

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

December Topic: Deer Resistant Drama

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its December 2019 meeting on Wednesday, December 4, at 7:00 p.m. in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. Our speaker for the evening will be Karen Chapman CPH from le jardinet who will introduce us to her latest book, *Deer Resistant Design: Fence-Free Gardens that Thrive Despite the Deer*.

It's easy to feel defeated when trying to create a garden that we enjoy but that the deer will leave alone. We consult lists of recommended "deer-resistant plants" and consider fences and other barriers. The results are not always effective or beautiful!

Karen Chapman considers a different approach grounded in good garden design. She will share her 8 design principles for a deer-resistant garden from establishing the hardscape to choosing plants and developing barriers.

Come and learn how to create a beautiful deer-resistant garden! Signed copies of her book will be available for purchase.

Beautiful Winter Color Yuletide Camellia

With its bright glossy evergreen leaves and spectacular red flowers, *Camellia vernalis* 'Yuletide' brings color to the garden just in time for the holiday season.



Yuletide Camellia will tolerate more sun exposure than the spring-flowering types of camellias and has a rather bushy low-growing form. Its small leaves and upright form make it a fine choice for formal and informal hedges. It is also excellent when used as an espalier and makes a lush screen for the back of the border.

Like all camellias, Yuletide needs to be planted in a spot where there is good drainage. If the

plant is set too deeply into the soil it will grow, but will not flower properly, if at all.

Camellias in general are not very heavy feeders. However, if yellow leaves develop, the plants will benefit from feeding in the late winter or early spring, with a rhododendron type fertilizer. Established plants are best transplanted during the fall and winter months of November to February.

This plant grows slowly and pruning is seldom required because it has a naturally uniform growth habit. However, should any kind of pruning be needed, the best time to prune is when the plant is in bloom or shortly after flowering in February, March, or early April.

With its bright red and green colors, Yuletide mingles well with just about everything in the garden. So if your garden needs some holiday cheer, consider this camellia.



Beautiful Berries — *Gaultheria procumbens*

As the holiday season approaches, garden centers are flooded with *Gaultheria procumbens* plants (most commonly known as Wintergreen). Why is Wintergreen featured in stores now? Because of the spectacular red berries covering the plant during the winter months.

A lovely small-leaved ground cover, native to the mountainous areas of the northern United States and southern Canada, Wintergreen is a member of the heath family. It grows in almost all soils under all conditions from wet and organic to dry and rocky.

The plant is evergreen, and grows to about 6 inches tall. Its shiny forest-green leaves, which turn to a gleaming maroon in winter, have a leathery surface that prevents loss of moisture during extreme summer drought.

The flowers of Wintergreen are white and urn-shaped with five small lobes at the tip. They hang below the leaves on curving stems and appear early in June. The bright red berries ripen in September and remain on the plants until the following spring.



Wintergreen has its own arsenal of fungicides and bactericides and is seldom infected by disease, however, its delicious flavor and food value are its worst problems. Deer relish the plant

and keep it cropped off close to the ground unless it is planted out of reach. On a more positive note, honey bees use the high-quality nectar during dry weather to make a superior honey.

It is as a medicinal herb that Wintergreen is best known. Before the wide-spread use of synthetic flavorings, oil from the plant was used extensively in toothpaste and other dental products, candy, and lozenges. Aspirin was originally extracted from Wintergreen.

Grow Wintergreen as a rich, colorful ground cover around shade-loving shrubs and under conifer trees. It is a beautiful addition to the woodland garden and provides year-round interest with its spring flowers and bright winter berries. The benefits of this little plant to the garden extend far beyond the holiday season!

The Birchwood Garden Club Provides Financial Support and/or Gardening Expertise to the following Community Organizations

Bellingham Public Library *Whatcom Museum of History and Art*
Growing Veterans *Cornwall Rose Garden* *Bellingham Food Bank*

Welcome New Members

**Peggy Allen, Rochelle Burnett, Sandy and Al Hunter,
Barbara Sardarov, Diana Weiss**

Snacks

This month's meeting snacks will be provided by Judy Boxx, Mary Foster and Carol McLean.

Thank You

Plant of the Month: *Grevillea thelemanniaria*

Grevillea thelemanniaria, the Spider Net Grevillea, is valued by gardeners for its blooms that appear in winter when the majority of our garden is devoid of color. Try this Australian native for some color in your own garden this December.

This grevillea takes a prostrate form, keeping to 2' high and quickly spreading to a 5' span. It is an evergreen shrub with fine, green leaves that are divided into narrow segments 1-2" long. The leaves are deeply lobed and covered in soft hairs. There are two forms, one with dark green

leaves and one with silver grey leaves.



The clusters of pink or bright red and yellow tipped flowers appear between late autumn and late

spring, and can also appear in any season in garden cultivation. The blooms grow in spider-like clusters, hence the name of this cultivar. The flowers attract hummers and other birds into the garden.

Although drought tolerant, Grevillea will produce more flowers when watered regularly. Prune after flowering to maintain compact and dense growth habit.

Spider Net Grevillea can be used as a ground cover, on embankments, and in rockeries. It is also beautiful when grown in large containers.

Pruning Equipment: Great Holiday Gift

When the weather is dreary outside, take time and assemble your pruning equipment. If you need any tools, put them on your holiday wish list. Listed below are some basic pruning tools that should be in the garden tool shed of the "handy" gardener for those small pruning jobs.

Hand pruning shears are the proper tool for most small pruning chores. A sharp set of bypass pruners with curved blades that cut with a scissor-like action and give the cleanest cut should be in every gardener's tool box. Pruning shears are designed to cut stems up to 1/4 inch in diameter.

The bypass types are preferred over anvil pruners. These have a single cutting blade that, when cutting, presses the stem against a flat piece of metal (anvil). These types of hand pruners are typically not preferred as they tend to crush the stems.

Long-handled loppers (12 to 18 inch long handles) are used to cut thick branches up to 1/2 inch in diameter. Select bypass types with lightweight metal alloy handles.

A keyhole saw about 7 to 8 inches long with a thin pointed tip allows you to maneuver into tight corners. It can be used to cut very

large stems (up to 1/2 inch diameter or greater) near the crown of shrubs. Remove large stubs close to a bud union.

Sturdy leather gloves with a gauntlet-type cuff to protect your hands and forearms are a must for those thorny pruning jobs.

Squirt bottle of Lysol® or other disinfectant cleaner to disinfect your pruning equipment after pruning out diseased branches is a good thing. Using these types of disinfecting cleaners are less corrosive to your tools than using bleach.



" We may think we are nurturing our garden but, of course, our garden is really nurturing us. "

Jenny Uglow

Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2019
Submitted by Ann Holland



Our President Patti Salotti welcomed all and three guests to our November meeting. There were forty- five members present. Our speaker tonight is Brian Minter, owner of Minter Country Store in Chilliwack, British Columbia. Mr. Minter gave an excellent presentation of garden trends and a better understanding of nature.

The last meetings minutes (October 2019) published in the Gazette were approved.

Old Business: Zapote Gregory reminded us of the Parks Dept. work party for the Cornwall Park on Saturday November 9th, 9:00 am until noon. This also includes the Rose Garden area and Zapote would greatly appreciate volunteers in that area.

The Silent Auction table has a nice selection of garden themed items for sale.

Treasurers Report: Nancy McMaster passed out the proposed 2019/2020 budget, at our last meeting. Tonight the proposed budget was voted upon and approved by the members present.

If you have not paid your annual dues, please see Nancy McMaster tonight or fill out the dues form in the October Gazette and mail it in with your check to: Birchwood Garden Club, P.O. Box 362, Bellingham, WA. 98227.

New Business: Ann Holland announced a work party for the Museum Garden on Saturday, November 16th at 10:00am. A sign-up sheet was passed to the members and seven members volunteered. Any suggestions for new plants that can handle a hot and dry environment are welcome.

Thank you to Marilyn Glenn and Lillian Nelson for our snacks this evening. As always, thank you to Sheri and Russ Lambert for our coffee (always decaf).

The Birchwood Garden Club (BGC) is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. BGC meets the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership is \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available from the website: www.birchwoodgardenclub.org.

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the BGC. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editors, Ken and Stephanie Salzman, at the above address or via e-mail to: sasalzman@comcast.net

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President Elect - Sheri Lambert

Treasurer - Nancy McMaster

Secretary - Ann Holland

Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride

Historian – Violet Hayes

Hospitality – Carol McBride

Library Garden – Donna Halwe

Museum Garden – Ann Holland

Membership – Judy Lewis

Newsletter – Ken & Stephanie Salzman

Plant Sale – Cheryl Haak

Programs – Tamara Hall

Publicity – Susan Metcalfe

Silent Auction – Sandy Gurosko

Sunshine – Cheryl Haak

Webmaster – Tom Sparks