

# the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB [www.birchwoodgardenclub.org](http://www.birchwoodgardenclub.org) CHARTERED 1931

## January Topic: Lavender

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its January 2018 meeting on Wednesday, January 3, at 7:00 in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. The owners of Red Barn Lavender in Ferndale will discuss their experiences with organically growing lavender in Whatcom County.



These experts started growing lavender in 2005 and now have over 3,600 plants under cultivation. Over the years they have experimented with various species of lavender to determine which ones grow best in our area and meet their product requirements. At present, they grow 24 different species in their lavender gardens.

They grow this wide variety of species because Red Barn has several product lines which require different plant attributes. Specifically some species generate superior oil, others are fragrant, some species have robust flower heads and others provide culinary usages. Lavender sugars, butters, lotions, creams and soaps all require different plant attributes.

The speakers will be bringing some of their non-plant related products to demonstrate the lavender attributes that they are selecting. Red Barn Lavender is a valued member of the Bellingham Farmers Market. When I visited their booth, it was overflowing with customers.

The pictures, their experiences, and the range of lavender uses will be a treat for the new year.



## It's Showtime in the Pacific Northwest!

The Northwest Flower & Garden Show brings flower and plant enthusiasts from around the world to the Seattle Convention Center for an annual celebration of gardening. A Northwest spring tradition since 1989, the Show runs for five magical days, February 7-11.

Lush showcase gardens will spotlight the "Garden Party" theme celebrating the show's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Created by 20 garden creators, the fully built showcase gardens will be both impressive to admire and full of many invaluable take-home ideas.

Other features of the show this year include a City Garden Showcase focusing on gardens for small spaces in addition to the annual Floral Competition. The Show Marketplace offers over 300 exhibitors showing the latest garden tools and accessories for home and garden.

The Show is renowned for offering a large roster of horticulture seminars brimming with hands-on demonstrations and sensible advice. The seminars are filled with valuable education and entertainment.

The Show is a great place to dig in and learn how to solve your landscaping problems and create beautiful outdoor spaces and luscious edible gardens for year-round enjoyment. For ticket information (and information about bus tours to the Show) go to [www.gardenshow.com](http://www.gardenshow.com)

# 2018 Gardening Trends

Each year, the Garden Media Group ([www.gardenmediagroup.com](http://www.gardenmediagroup.com))-- a marketing firm for the home and garden industry—identifies key gardening trends for the coming season. For 2018, they pegged their 8 trends around the theme “Nature's Rx for Mental Wellness.”

**Climate Controlled.** "People are gardening in a changing climate," which can be stressful, the Garden Media Group says. Trees are being used to reduce heat in urban environments and low-water gardening options are being used to deal with warming temperatures and drought.

**Social Network.** This trend focuses on creating a social network for plants and promoting symbiotic relationships. The future is in learning how these plants work together.

**Imperfect Gardening.** Promoting the spirit of the Japanese term "Wabi-Sabi," which means to embrace imperfection and transience. Making mistakes and aging gracefully are among life examples, and in the garden, perfectly-maintained lawns are getting less common and sought-after.

**Breathing Room.** Emphasizing the importance of disconnecting and relaxing. This trend is driven by people giving themselves spaces to renew. Gardening is becoming more about creating relaxing spaces.

**Make a Splash.** A trend all about water - using water in beautiful, colorful ways. Water in landscapes is expected to be a big demand.

**Grow Your Own Protein.** The “flexitarian” trend is in full swing now, with many people choosing to eat less meat and substituting with plant-based proteins more often. This trend focuses on a unique challenge and opportunity to develop plant-based proteins that can be grown easily in the home garden.

**Purple Reign.** Purple is a very trendy color this year, especially in edibles, according to the Garden Media Group. Purple foods and ornamentals are big draws as is blending flowers and edibles in displays and landscapes. Beets, berries, purple cabbage, eggplant, plums and more are among examples given.

It will be fun to see how these Garden Media Group trends are reflected in the garden showcases at this year's Northwest Flower and Garden Show!

## AAS 2018 Perennial Winner!

All-America Selections (AAS) was founded in 1932 as a way to test for superior garden performance. Today, AAS utilizes a network of over 80 professional horticulture judges all over North America who trial and evaluate new, never-before-sold varieties. Only the best performers are declared AAS Winners. The 2018 AAS Winner in the Pacific Northwest perennial category is . . . drum roll! **Penstemon Arabesque Red.**



According to the AAS, this exciting new hybrid provides superior garden vigor and flowering. The beautiful red and white bicolor unique large bell-shaped flowers adorn well-branched plants that attract both hummingbirds and butterflies all summer. Needs full sun and grows to media height (so plant in the middle of the flower bed or in containers). Remove spent flowers to encourage continuous flowering.

# Plant of the Month: *Lonicera purpusii*

*Lonicera purpusii* 'Winter Beauty' is one of the best of the winter flowering shrubby honeysuckles, bearing sweetly fragrant creamy white flowers on bare stems, from late winter. It makes an attractive spreading deciduous shrub. It's extremely attractive to insects, and provides a vital source of nectar for bees.

A multi-stemmed deciduous to semi-evergreen shrub, Winter Beauty thrives in USDA Zones 5-9. It will form a large twiggy bush in time, with a height and spread of 5 feet, but can be confined to a smaller size by judicious pruning in late spring.

Honeysuckle Winter Beauty flowers are among the most sweetly fragrant of Winter- and Spring- flowering shrubs. The five petals are white; the five yellow stamens protrude jauntily. The flowers are small, but bushes growing in full sun are floriferous enough to be showy as well as fragrant.

Full sun maximizes the floral display, but Winter Beauty is very tolerant of all growing conditions, persisting and flowering in part-shade as well as in a diversity of soils, from dry to moist, including clay.



In mild Winters, flowering can occur over two months, beginning in mid-Winter and ending in earliest Spring. Where Winter is colder, the flowering season is shortened to just the end of that interval.

One drawback of Winter Beauty is its tendency to become a twiggy haystack of a shrub if not pruned. And, thoughtless pruning can impair flowering, and it might take a year or even two for fuller flowering to resume. On the other hand, if you're able to commit to some thoughtful pruning strategies you will maintain the shrub with year-round integrity highlighted by a spectacular flower display.

Fortunately, the strategies for pruning Winter Beauty are much like those for maintaining mophead hydrangeas. The rule of thumb is to thin old branches at the base of the shrub and do light pruning on the lateral stems to shape after flowering has finished. Easy!

This winter-flowering honeysuckle brings the fragrance of midsummer to enchant and enliven the senses on the dullest of mid-winter days.

## Did You Know?

Variegated plants are prized by gardeners for their interesting often vibrant colors. Popular varieties include hosta, heuchera, zebra grass, and coleus among many others.

Most variegated plants are actually mutations! Chlorophyll is the green pigment needed for photosynthesis. In variegated leaves, the cells that are genetically unable to produce this pigment appear white; some pigments in the mutated cells can produce pink or yellow. A variegated plant will grow more slowly because of its reduced ability to produce food energy.

# Welcome New Member Nancy Drew

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## Snacks

This month's meeting snacks will be provided by Cheryl Haak and Rita Saling.

## Meeting Minutes

December 6, 2017

Submitted by Rhonda Rinn



President Ann Holland welcomed 42 members and one new member to the December 6th meeting of the Birchwood Garden Club.

Minutes of the November 2017 meeting were approved. The treasury report was done by Jerry McLean.

Our speaker tonight was Ryan Carpenter from Sunbreak Nursery. Their nursery is here in Whatcom county and has been a family owned and operated business for many years. His presentation "Ground Covers for Northwest Gardens" was very interesting. He included many ground covers that are native to our area.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** The museum sent a list of rules for use of the Rotunda Room. One rule that is not new, but will now be enforced, no one can bring live plant material into the museum. This would affect our bringing of live plants to our silent auction table and no bouquet of flowers for our snack table. It may also affect our speakers that often bring live plants to accompany their presentations. Ann will be doing further research to determine if that is in fact true. It was brought up that we may need to look for another location for our meetings since we are a "Garden Club," plants are what we do. There will be more information about this at a future meeting.

Thank you to Tamera Hall and Sandy Gurosko for our snacks this evening. As always, thank you to Sheri and Russ Lambert for their generous donation of coffee for our enjoyment.

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](http://www.birchwoodgardenclub.org).

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## CURRENT OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President - Ann Holland

President Elect - Patti Salotti

Treasurer - Jerry McLean

Secretary - Rhonda Rinn

Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride

Historian – Violet Hayes

Hospitality – Carol McBride

Library/Museum Gardens – 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