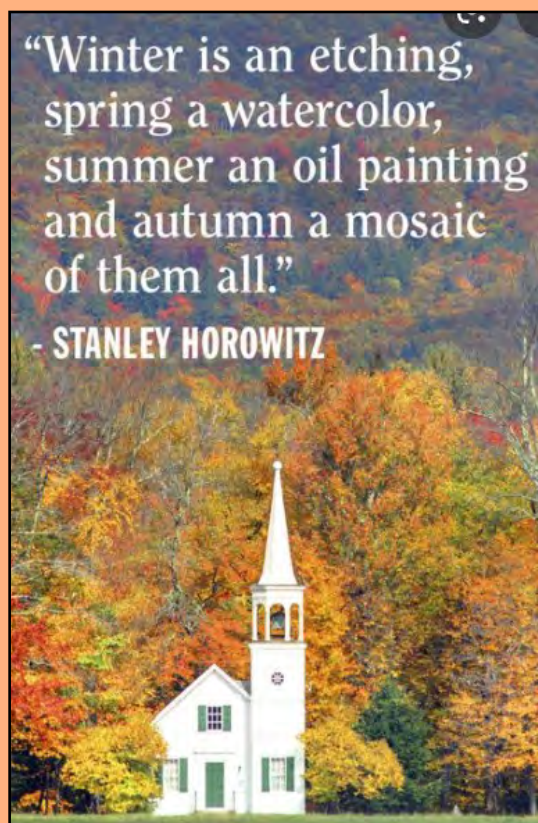
Welcome! I'm Mary Jane Duford. I've built a handful of gardens over the last few years and have totally fallen in love with gardening. My gardening blog, Home for the Harvest, has grown alongside my indoor and outdoor gardens. Welcome to my online abode :)

Christmas Gift Ideas for Gardeners contd.

Help maintain tools in perfect condition with the [Sneeboer Garden Tool Maintenance Kit](#), which includes a wire brush for removing dirt and debris, linseed oil for conditioning wood handles, and a stone for honing bladed tools; \$68 through Terrain.

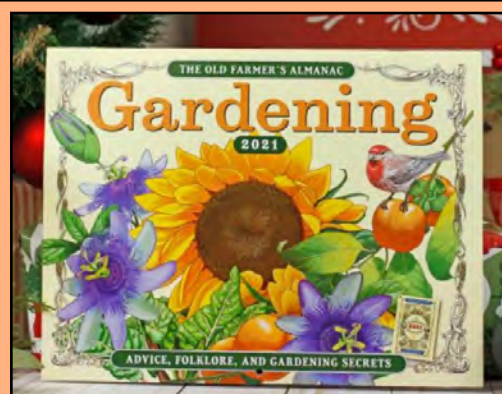


Above: The eco-aware can avoid buying imported blooms from florists by planting seeds for a native cutting garden. Floret Farm's [Seed Collections](#) come with a curated selection of seeds in coordinating varieties and colors, like the [Sherbert Punch Zinnia Mix](#) (shown); \$21.95.



BEST GARDENING HAT

We wear this gardening hat all day every day! It's ultralight so barely noticeable but does double duty to protect us from the Sun with ultraviolet protection factor of 50+ while staying breathable with ventilation panels and wicking sweatband. Stain- and water-resistant, this sporty hat also has a wind strap and a sun cape to protect the back of your neck; both can be tucked away when not needed. It's great for gardening but also for fishing, hiking, and any outdoor activity! [See the Sunday Afternoon Sports Hat.](#)



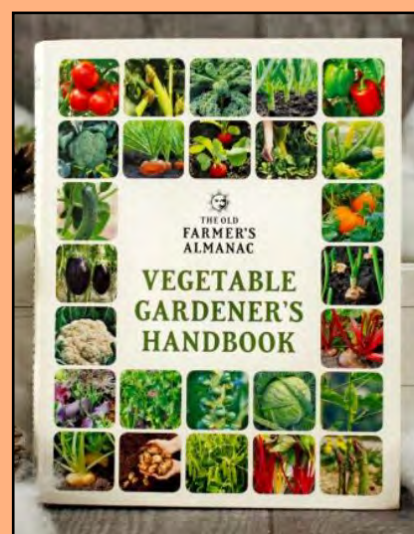
Christmas Gift Ideas for Gardeners contd.:



Some gift ideas could be made, such as the glove rack on the right or the gardener's hand scrub pictured below.



Lee Valley garden knives



Herb Drying Rack



Websites you could visit for more Christmas gift ideas:

<https://morningchores.com/gifts-for-gardeners/>

<https://www.gardenista.com/posts/eco-friendly-garden-holiday-gift-guide/>

<https://getbusygardening.com/gifts-for-gardener-who-has-everything/>

<http://www.northerncottage.net/2011/04/gardeners-hand-scrub.html>

<https://www.almanac.com/content/gardening-gifts-holidays>

<https://www.homefortheharvest.com/gardening-gift-basket-ideas/>

Sell, Swap, Trade or Give Away's:

The editors saw another garden club add this feature to their newsletter and thought it was a great idea.

What gardener doesn't want to share their favorites or trade a plant for another one?

Please send the editors a note (malgar@telus.net) if you have a plant to swap, donate or sell and we'll include it in the next newsletter.

House Plant

\$ 5 donation to garden club.

Contact Colleen at 250 546-9891.

**Jade Plant**

\$ 20 donation to garden club.

Contact Colleen at 250 546-9891.



October Exec. Meeting: Judi C, Carolyn, Glenn, Mary, Judy W., Heather F., Brenda

The *** NEW ***ADGC Website: <https://armstronggardenclub.com/>

Have you visited the ADGC Website?



Mary Jane

Thanks to the efforts of ADGC members Mary J. and Mary Jane the club now has an amazing website:

(<https://armstronggardenclub.com/>)

It tells people about our club, what we do, how to join and the ways we support our community.

Forward any comments or ideas to the editors.

CLUB NEWS



BC Council of Garden Clubs: Fall General Meeting

Sep 24, 2021

Fall General Meeting October 30, 2021. Registration details to follow. See the BC Council of Garden Clubs website, here: <https://bcgardenclubs.com/events/bc-council-of-garden-clubs-fall-general-meeting/>

[READ MORE](#)



September 2021 Newsletter

Sep 20, 2021

Here is the September 2021 Newsletter of the Armstrong & District Garden Club. Thank you to our club newsletter editors Heather Hayes and Mary Jackson. The September edition of the newsletter includes: Update from Glenn/Domingo get-together/Proposed community...

[READ MORE](#)



June 2021 Newsletter

Sep 20, 2021

Here is the June 2021 Newsletter of the Armstrong & District Garden Club. Thank you to our club newsletter editors Heather Hayes and Mary Jackson. The June edition of the newsletter includes: Photos from petunia planting along PV Boulevard/Available volunteer...

[READ MORE](#)

Community Involvement



ADGC Heather donating to Len Wood School – Armstrong Garden Club
Heather Presenting Garden Club Donation To Principal Denise Brown Of Len Wood School



Armstrong BC – Planters on Pleasant Valley Boulevard
Petunia Planters on Pleasant Valley Boulevard



Collecting Plants for the sale
Collecting Plants For The Plant Sale Community Fundraiser



ADGC recognized by Communities in Bloom – Armstrong Garden Club
Recognition From Communities in Bloom

LEARN, GROW, & HAVE FUN!



Community Involvement

The club is active in the community, supporting local charity organizations through our Annual Plant Sale and helping to beautify the community with work parties such as the petunia planters on PV Blvd.

[SEE UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS](#)



Monthly Meetings

The club meets monthly to discuss upcoming events, plan the Annual Plant Sale, and share gardening tips and ideas.

[MORE ABOUT OUR MEETINGS](#)

ADGC FACEBOOK PAGE: Have you visited or “liked” our club’s Facebook page? Special thanks to Ken Barr who regularly adds interesting information and events to the page! Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/ArmstrongandDistrictGardenClub/>

Upcoming Events:

A reminder to garden club members to **pot up some plants** for next year's plant sale while you are doing your fall clean-up.

Think of volunteering for the positions that are available in the club.

Check your email for upcoming meeting information.

ADGC members are now eligible to receive between 10% and 15% off regularly priced garden centre plants. Show your ADGC membership badge to the cashiers prior to sale.

**THANK YOU!**

Thank you to this month's newsletter contributors— Heather F., Sue L., Glenn, Mary Jane D., and Mary J.

About ADGC:

The Armstrong and District Garden Club was established in 1927 and is an active, fun group with over 30 members. The club supports the community through donations, student bursaries, planting along PV Boulevard, and supporting initiatives such as Communities in Bloom.

