

Village Garden Center

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Cotoneaster

Cotoneaster divaricatus is a medium sized deciduous shrub with an upright, columnar growth habit, becoming horizontal and spreading with age. It's foliage is dark, glossy green in colour. It's leaves are 2cm long, alternate, elliptical, with flattened, entire margins. The leaves of this plant turn bright red in autumn. The stems of the plant are purple/brown in colour and have a waxy coating that flakes off with age. The hermaphrodite flowers of the plant are held tightly against the stems, blossoming in late May and early June.

They are borne from pink buds to small 5 petals and are white or pink and are numerous. The 1cm fruits of the plant are egg shaped and are bright red in colour.

Cotoneaster divaricatus, commonly known as Spreading Cotoneaster, is native to west China. This plant was introduced into the UK in 1904 as a garden species. In 1983 it was recorded in the wild in Kent, probably bird sown, and it is suspected that it may be spreading

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The etymological root of the binomial name Cotoneaster is derived from the old Latin name cotone 'quince', aster being a Latin substantival suffix indicating 'resembling'. Divaricatus is derived from the Latin meaning 'spreading out' or 'growing in a straggly manner'.

The landscape architect may find Cotoneaster divaricatus useful as an impenetrable informal hedge.

It can be planted en mass to great effect due to it's autumn colour. It is also tolerant of urban conditions and some salt exposure. Ecologically Cotoneaster divaricatus is pollinated by flies, bees and midges.

Cotoneaster divaricatus will tolerate most soils although it prefers well drained soil. It is tolerant most soil pH. It will tolerate poor soils and soil compaction.

Cotoneaster divaricatus requires little maintenance. Hedge maintenance should be carried out in late winter.



How to have Winter interest-Shrubs

Small and large

Buxus sempervirens 'Variegata'



Winter has descended upon us. It is cold, sometimes windy, sometimes dreary, sometimes sunny in the garden. Gardeners need some cheering up while waiting for the excitement of bulbs poking through mulched or leaf covered ground. They want to see something that is alive and interesting to help the time pass more quickly, perhaps viewed from the warm and cozy inside of the glass or bundled up for outside perusal. Proper plant selection, and siting, to the rescue. Shrubs of various sizes, shapes and colors fit the criteria. Evergreen conifers and broad leaf woody shrubs belong in every garden. There is something for every situation, climate or zone that can offer the desired effect. Let us begin with containers, like the above hypertufa with a small specimen of variegated boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens* 'Variegata' that will fit into even the smallest of garden spaces.



Juniperus horizontalis 'Blue Pygmy'

Chamaecyparis obtusa 'Gemstone'



Calluna vulgaris 'Multicolor'



Mugo Pine and Chamaecyparis



Without the addition of evergreen shrubs, planting beds, especially those foundation areas around the house would be boring during the winter months. The blue foliage of *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Boulevard' gives height to the corner while several *Juniperus squamata* 'Blue Star' anchor the bed. The chartreuse leaves of *Heuchera* 'Citronelle' lighten up the dark space and the Japanese Maple gives graceful structure.

White astilbe, self sown forget me nots and various bulbs complete this low maintenance section for twelve month beauty.



A handsome species from China and Taiwan, although plants are now only found in cultivation, this is one of the most popular winter-flowering evergreen shrubs. It makes a bold, colourful highlight when its remarkable leaves, up to 40cm (16in) long, glow rich reddish-purple in the winter garden, followed before the spring by the long terminal clusters of lemon-yellow blooms which smell of lily-of-the-valley. Plants withstand shade, but need some protection from frost and wind to avoid leaf and bud scorch. Flowers last well in water when cut. The Royal Horticultural Society has given it its Award of Garden Merit (AGM).

Mahonia japonica



Hamamelis x intermedia 'Arnold's Promise' Certainly one of the best yellow flowering Witch Hazels. Begins blooming in February with clear yellow, ribbon-like flowers that continue into March. Green summer leaves turn bright yellow/orange or red in fall. Grows to 20' in full sun or light shade. Prefers a moist, well drained and slightly acid soil. A Witch Hazel in full bloom in February-March is sure to gladden the heart of any winter weary gardener. Zone 5.

Hamamelis × intermedia 'Arnold Promise'



•Hellebores will bloom in mid- to late-winter and comes in many colors. It thrives in Zones 3-8, so it is a great option for many regions of the U.S

•Japanese Pieris is an evergreen-like shrub that will bloom all through the winter. It's hardy in Zones 5-7, which is most of the middle belt of the U.S.



The last step in creating a healthy winter garden is to keep mulching. Mulch and compost will help stabilize the temperature of the soil and will stop soil erosion. Keep a few inches of mulch above the soil- you can think of it as insulation- to keep your plants warm and healthy in the chilly weather. This will also replenish nutrients in the soil to keep it rich for the spring. As with any personal hobby, you have to know what works for you, your habits and your garden. Beginning a winter garden can take a few years to perfect, but the time you put into the care will not be wasted. There are some beautiful plants that can grow in the colder weather with some planning, planting and some TLC. And don't forget to reward yourself with some hot cocoa while you relax and enjoy your vibrant winter garden.

From the garden of Eva

Farfalle with Sausage and Fennel

Cooking the links whole and then slicing (rather than trying to slice soft raw sausage) results in neat round coins that stay super juicy. Feel free to use chicken sausage or hot Italian sausage in place of sweet, but omit the crushed pepper flakes if you do.

Kosher salt

2 Tbs. olive oil

1/2 lb. sweet Italian sausage (about 3 links)

1 small yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced lengthwise

1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed, cored, and thinly sliced lengthwise

3 medium cloves garlic, sliced

1/2 lb. dried farfalle

1/2 cup thinly sliced oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes

1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

Freshly ground black pepper

2 oz. coarsely grated Pecorino-Romano (about 1/2 cup)

2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil.

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage and cook, turning often, until cooked through, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board.

Add the onion, fennel, garlic, and 1/2 tsp. salt to the skillet. Stir, cover, turn the heat down to medium low, and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender and starting to brown, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to package directions until al dente. Reserve 2 cups of the pasta water, drain the pasta, and return to it the pot, off the heat. Cover while finishing the sauce.

Uncover the skillet and add the sun-dried tomatoes, red pepper flakes, another 1/2 tsp. salt, 1/2 tsp. pepper, and 1 cup of the reserved pasta water.

Turn the heat up to medium high and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes.

Slice the sausage 1/4 inch thick. Add the sausage, half the cheese, and the remaining 1 cup of pasta water to the skillet and cook until the sauce thickens somewhat, about 5 minutes. Toss the sauce, parsley, and the remaining cheese with the pasta. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve immediately.



Christmas chocolate log recipe

Based on a chocolate sponge cake, the filling of this dessert is flavored with mouth watering Bailey's Irish Cream liqueur and lightly set with gelatin. Whatever your Christmas meal, this cake will provide the perfect ending. -

Ingredients

4 eggs

4 tsp. tepid water

1/2 cup (4 oz./115 g) superfine (caster) sugar

1/2 cup (2 1/4 oz./60 g) all-purpose (plain) flour

1/4 cup (1 oz./25 g) cocoa

1 level tsp. baking powder

butter for greasing

confectioners' (icing) sugar for dusting

3 tsp. unflavored gelatin

1/2 cup (4 fl. oz./115 ml) Bailey's Irish Cream

1/4 cup (2 oz./55 g) superfine (caster) sugar

1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

1 cup (8 fl oz./225 ml) whipping cream



Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F

Whip the eggs and water together until frothy. Gradually add the sugar a little at a time, lightly beating the mixture. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, cocoa, and baking powder. Fold gradually into the egg mixture

2. Line a jelly roll pan measuring approximately 14 in. x 16 in. with greased baking paper, and spread the runny mixture evenly on the paper.

Bake until firm, about 12–15 minutes.

3. Carefully turn out, face down, onto a clean tea towel that has been dusted with confectioners' sugar and peel off the baking paper. Roll up the sponge with the tea towel inside, starting at on long side. Lift onto a wire rack and allow to cool

4. Sprinkle the gelatin over 2 tbsp. of water in a small bowl and leave for 5 minutes. Dissolve the gelatin by standing the bowl in a pan of warm water.

Mix together the Bailey's Irish Cream, sugar, and vanilla. Stir in the dissolved gelatin and chill until starting to thicken, about 20 minutes. Whip the cream until stiff and fold into the setting mixture.

5. Unroll the sponge and spread the Bailey's Irish Cream evenly over it. Roll up again and chill for about 1 hour.

Decorate with rosemary and red currants if desired.

Bring It On, Winter!

It's coming. Are you ready?

Of course we're talking about winter and all of the preparation that comes with it.

Sometimes, it seems like there is no winter. The weather doesn't really change and life goes on as normal. Then there are those occasions when winter rears its ugly head and makes life anything but normal.

And that's just how it seems to us. Think about the birds.

Birds usually eat a quantity of food to satisfy their energy needs. Their food intake fluctuates with environmental temperature, their activity level and the energy concentration of the diet.

Furthermore, the average bird in an average environment must forage about five hours per day to meet its energy requirements. In winter, they may have to forage longer for much-needed additional energy.

Bird feeders can be an important food source. When severe weather impacts wild food supplies, some species of birds will turn to feeders as a critical food resource. It's during these times that feeders play their most vital role.

However, don't think that helping the birds is actually altering their normal behavior. There is no evidence that birds using feeders will alter their seasonal feeding behavior when switching between seeds, insects and fruit.

So again, are you ready?



Do you have what your birds need this winter?



Garland for wild birds to eat





Materials:

- cardboard toilet-paper tube (or paper-towel tube cut in half)
- peanut butter
- knife
- birdseed
- 24 inch of ribbon (or just make it long enough to hang from tree branch)
- empty box
- scissors

Step 1: Spread a coat of peanut butter all over the cardboard tube.

Step 2: Pour birdseed into the empty box so there is a thin layer covering the bottom of the box.

Step 3: Roll the cardboard tube in birdseed so the seeds adhere to the peanut butter and cover the tube.



Step 4: Thread a ribbon through the tube and tie ends together into a knot.



Step 5: Hang from a tree branch near your window and watch the birds feast!

Caring for Your Live Potted/B&B Christmas Trees

If you're planning on keeping your Live Potted/B&B Christmas trees beyond the holidays, here are a few helpful hints

My favourite thing about buying potted/balled and burlapped (B&B) trees is that you can plant the tree in your yard after Christmas and enjoy it for years to come.

Here are some guidelines for best success.



Live Potted/B&B Christmas

Tree Tips

Determine where in your yard you want to plant the tree.

- For B&Bs, make sure the root ball is intact and securely bound before buying.
- Carry the tree by root ball/pot only.
- Water the root ball or pot as soon as you get it home and allow excess water to drain away.
- Wrap pot/root ball with plastic to protect floors.
- Keep pot/root ball moist, but not wet (cool water).
- Keep the tree away from heat sources and, if possible, place it near a window.
- Choose lights that give off less heat.
- The maximum time the tree can be kept indoors is 10 days, but try and remove it sooner than that.
- Soon after Christmas, dig a hole in the yard and place the potted or B&B tree in, then cover with soil.
- In early spring, prepare planting site and plant tree in your planned location.



Colorful Tabletop Display

If you're tight on space, try a tabletop tree planted in a sculptural garden urn. Dripping with antique glass ornaments and beaded garland, it's a festive way to display your treasures.

Green & Gold Tabletop



Christmas Shop



We wish you joy all though your holidays,
We wish you good luck that forever stays.
We wish you the love of family and friends,
We wish you happy days that never ever ends.
Merry Christmas to you!

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