



Scatter Info As We Bloom and Grow

Horticulture Edition, Gail Berthe, Editor

Environmental Edition, Judy Keenan, Editor

Landscape Design Edition, Jane Hersey, Editor

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Horticulture Edition

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From: your Horticulture Edition editor, Gail (the Happy Gardener) Berthe

As we come to the New Year we know there are many garden challenges and opportunities coming. How many seed catalogs have you already received?! We also know 2014 will be unique but lessons learned in past garden experience will help us adjust and improve. The old favorites will persevere and new plants will be introduced. It is this publication's goal to offer you information and motivation to expand your horizons—whether it be to try one houseplant or design a whole new landscape—as we share our experience we will make Garden Club of Georgia the very best gardening group we can. With our sister *Scatter Info*...newsletters for Landscape Design and Environmental issues you will have the tools to accomplish some of your goals. Know that each of our editors welcome your ideas and questions. Check your GCG Guides for the appropriate emails or contact me at gail.berthe@gmail.com.



Rosa 'Maidens Blush' an antique rose

Pruning Roses!! (Late Winter's Task)

Roses are universal, varied almost beyond imagination and a bit of a task to maintain. This maintenance is related to the variety/cultivar of *Rosa* chosen! If your choice is the exquisite hybrid rose and many of the 'old roses' advice from **American Rose Society** plus many of the outstanding organizations dedicated to rose culture is a necessity. Many of the 'new roses' are cultivars which have been hybridized to withstand many of the fungal and insect problems typical of the older varieties. [BUT—there is always the exception! Many of the old roses have developed their own immunities and are very hardy. BUT—they also have a problem in their hardiness

may have made them invasive and/or disease carriers. There are no “free lunches in the garden!” Be aware and read valid information before planting.]

No matter what roses you are growing they will need late winter pruning to produce the best spring and summer bloom. Here are a few ‘rules’ which will apply to most varieties/cultivars.

🌹 Proper tools are essential

- **Bypass pruners:** really good ones—very sharp; they will be expensive
- **Loppers:** ditto above—difference these and longer and necessary if you have climbing roses
- **Pruning saw:** I like the folding Japanese saw
- **Gloves:** these depend on how much pruning is done and how big the bush is. Leather gloves especially designed for rose pruning are the ultimate, but for the small time rose gardener my favorite is the Atlas glove 300 and it is excellent for all garden related jobs—great tactile feel
- **Rubbing alcohol:** this is to sterilize your tools after any cut—keep in an old coffee can in your work basket



🌹 Clothing

- Long sleeves and heavy pants to protect your arms and legs
- Probably be cold anyway, but if doing any heavy pruning in the warmer season be especially careful of remembering long sleeves and pants

🌹 Rose Pruning Tips

- Use the correct clean cut—generally at a 45° angle slanted away from the branch being cut—to keep the rain etc. off the cut
- Cut above the bud eye
- Cut also directs new growth—choose the bud pointing in the direction you want a new branch to grow
- The pictures above are good examples of the right way and the wrong way to cut a branch—the one on the left is correct and the right one is the incorrect cut, but has the bud eye correctly selected
- Prune out any dead canes
- Do not compost your debris—can spread disease—put it in the trash for pickup



🌹 Winter Rose Care

- If necessary dormant oil is an excellent way to control insects (if you have an insect problem) It must be sprayed while the plants are

dormant and before leaves start budding out in the spring. Follow the directions on the packaging

- The pruning is a most essential rose care tool—read more online or in your reliable garden books

🌹 Enjoy!!!

These tips are edited from Jeanne Grunert who writes for Dave's Garden available online at dave'sgarden.com plus some of you editor's opinions



Cornus florida, 'Stellar Pink'

Kate Baltzell of Trees Atlanta sent the following information about a tree walk coming up in early January. She also lists information concerning a weekly tree experience.

Hi Tree Lovers,

Warm up during this winter weather at Trees Atlanta's first educational event of 2014 - an upcoming Winter Tree Walk in Grant Park on Saturday, January 11 from 1-3pm. Brian Williams, Trees Atlanta Forest Restoration Coordinator, will be leading the walk through the Park beginning at the Atlanta Cyclorama and identifying key specimen along the way by identifiers still around during the colder temperatures. Attendees will learn tips & tricks on how to determine one tree versus another. This Tree Walk is funded with help from the City of Atlanta and we'd appreciate any help you can offer in spreading the word. The below website offers more information on the event and registration.

<http://treesatlanta.givezooks.com/events/winter-tree-identification-in-grant-park>

Please be in touch with any questions and thank you in advance for helping to spread the word about this fun educational opportunity,
Kate

PS: Don't forget we offer FREE Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum Walking Tours every Friday & Saturday on the Eastside Trail. Come learn about the Atlanta BeltLine's beginnings, the future of the design, and, of course, the diverse horticultural collections. Find out more and register [here](#) today! Special thank you to Kaiser Permanente for funding these exciting walks.

Foliage House Plants and Their Care

House plants come in two classes in your editor' opinion—those brought in from outside to winter over in any appropriate available spots, and those acquired for their specific indoor beauty and design. For the gardener each is important. Here are some general rules and considerations.



- 🦋 Each plant has very special needs related to lower humidity, temperature levels, and available light in the home as opposed to natural light
 - Misting may be necessary for any plant which thrives in a high humidity (be careful to not mist all the furniture ect around the plant!)
 - Succulents generally do not need to be misted
- 🦋 Outdoor plants are generally either dormant or in need of a rest
 - Don't overwater
 - Don't over fertilize
 - Long time ago I postulated this thought—***think like a plant!*** How would you like it if you had to work 24 hours a day for 365 days a year—even if it seems like we do!
 - Try to observe appropriate light conditions for the specific plant.
 - For outdoor plants being overwintered indoors, if possible maintain some natural light—if not hope they survive until April! Most will!
 - For indoor houseplants lighting is essential.
 - “Tropical rainforest plants such as bird's nest and maidenhair fern, bromeliads, spathophyllum, Dieffenbachia, spider plants and ficus, all perform best in lower light areas. This type of exposure mimics the dappled or low light the plants receive naturally in the forest as they are protected by the taller trees and plants. These types of plants also enjoy the warmer temperatures of the home interior. There are plants that tolerate even darker rooms such as that northern back bedroom with a giant fir tree outside the window. They are deep understory tropicals such as philodendron, cast iron plant, dracaena, bamboo palms and, sansevaria.” My personal knowledge of these plants is marginal therefore the quote is from ***Bonnie Grant, a contributing writer to Dave's Gardener.***
 - Succulents including Cactus—these I know more about! They need good light even if you need to use supplemental lighting. If you want to let them go dormant keeping them in a dimly lighted and cool room is good and the garage can be good too. I've had good luck with larger containers putting them behind dense shrubbery next to a west wall. Check with succulent sources to determine which is winter hardy in your part of Georgia. Many are, the big problem is excellent drainage—not easy in clay soil!

- 🦋 Some general rules (suggestions) for interior plants
 - Overwatering kills more house plants than too little water!
 - Don't leave plants in a draft from leaking windows or the heat vent
 - Mist plants occasionally (carefully!)
 - Don't keep in rooms where moisture may accumulate such as the bathroom (It is one of my favorite plant locations on ventilated shelves supported by the bathtub and under a sky light—but in general the other information is correct about the bathroom. Ours just happens to have a separate tub and shower with the sky light over the tub)
 - Once more the old adage, "...the right plant in the right place" works every time!

This information was edited from an article by *Bonnie Grant, a contributing author for Dave's Garden* plus a bit of personal advice from your editor

Thanksgiving and Christmas Cactus

Schlumbergera truncata and *Schlumbergera*×*buckleyi*

First steps first! A bit of botanical nomenclature information required for correct identification of a horticulture division entry in any National Garden Club, Inc. recognized flower show, or for the ability to purchase the exact species of any plant, you must know both the genus and species of your plant to be eligible for a major award in a standard NGC flower show or the plant you are hoping to purchase.



Schlumbergera truncata Thanksgiving cactus is the common name, but this is generally sold as Christmas cactus because it blooms more reliably at the Christmas season! Also note the leaves are 'dentate' (has points) and the flowers are horizontal.



Schlumbergera×*buckleyi* or Christmas cactus does not bloom until after the Christmas season so is not commercially profitable—therefore not easily available for purchase. It is generally a pass-a-long plant available from friends or relatives. As you can see from the two pictures—Christmas cactus is a 'weeping' form and the leaves are more rounded (without points). It is a lovely plant and hybridizers are working on more colors but it

certainly is a plant to treasure in your collection.

How should we maintain these two lovely species?

- ☞ Hardy outside to zone 10 so for Georgia it must be grown as a houseplant in the winter.
- ☞ Full sun in the winter, but outdoors in the summer keep it in lower light. I put mine in front of some shrubs with good morning sun exposure and protected from the hot afternoon sun
- ☞ Growing season is from mid-Spring to early autumn
- ☞ Temperature is very important after bud set in the fall—temps above 90° will cause buds to fall off
- ☞ Long cool nights are important for buds to form—13 hours of cool dark nights are outstanding for bud set—like maybe an air conditioned guest room that will be dark the required 13 hours—no company coming!
- ☞ Remember, these are succulent plants
 - Let them dry out between watering
 - Never use too much water
 - Excellent drainage is essential
 - Like to be pot bound for good bloom
- ☞ use a ¼ concentration of soluble liquid fertilizer from spring until bud set and then no fertilizer after bud set
- ☞ replot every three years in a well-drained good quality potting mix with a good proportion of perlite

This information is edited from an article by Marie Harrison. She is a NGC Master Judge and NGC Flower Show Instructor as well as a contributing author for Dave's Garden plus your editor's opinions



Seed Catalogs Arrive in our Mail Boxes

The annual ritual of dreaming over the multitude of seed catalogs arriving daily in our mail boxes is here. My experience with seed starting has been mediocre but with one exception—lettuce. The seeds are easily germinated inside but also thrive in early spring temperature outside. Plant them thickly, barely cover and tamp down. As they begin to grow, thin them (and use the thinnings in salad. Plant several different varieties and enjoy not only the tender sweet early lettuce, but the lovely display of color and texture. The conditions needed for success simply were not met for the vast majority of my

seeds despite installing special lights and shelves; the temperature was the problem--too cool. So what is needed?

- Appropriate amount of light
- Appropriate temperature for germination
- Appropriate watering methods
- Appropriate containers for the seeds
- Appropriate potting soil for seed starting
- Appropriate air circulation
- Appropriate sterilization equipment and methods
- Viable seeds
- And on and on....

You have undoubtedly noticed the number of ‘appropriate’ descriptions used in the incomplete list above. All of the above is necessary; can be expensive to accumulate (though it doesn’t have to be) and is time consuming and very demanding as the seeds mature, need division, develop disease....and on and on! Here is the real list of what I now do after too many unsuccessful tries:

- Read the back of the seed packet very carefully—it will list everything you should know
- Assemble your equipment prior to seed planting
- Keep detailed records
 - Kind of seeds planted
 - Dates planted (don’t plant all your seeds the same day!)
 - Dates germination actually occurred
- Have a suitable place to harden off your seedlings when appropriate conditions are met
- Plant outside in suitable horticultural conditions

Carefully follow the first underlined statement in the above list. But also check on line resources; I liked the first two listed references the best...

<http://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/garden-care/seed-starting-essentials/>,

<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Start-Seeds-Indoors-for-cheap/>,

www.organicgardening.com, There are so many fine reference books for any horticulture subject. Timber Press is an excellent publisher specializing in books dealing with the environment in general including horticulture. My favorite for our climate is the Southern Living Garden Book, but my personal library is full of way too many good ones.

Successful seed starting can be very rewarding, is less expensive (supposedly), and enable your garden to have plants not easily available at your local nursery or by reputable online providers. But it does require a real commitment, and quite, frankly I've been very happy with purchasing developed plants locally, from seed catalog sources, or online. Allowing annuals to self-seed can be very exciting. Dividing perennials at the right time and planting in your own garden or sharing with friends and neighbors is great fun—and more or less free! Please don't let me discourage you, but you should be aware seed starting is not all fun and games.

In future horticulture editions I'll include more information about plant division and other important information toward a successful garden—vegetable or ornamental of a combination of both.

Improved Cultivars and UGA Trial Garden

<http://ugatrial.hort.uga.edu/> is the online address and the amount of information relating to our own climate zone and conditions is available as well as so much general information it is incredible. Many of you have toured the UGA Trial Garden, used the cultivars from their recommendations, and are well aware of how excellent a resource this is for us that my words are unnecessary, however—just in case you are unaware of this garden plus the UGA Griffin Research and Education Garden please do use the online information.

In general, what is an **improved cultivar**? Nature has given us many wonderful genus and species which we enjoy, but man (and sometimes nature) likes to make things better. For instance let's consider *Solidago canadensis*, plain ol' wild goldenrod—so pretty on the roadside every fall, but it is too tall, too weedy for the garden. When the first plantsman from England came to America before the Revolutionary War they were amazed with multitude of unusual plants and took seedlings home to England where many became the 'rage' for the English garden! Hybridization (defined as the botanical cross between two species, subspecies, varieties, selections, strains or any combination of the above and sometimes two plants from different genera which results in a new plant with different characteristics from the parents. This can occur by human selection or nature's action from wind, animal etc. transferring pollen between two different species...) The goal is a 'better' plant—taller, shorter, different color bloom, healthier, whatever the goal may be. This is an **Improved Cultivar** if human instigates it, and if it is a natural selection of two different plants because of some act of nature it is then a **Variety**.

The trial garden at UGA is a world famous location where ‘field trial’ documentation is achieved to learn more about the viability of many specific improved cultivars or varieties. Dr. Alan Armitage established the garden in 1982 and continues to serve the garden with his outstanding skill. Visit the website and learn about the new plants for our gardens and plan a tour of the garden as a personal trip or an excellent day trip for your garden club. (The UGA Griffin Research and Education is an excellent facility for those of us who live in central Georgia. UGA Tifton also has excellent touring opportunities for those in South Georgia)

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