



The Ladyslipper



Perth & District Horticultural Society

www.perthhortsociety.com

Est. 1984

P.O. Box 494
Perth, ON K7H 3G1

November 2022

President's Pen

Here we are at our last month of Perth & District Horticultural Society for 2022. I would like to take a few minutes to express my gratitude to all of our members for being there to make the society viable and enjoyable. I want to sincerely thank every one of our volunteers, no matter how much you contributed to the society.

I appreciate all the hard work Lynda Haddon and the community garden volunteers do to keep the Community Gardens looking beautiful. The volunteers put a total of 438 hours in the gardens this year. Both the Town of Perth and the Heritage Tourism have nothing but praises and compliments on the gardens.



PDHS Garden Volunteers in Inge Va Gardens
Kim McPherson, Rita Godin, Catherine Stapleton, Carolle Armour, Richard Catchpaw, Wenda Veldman, Allan Humphreys, Doug Smallwood, Janette Wood, Cheryl Moss - photo taken by Lynda Haddon

A special thank you to each of the Board members who worked with me to keep the society running: Jane Avery, Madeline Archer, Gerda VanWingerden, Barbara Smith, Robin McIntosh, Richard Catchpaw and Wenda Veldman.

Happy Holidays!

Linda

Festival of Lights 2022 Crystal Palace Perth

*O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree
How lovely are thy branches*

Many thanks to Caroline Bolduc for jumping in and getting the PDHS annual Christmas tree from Campbell's farm and delivering it to Crystal Palace for our three elves (Catherine Stephen-Dunn, Robin McIntosh and Sandi Sissions) could do their magic and decorate the PDHS Christmas tree to



be on display at Crystal Palace for the Festival of Lights from November 20, 2022 to January 2, 2023. There will be continuous viewing of the decorated Christmas trees from the outside of the Crystal Palace. The trees are lit from 5:00 p.m. until dawn.

Beginning at 5:30pm on December 2, join the Men & Women of the Tay Choral Groups as they lead in the singing of traditional Christmas Carols outside the Crystal Palace. There will be a bonfire to stay toasty, and refreshments will be supplied by The Table Community Food Centre in exchange for donations.

Fireworks WILL take place over the Drummond Street Bridge about 6:15pm, followed by viewing of the beautifully lit and decorated trees inside the Crystal Palace. The best spot to see the fireworks is from the west side of the Palace and parking lot; Tay Street will be closed for this purpose.

A Community Christmas Tree will be lit up outside the Crystal Palace. Everyone is encouraged to hang an ornament to thank anyone who's made a difference in our community.

Houseplants In the Winter

Submitted by Lanark County Master Gardener, Dale Odorizzi

Winter can be stressful for your indoor plants, whether they are year-round houseplants or just overwintering indoors. There are several stress factors:

- ▶ temperatures that fluctuate from daytime heat to overnight chill;
- ▶ dry air;
- ▶ short days that reduce the light they receive.

Different plant species have different needs, but the following provides general guidelines. You may have to do more research or contact your Lanark County Master Gardeners (lanarkmg@gmail.com) for more specific advice.

1. Adjust your watering routine—Most indoor plants need less water in the winter. Plants slow down their growth or may even go dormant. Overwatering can lead to root rot. Surface soil dries quickly, so it is not a good indicator. Push your finger into the soil to your second knuckle to determine if it is dry. **Tip:** Do not use cold water. Let your tap water sit for several hours before watering.
2. Alter Humidity Levels—Low humidity is a big stressor. Forced air heating drops indoor humidity levels. Cluster plants that like the same conditions together. Plants release water through their leaves, so they help raise the humidity level for their friends. Bathrooms, kitchens and laundry rooms raise humidity the most. OR place your plants on a tray of water but don't let them sit right in the water for long. If you only have a few plants, try misting them.
3. Pay attention to temperature—Most plants like a temperature around 20-22C. It may cause stress to your plants if you lower your thermometer too much below that overnight. Anything lower than



15C can cause more stress. Also, avoid cold drafts and wide fluctuations from fireplaces, radiators, and the like.

4. Follow the sun—There are fewer hours of sunlight during winter, and the rays are at a lower angle. You may need to move your plants to a brighter spot. Rotate the pots $\frac{1}{4}$ turn each time you water to prevent them from stretching toward the window. If you are like me, layers of dust can accumulate on plant leaves which reduces the amount of light they receive. Wipe them down with a damp cloth regularly in the winter. If you cannot get bright light, you may want to invest in grow lights to receive adequate energy.
5. Put your plants on a diet—Most plants do not need any fertilizer in the winter. This will upset their natural cycle. They do not grow actively in winter, so stop feeding until early spring. When you see new growth or the existing leaves start greening up, resume feeding. Some tropical plants, especially vining climbers or trailers, grow quite actively in winter and may require feeding at about half the normal rate.

Enjoy your indoor garden but look forward to getting them back outside. They sure are looking forward to it. Next issue of the newsletter, we will talk about insects and your house plants. Taming the Potted Beast: The Strange and Sensational

Eco-friendly Christmas*

Source: GoodWorks.ca - Canada's Green Job Site Since 2001

“Bake them a cake, write them a poem, give them a kiss, tell them a joke, but for god’s sake stop trashing the planet to tell someone you care. All it shows is that you don’t.”

– George Monbiot

Christmas* is supposed to be a time of peace and togetherness. For many it’s a happy, joyous time of year. But it’s also a time when we drive around madly, feeling obliged to shop for everyone on our list. Each year we also use millions of plastic bags, throw out tonnes of packaging and food, and try to buy just about everything in sight.

Is this good for us? Are there better ways to show our love for each other and the world?

To help you indulge the Christmas* spirit and show goodwill on Earth, here are three basic strategies:

- ▶ Choose local, healthy, eco-friendly gifts;
- ▶ Buy fewer gifts or substitute with activities;
- ▶ Give non-material gifts — services, art, fun.

Local & Healthy

Whenever possible, buy from local, independent services and stores. This strengthens the local economy, saves energy, and helps foster healthy diversity. Look for local food, beverages, crafts, services, music and entertainment. Good places to try include the local farmers market, flea markets and Christmas events.

Any gift worth giving should offer genuine pleasure or utility for more than a fleeting moment. Otherwise it is just a waste, soon to be fodder for the landfill. In addition, the gift’s production, use and disposal should be socially and environmentally sound. Be sure to read the label and ask questions about its manufacture, origin and ingredients. If credible information isn’t given, don’t buy it.

If possible, a gift shouldn’t impose cost and inconvenience, such as batteries, storage or maintenance requirements. Look for toys that minimize or eliminate battery use. For example, rather than a battery-powered car, consider a bicycle, tricycle or skateboard. Not only will it

save you money, but it will be healthier, longer lasting, and much better for the environment.

Quality not Quantity

Rather than trying to shop for everyone on your list, consider sharing or rotating gift-giving responsibilities. Why not draw names from a hat and have each person give just one gift? Or, pool together your money for a shared meal, outing or other purchase. This can result in more time for celebrating – and less time spent chasing around.

It’s also a good idea to keep receipts and make it easy for the recipient to make an exchange. Better yet, consider gift certificates for local services or green, ethical retailers who really add something to your community.

Think Before You Buy

A hundred times each day we are urged to buy, buy without thought. The latest fashion, the newest gizmo, the most recent distraction. But with a little practice we can rise above the hype. We can make up our own minds and make choices that reflect our love for each other and the planet. To me, this is what Christmas is about.

The Best Things in Life...

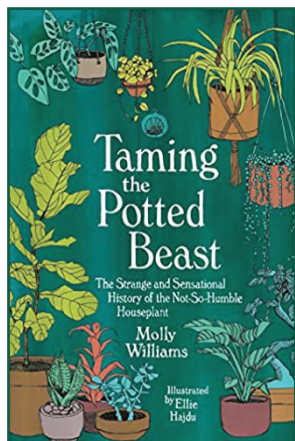
My best memories of the holiday season are not gifts, but good times with family and friends. Christmas parties, nature walks, shared stories and games. Perhaps if we paid as much attention to these aspects of the season, we’d be the better for it.

Green gift ideas

- ☺ local food and drink (organic if possible)
- ☺ gift certificate for your skills or services
- ☺ donation or membership to a local charity/nonprofit/community group
- ☺ local or fairly traded crafts
- ☺ your own craft, poem, artwork or story
- ☺ gear for non-motorized outdoor sports
- ☺ gift certificate for a garden, bike or bookstore
- ☺ tickets to a local screening or production
- ☺ bicycle, backpack or bus pass
- ☺ ticket for a workshop or course

GIFTS FOR THE GARDENER

Taming the Potted Beast: The Strange and Sensational History of the Not-So-Humble Houseplant



by Molly Williams (Author), Ellie Hajdu (Illustrator), Simon & Schuster (Publisher)
Release Sept 2022

The colorful, peculiar history of the houseplant—from ancient Rome to Victorian England to Instagram—a botanical adventure full of histrionic highs, devastating lows, and

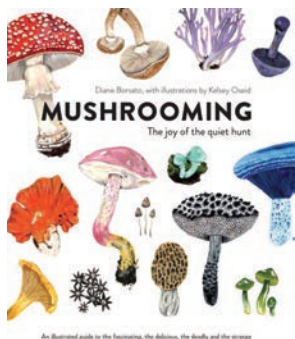
sensational turning points along the way.

From the hanging gardens of Babylon to that fiddle-leaf fig in your living room, houseplants have been humanity's companions for a millennia. Taming the Potted Beast explores the history of our air-purifying friends with an entertaining narrative of the peculiar, often dramatic story of the cultivation and domestication of the not-so-humble houseplant.

Including entertaining historical vignettes, DIY plant projects, and accessible tips and tricks for caring for your own historical houseplant collection, this book has any plant-curious reader covered. Readers will come away with practical projects, expert advice, and an understanding of the historical significance of houseplants as well as an appreciation of the cultures from which they emerged.

Both fascinating and fun, Taming the Potted Beast will take readers on exhilarating botanical adventure through the ages.

Mushrooming: The Joy of the Quiet Hunt - An Illustrated Guide to the Fascinating, the Delicious, the Deadly and the Strange



by Diane Borsato (Author), Kelsey Oseid (Illustrator)
Douglas & McIntyre (Publisher)

Foraging for wild mushrooms is an

increasingly popular pursuit and this beautifully produced volume—filled with insights, anecdotes and details about more than 120 common and charismatic fungi from across the northern hemisphere—will appeal to everyone from beginner mushroomers to advanced mycophiles.

Mushrooming offers a new perspective on the fascinating, edible, deadly and strange world of fungi, from candy caps to earth stars, puff balls to poison pie, prized chanterelles, morels, hedgehogs and the bloodless destroying angel. There are mushrooms named after fairies and demons, little brown mushrooms that are wildly hallucinogenic, phallic specimens prized as aphrodisiacs, and mushrooms that are the colour of precious jewels. Some mushrooms look so much like woodland birds they are shot at by hunters, and others, incredibly, glow in the dark.

Walk along with award-winning artist, naturalist and educator Diane Borsato from Guelph ON along with illustrator Kelsey Oseid as they inspire foragers at all levels to see the wondrousness of fungi wherever they are: in the forest, the city park or the local market.

Learn how mushrooming can radically expand our perspectives, connect us to nature and quietly enrich our lives.

NOTE: These above two books can be ordered in at the Book Nook right here in Perth.

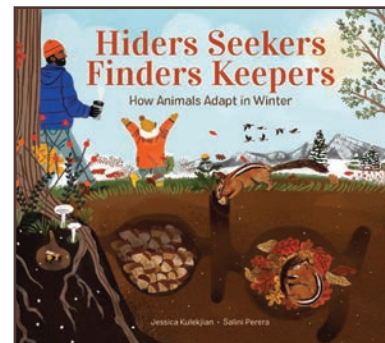
Hiders Seekers Finders Keepers: How Animals Adapt in Winter

by Jessica Kulekjian (Author), Salini Perera (Illustrations)
Kids Can Press (Publisher)

Suitable for kids
ages 4-8

A poetic and informative exploration of the many ways animals face the challenges of winter.

When the autumn days grow shorter and the temperatures cool, animals prepare for winter.



Some, the hidiers, choose a place to rest and wait out the winter, hibernating under the ground or snuggling in a sheltered spot. Other creatures are seekers, migrating to new locations where the weather is milder and the food sources more plentiful. And then there are the finders, who keep warm and fed by adapting to the new conditions. Every animal knows just what to do --- following an ingenious plan that's just right for them!

Jessica Kulekjian's lyrical informational picture book uses expressive text supplemented with sidebars to explain how different animals survive winter. While the compelling narrative tells the bigger story, the sidebars provide fascinating information about specific winter animal behaviors --- for example, how box turtles lower their heart rates, and monarch butterflies travel all the way to Mexico! Salini Perera's stunning illustrations show the concepts in detail and provide a visual story, featuring a father and a child, that evocatively traces the subtle changes in the landscape from late fall to early spring. Grouping the animals into three categories makes for easier comprehension of topics such as hibernation, migration and adaptation. Back matter contains a guide to tracking prints in the snow, an author's note and a list of resources. There are strong links here to primary grades' earth and life sciences curriculums. This is also a perfect read-aloud for a snowy day!



Daphne's Bees

by Catherine Dempsey (Author) Veselina Tomova (Illustrations) Running the Goat (Publisher)

Suitable for kids ages 8-12 Released March 2022

Ten-year-old Daphne is abuzz with excitement! She's learning the ins and outs of beekeeping from her grandmother. Together they assemble hive boxes, set up a colony, tend the colony, and gather honey. Told in a simple, straightforward manner, this beautifully illustrated informational storybook is an excellent introduction to the many aspects of beekeeping. It includes lots of useful

information, bee facts, and more, all wrapped up in a story that celebrates the connection between grandparent and grandchild.

Dew Drop Bug & Bee Hotel

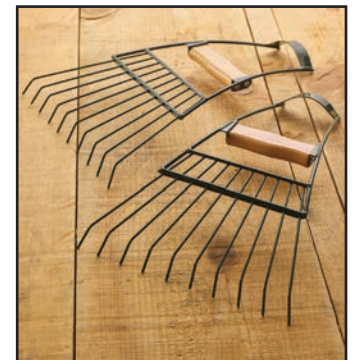
Source: Vesey.com
SKU 88041 \$39.95



Made from FSC wood and hand-woven bamboo our Bee & Bug Hotel comes complete with a natural cord for hanging. This solitary bee nester is packed with drilled canes for nesting with the added feature of smaller holes for use by other beneficial insets such as ladybugs. 8.46" H x 5.12" W x 4.72" D.

Large Hand Rakes

Source: Lee Valley Pair: \$47.50 Order online or consult with Lee Valley in Almonte Item PD255



These narrow rakes act as extensions of your hands, making it easy to rake around plants as well as reach into areas a conventional rake can't. They can also be used for quickly transferring piles of leaves or yard waste to the compost bin.

The tines are closely spaced to capture even fine materials such as pine needles and wood mulch. The forearm rest greatly improves leverage, letting you use a light grip while raking.

Sold in pairs, the rakes are 16" overall and 10" wide. Each is powder-coated steel with a beech handle; together they weigh just under 2 lb.

Enjoy your holiday season!
Jane Avery

Leaves are a Gardener's New Gold

Source Inside Ottawa Valley Nov 22 2022 - Tom Shoebridge

They're great food for plants and trees, writes Tom Shoebridge

After a month of one of the most spectacular displays of autumn leaves in years, they have now fallen and cover the ground. To some people, they are a mess. For others, they are the source of the most wonderful free compost.

It makes sense that leaves are great food for plants and trees as nature, as it seems in most cases, knows exactly what it's doing. These leaves not only decay and generate food for plants and the tree itself, but they also help maintain the pH, acid or base, of the soil around the tree's roots. These leaves also protect against moisture loss and keep weeds from competing for food and water.

Freshly fallen leaves are mainly acidic in content, so one should be careful when putting fresh fallen leaves on certain plants. However, that acidity reduces as the leaves decay until the remnants are mainly neutral, and hence can be used as fertilizer for all plants and trees.

Many people, unfortunately, have grown up with the culture of getting rid of leaves. They gather them up and burn them, or worse, send them off with the garbage to the landfill, where they are wasted and contribute to the volume of garbage and methane production.

Left in piles, leaves get wet and become a slimy mess that take forever to decompose and kill the grass under them. However, composted carefully, they are almost magic as a growth stimulant.

If one has a regular compost bin or container, leaves can be stored in a waterproof container and added to the regular food stuffs that make up household compost. They will quickly rot and add to the food value of the composting material.

However, there is an exciting new way of composting leaves that produces even more useful and effective compost. It is called fungal dominant composting (FDC), and the good news is that it never needs turning over, doesn't attract flies and has no smell, which discourages many people from composting.

To begin the FDC process, gather leaves of all kinds, chop them up with your lawn mower and put them in a wire circular container so the leaves get all kinds of air. You can also install a plastic pipe with air holes drilled in it and stand it upright in the pile. Voilà, you are done.

After two years of just sitting there, the leaves will decompose naturally, in a perfect hospitable place for fungal action. For the more scientifically inclined, the resultant material is "a microbially diverse and fungal-dominant soil microbiome," according to an online article entitled "Making Fungal Compost."

This compost is much more concentrated than normal compost and so can be applied very sparingly, by sprinkling it or making a compost tea by soaking some FDC in water.

