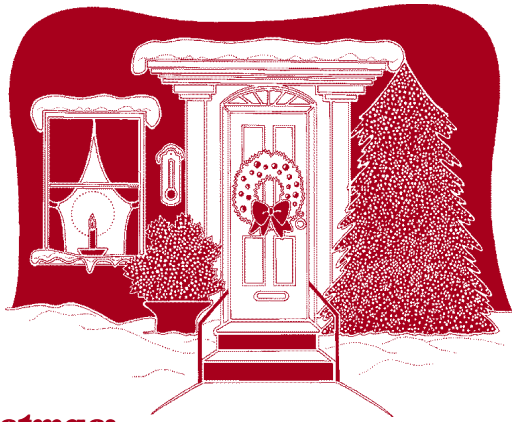


December 2007 Garden Planner



Christmas:

- ☞ Homewood is a great place to get **beautiful Christmas trees!** Come see our **freshly-cut Fraser Firs** grown in the North Carolina mountains. We also carry **assorted container-grown evergreens** that mimic the Christmas tree look, and **Norfolk Island Pines** that can be kept as houseplants.
- ☞ If you have your **poinsettia or Christmas cactus set in a foil wrap or pot cover**, be sure to cut a hole in the bottom to allow water to drain out. These plants require well-drained conditions. **Water when the soil feels dry to the touch** and keep poinsettias away from cold drafts.
- ☞ We carry **fir, mixed greenery, and boxwood wreaths; pine, fir, and western cedar roping, fir swags; mistletoe, kissing balls; cedar, boxwood, & magnolia, holly, and privet bundles; all-weather bows; and mailbox-toppers** so that you can green up mantles, mailboxes, & doorways for the holidays!
- ☞ Dress up your home with "permanent"



decorated or made-to-order wreaths, as well as **garlands, festive decor, and seasonal flowering plants** suited for the occasion. **Ivy topiaries** and **rosemary "trees"** are pretty on the holiday table. **Norfolk Island pines** are indoor plants that provide a Christmas tree look and are great for small rooms and corners. Poinsettias aren't the only colorful indoor plant that bloom now. Try **blooming cyclamen, orchids, begonias, and kalanchoes** to brighten interiors. Drop by the wrapping table in the greenhouse to **top these beauties off with a festive bow and pot cover**. Makes a great hostess gift!

Plant:

- ☞ Enjoy **gorgeous amaryllis and paperwhite blooms** this winter by starting to force them now. **Amaryllis like to be crowded in the pot**, so only plant the bulbs in pots that allow an inch of space between the bulb and the side of the pot.
- ☞ **There's still time to plant for a spring garden!** As long as the ground isn't frozen or water-saturated, you can plant. Plants also experience less transplant stress while dormant or not actively growing.
- ☞ **It's not too late to get those bulbs in the ground!** It's even ideal for planting tulips, hyacinths, and crocus.
- ☞ **Arum is great to plant near hostas that have gone dormant.** As hostas die down in fall, **arum** starts to leaf out with attractive arrow-shaped leaves speckled or veined in white. When spring returns, arums die down as hostas emerge. Talk about made for each other!



Fertilize:

- ☞ **Fertilize pansies and violas** with Ferti-lome Pansy Food for best color and production.
- ☞ Mid-month is the **last chance to fertilize trees and shrubs**. Don't fertilize perennials now.
- ☞ **Now is a great time to add lime to the**

lawn or garden. Not sure if you need to lime? Come to Homewood for a **free soil test kit** so you can send samples in for testing.

Prune:

- ☞ There's little pruning to do at this time. Only if a plant part is **dead, damaged, or diseased** do you need to break out the pruning shears.
- ☞ Once **fall-blooming camellias** have finished blooming you can prune them if necessary.

Garden Maintenance:

- ☞ **Keep watering newly planted or transplanted trees, shrubs, and perennials.** Water about once every week or two when there is no rain and the ground isn't frozen but is dry.
- ☞ **Clean and sharpen mower blades,** if necessary.
- ☞ **Clean and oil garden tools.**
- ☞ **Clean and organize potting area.** Seed flats and pots can be sterilized in a 10% bleach solution.
- ☞ Continue **harvesting chives, cilantro, and parsley.**
- ☞ Now's a great time to **reward your soil** for all it gave you this season. **Top dress garden beds with 3 to 4 inches of compost.** If areas to be planted have very heavy clay soil, add 2 inches of pine bark soil conditioner and till this in to a depth of about 8 inches.
- ☞ **Keep lawns free of fallen leaves.** Compost leaves to make soil amendment for added nutrition & soil conditioning.
- ☞ **Housplants** will stay happy this winter if you **keep them from areas with hot or cold drafts** such as near doors and heating vents. A **humidity tray or regular misting** will help mitigate dry, heated indoor air. **Watch out for overwatering** and water

when the soil feels it's going from damp to dry. **Refrain from fertilizing** until spring. **Keep houseplants warm** by avoiding contact with cold window glass and if the area seems cold, place folded cloth under pots to help insulate them.

- ☞ **Move planted containers to a protected location** (against a wall or

building that faces south is best). Mulch with pine straw or bark mulch to protect roots. **On freezing nights cover blooming camellias** and any tender or marginal plants with old blankets.

Integrated Pest Management(IPM):

- ☞ **Keep an eye on houseplants.** 'Tis the season for bugs to try to overwinter inside. Small infestations can be gently hosed off the plant (not for fuzzy-leaved plants like African violets). Larger infestations can be treated with horticultural oil or insecticidal soap.
- ☞ **Keeping garden beds free of diseased leaves, fallen fruit, dead blossoms and twigs** will save you pest headaches next season since many disease pathogens will overwinter in garden litter.
- ☞ **Inspect shrubs and trees for bagworm egg capsules** which look like small, cone-shaped bags (especially on arborvitae and juniper). Another pest to **keep watch for is the tent caterpillar's egg masses** which look like a grey-brown belt or swelling that encircles a twig. Remove and destroy both of these..

Special Note:

Christmas Cash Days are coming! From **Dec. 19th - 22nd**, Redeem your Christmas Cash coupons (each worth \$1) for **up to 50% off ANYTHING** in the store, greenhouses, or nursery!

Homewood will be **closed for Christmas from December 23rd -January 1st, re-opening January 2nd.** We wish you and your family very happy holidays!

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER: Homewood will be open during the week after Christmas for our After Christmas Sale. On Dec. 27, 28, and 29, get 50% OFF all holiday merchandise!



Merry Christmas

