

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

November Topic: Your Favorite Plants in Pots

From by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will meet via Zoom on **Wednesday, November 4, at 7:00 p.m.** You will soon receive an e-mail with instructions on how to connect to the meeting.

Our presenter for the evening will be our own Judy Boxx, beloved Master Gardener and expert on designing, developing, and maintaining beautiful gardens. She will provide an overview on successfully growing fuchsias, geraniums, and begonias in pots.

Judy's original creations using these favorite plants are true works of art that bring joy and beauty to the garden. Connect to this Zoom presentation and learn how to create your own masterpieces.

Zoom has proved to be an easy and effective way to connect to the club, see friends, and learn garden tips, all in the comfort of your own home with your own close-up screen. So join us for this very special presentation on creating beautiful pots using fuchsias, geraniums, and begonias.

Watch for the e-mail on how to connect to the November meeting. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom!

Pansies for Winter Color

November is a great time to plant pansies. Despite their name, pansies are some of the toughest annual, cool-season color plants and should be planted in everyone's garden and landscape.

There is a huge range of colors and styles. Flowers with dark blotches are thought of as more traditional pansies, but for pure color, there are



selections called clear that do not have the blotch. A nice feature of the clear-colored flowers is that the throat of each has a small yellow eye.

When massed together, as pansies were meant to be planted, they create an impressive, colorful landscape carpet. Look for plants with

strong stems that will hold the flowers above the foliage, allowing the petals to flutter in the slightest breeze.

As with all annual color, bed preparation is the key to landscape success. Always work a little compost into the soil before planting, and be sure to allow for plenty of drainage moisture. Feed with a water-soluble fertilizer, even during the winter months.

Pansies may be the perfect winter-flowering annual, as the plants can freeze solid and thaw with little damage. In response to the cold temperature, the leaves will be tinged purple. Of course, the flowers will be nipped back, but once it gets a little warmer, the flowering will rev up again.

Pansies give nonstop color to get you through the winter months. Buying pansies now will give you the best selection. In a month, your pansies will be pansying and ready for the months of the real cool weather.

Zucchini Mexicali

With our virtual meeting format, we will miss our delicious snacks. So we will be featuring favorite recipes from members. This month's recipe is from **Judy Boxx**.

Serving Size: 4-6 Preparation Time: 30 minutes

1/4 C cooking oil
4 C unpeeled zucchini thinly sliced
1 C carrot coarsely shredded
1 C onion chopped
3/4 C chopped celery
1/2 med green pepper cut in thin strips
1/2 t garlic salt
1/4 t dried basil crushed
Dash of pepper
1/3 C taco sauce
2 t prepared mustard
2 med tomatoes cut into wedges
Salt to taste



Heat cooking oil in 10 inch skillet. Add zucchini, carrot, onion, celery, green pepper, garlic salt, basil, and pepper. Mix well. Cook covered over medium high heat for 4 minutes stirring occasionally.

Combine taco sauce and mustard, stir into vegetables. Add tomato wedges, cook uncovered 3 to 5 minutes or until heated throughly. Season with salt and serve.

Garden Quiz

This strange looking flower belongs to which plant?



Flowers are usually orange, pink, or red. Although it can tolerate some shade, it will flower much more profusely in sun. The flowers are greatly loved by insects of all descriptions and are an essential ingredient of a wildlife garden.

Answer on page 4

Fall Planting

Fall is an ideal season for planting trees and shrubs. The key is encouraging good root growth. Planting trees and shrubs in fall enables the root systems to grow before the hot summer returns.

September through November is the ideal time for tree planting because it allows the roots to become established before the ground freezes and winter sets in. With an increase in rainfall and cooler temperatures in the fall, less watering is needed.

Trees and shrubs planted in the fall are better equipped to deal with heat and drought in the following season. Roots will be well-established by spring. And you can pick your trees and shrubs by the fall color they provide.

Soils stay warm well after the air temperature cools, also encouraging root growth. During shoot dormancy, trees and shrubs grow to establish roots before warm weather stimulates top growth.

Plant of the Month: *Snowberry (Symphoricarpos)*

Spend any time in the woods in Western Washington and you will probably encounter our native Snowberry, *Symphoricarpos albus*. This deciduous shrub is also becoming a familiar sight in home landscapes, as it is an easy-going, carefree native shrub.

In spring, Snowberry is fairly unassuming with its small, round-to-oval green leaves and sometimes rather twiggy stature. But it catches more attention when it flowers: Though the blossoms are tiny (less than a half-inch) pinkish-white tubes, they are abundant enough during their long bloom period of late spring to late summer to catch the eye of passers-by and hummingbirds alike.

But it is in autumn when Snowberry's namesake is realized. The stems are covered with stark white berries that

persist after leaf drop and make for an especially interesting and attractive shrub in the winter garden. A cultivar, Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbitulatus*), has the same growth pattern as the *albus*, but produces large pink berries.



Birds are attracted to the berries, but it is also true that the Snowberry's fruit is not their first favorite choice -- so that means the shrub can be an attractive feature in the garden through the

winter and also then available food for birds in the leaner times of late winter.

Snowberry can grow in sun or part shade, in moist, dry, even poor soils and is good for USDA hardiness zones 2-7. It grows from 3-6 feet tall and about 3 feet wide. It can spread and colonize an area to form a dense thicket, but is easily controlled through pruning.

Snowberry makes an attractive garden plant that provides great winter interest in the landscape with the advantages of being low-maintenance and bird friendly. Be aware that there is a minor toxicity to humans associated with *Symphoricarpos* berries — not at all considered dangerous or deadly, but can cause degrees of stomach upset, so not for snacking by humans.

BGC DUES ARE NOW DUE!

If your name, address, phone number, or e-mail address has changed, please supply the correct information below. Otherwise, simply return this form with your dues payment (\$10 single or \$15 family) to: Birchwood Garden Club, P.O. Box 362, Bellingham, WA 98227-0362.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please ensure that we have your "current" E-mail address!

Answer to Garden Quiz

Monardia. Also known as Bergamot or Scarlet Beebalm

Meeting Minutes

October 7, 2020

Submitted by Ann Holland



Our President Sheri Lambert welcomed all to our October meeting via Zoom. There were ten members present. Our speaker was David Droppers, naturalist and biologist who provided an overview of how to attract butterflies to your garden.

The last meetings minutes (September 2,2020) published in the Gazette were approved.

Treasurers Report: Nancy McMaster gave us the current bank balance and membership income to date.

Library Garden Report: Ann Holland reported that we will perform a fall Library clean-up sometime in October. Please watch for an email from Judy Lewis as to the time and day. (Probably a Saturday.)

The Museum garden has been put to bed for the winter.

Sheri Lambert asked: How are people surviving COVID? Has anyone been doing any exciting changes or projects they would like to share? Please let us know. Send email with pictures to Sheri so we can share with our membership.

Our next presenter will be Judy Boxx. (Possibly regarding fuchias and delphiniums.)

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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