

Gardener's Corner December 2024

It's early December and we've already had our first snow fall. Hopefully we aren't in for a long, cold winter.

The **Missouri Botanical Garden (MoBot)** turns us inward focusing our activity on houseplants. They remind us that houseplants usually need less water in winter because of fewer sunlight hours. A few additional tips to keep them healthier are to use lukewarm water and to protect leaves at night by moving plants away from cold windows. For the best results, holiday poinsettias should be in bright, indirect light. Don't forget to punch holes in the decorative foil that surrounds them. Check all your house plants frequently for aphids, spider mites, scale, mealybugs, whiteflies, and thrips.

There are also a few tasks that can be done outside. For example, the branches of apples, pears, and other rose family plants that had fireblight can now be safely pruned. Mulch the root zones of shrubs using any organic material. Now is also a good time to trim hollies. These cuttings can then be used for holiday decoration.

Do you know how best to take care of those leaves on your lawn? While this has been mentioned before in the **Corner**, this article from the **MoBot blog** about the Webster Groves initiative will help to make your work a little easier and to replenish the nutrients in your lawn or garden. You can do this by either leaving them on the lawn (no pun intended), raking them into garden beds or mowing them into smaller bits: <https://discoverandshare.org/2023/11/03/leaves-the-leaves-this-fall-season/>

If you are an avid Mizzou fan, you can build your garden around your favorite team's colors. This article, *Gardening with Your Favorite Team Colors*, from the **MU Extension's Garden Spade** tells you what plants have black and gold flowers. You can find it here: https://i.emlfiles4.com/cmpdoc/9/4/0/0/9/1/files/25246_november-2024-garden-spade-newsletter.pdf?utm_campaign=1123547_Copy%20of%20November%202024%20Garden%20Spade&utm_medium=email&utm_source=email&dm_i=42N5,O2XN,4SVDF6,2T718,1

In a quandary about whether to buy an artificial or real Christmas tree? The **Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL)** from **Ohio State University Extension** has information about both. You can find the article entitled *Christmas Tree: Real or Artificial? Why Not Do Both?* here: <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/2444>

Virtual programs of interest in December are the following:

Saturday, December 7, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. CT. *To Know Our Trees: A Vital Responsibility for Today and the Future* (Online Lecture) offered by the **US Botanic Garden**. Botanist W. John Kress will discuss his new book, *Smithsonian Trees of North America*, a comprehensive compendium that takes a careful look at the diversity, morphology, and beauty of over 325 tree species. Register here: https://usbg.swoogo.com/To-Know-Our-Trees_Dec24

Sunday, December 8 – 11:00 to 12:30 p.m. CT. *The Essential Tree Selection Guide* by Henrik Sjöman is offered by the **Arnold Arboretum** at **Harvard University**. Selecting the right

tree for your yard or landscape is critical both for the health of the tree and for the strength of the ecosystem services they provide. The author's new book is a valuable new tool for making tree selection decisions. Register at: <https://arboretum.harvard.edu/events/the-essential-tree-selection-guide-by-henrik-sjoman/?occurrence=2024-12-08>

Thursday, December 19, 2024, 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM CT. **United State Botanical Garden** presents *Terroir of Chocolate—Cacao Flavor from Around the World* by Dr. Nat Bletter, ethnobotanist, founder and flavormeister for Madre Chocolate. We'll also look back at the amazing ancient plant chemists of the Inca, Olmec, Maya, and Aztec who invented these processes and still to this day make incredible perfumed chocolate foams that rival modern molecular gastronomy techniques. Register: <https://app.livestorm.co/u-s-botanic-garden/terroir-of-chocolate-cacao-flavor-from-around-the-world-online-lecture?s=0c532fb3-0bd5-4d49-8a64-0d26abe587af>