

# Master Gardeners Newsletter

November/December 2020



Happy Thanksgiving

Upcoming Meeting

December 14 ...6:00 p.m.  
Zoom

## Important

Dues need to be paid to:  
Regina Berg  
3100 Parsons Rd Bellville 44813  
Checks payable to Richland Co. OSU Extension



**I Want You!!!!**

Christmas decorating at Kingwood will be Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in Kingwood Hall. Let Mona (mvkneuss@gmail.com) know that you will be willing to help!!! Friday, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. will be a 'finish up' day if needed!

# How to join a Zoom Meeting

While you'll need to sign up for a **free account** in order to use Zoom, once the program is installed on your computer, you'll be able to use it right away.

Here's how to download Zoom on your [PC](#).

- 1.** Open your computer's internet browser and navigate to the Zoom website at [Zoom.us](#).
- 2.** Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click "Download" in the web page's footer.
- 3.** On the Download Center page, click "Download" under the "Zoom Client for Meetings" section.
- 4.** The Zoom app will then begin downloading. You should then click on the .exe file to begin the installation process.

Once installed, you will need to log into your Zoom account, which can be set up via the Zoom website if you don't already have one. Once created, you can use Zoom as normal for all of your video calls and online meeting needs.

You will receive an email link from Judy to use on the day/time of our meeting(s). Click on the link to join!!!!

# Tips to Winterize your Garden

- Gardening is an exercise of continuous investment: plant now, enjoy later. It is a logic that gardeners understand well, but often lose sight of toward the end of the gardening season. This is misguided, as many gardeners would know that winter is the most challenging time of year in the yard.
- Right now the timing is perfect to make one last investment in your garden for the season: winterizing. Come spring, the rewards will be tremendous if you follow these steps.
- **Plant spring-flowering bulbs**
- Spring-flowering bulbs are the ultimate testament to this ethos of thinking ahead—we only see their bright colors to herald spring if we think to plant them in the fall. It is probably too late to plant daffodils and narcissus, as they require about six weeks of frost-free soil to put roots down before the winter. However, tulips, crocuses and hyacinths will perform well, provided the soil isn't too frozen to get them in the ground. An added benefit: Many retailers have discounted what is remaining of their bulb inventory to make way for Christmas merchandise—a perfect opportunity to load up

## **Prepare your lawn**

The lawn wants a bedtime snack. That's right, this is the time of year that the lawn is sending natural sugars to the root zone that will make it healthy and green next spring, and that helps minimize snow mold, white powdery mildew and brown spot during the thaw. Despite popular wisdom, this is actually the most important application of fertilizer all year. Go with a fertilizer that is more balanced toward potassium (the third number on the bag), such as a 12-0-18.

## **Love your evergreens**

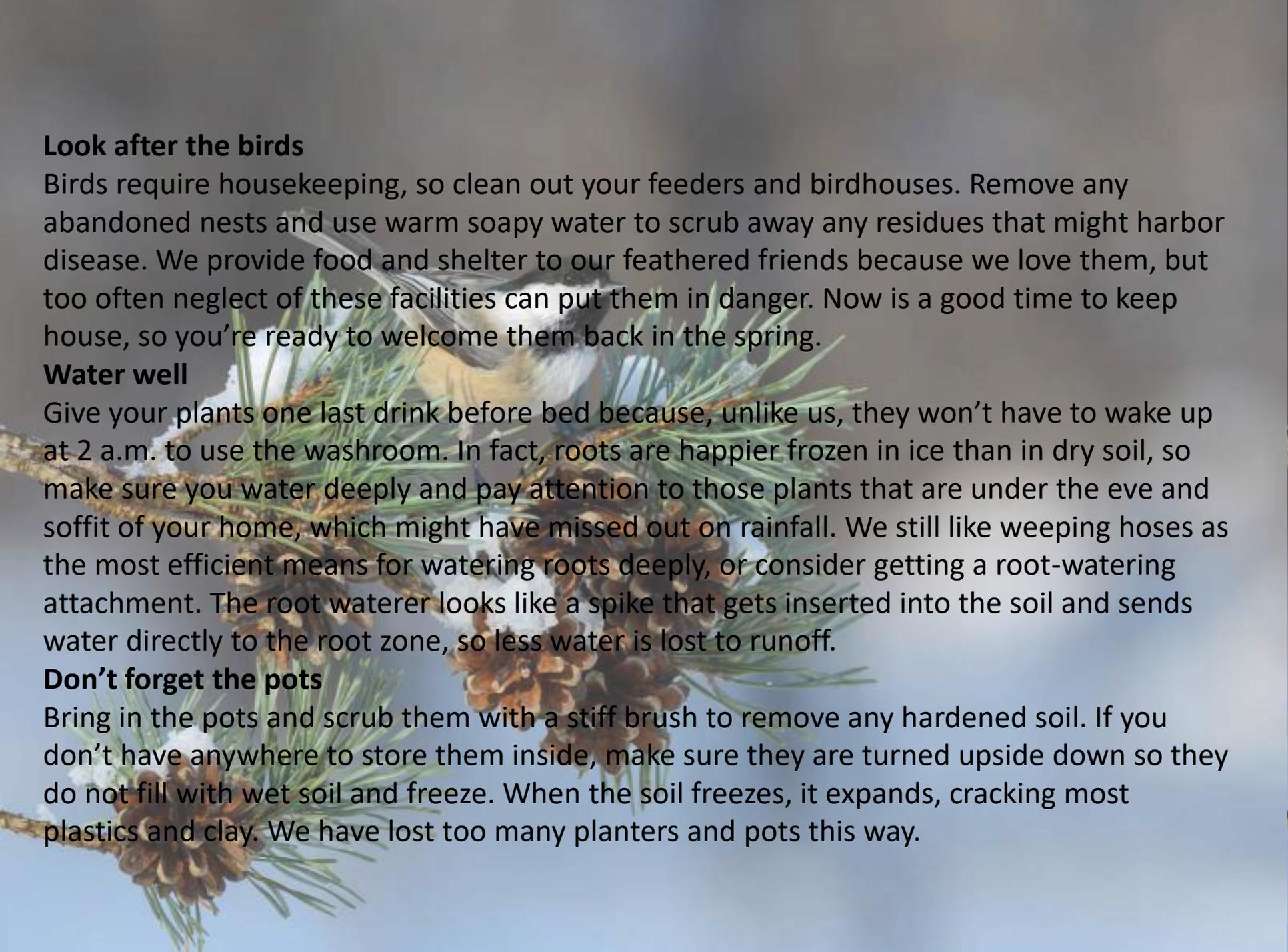
Broadleaf evergreens, such as rhododendrons and holly, as well as yews, will benefit from an anti-desiccant foliar spray to minimize damage from the very dry winter air. Wilt Pruf works well, and what you have left over can be used on your live Christmas tree to help it hold its needles and minimize the risk of fire.

## **Protect young fruit trees**

Rabbits, mice and rats are going to be hungry this winter, and your young fruit trees are a perfect target for them. Wrap a spiral-shaped plastic protector around each tree for the first five or six years, until the plant is thick enough to defend itself against these hungry vermin. Crabapples and flowering cherries should also get this treatment, as the critters don't know the difference. Maybe they do look the same at ground level...

## **Store your lawnmower**

The power lawnmower (if you haven't switched to electric) gets drained of fuel so it doesn't go gummy in the carburetor over the winter. After you've drained the tank, let it run until the last residue has been purged from the lines, then unplug the spark plug. Clean the deck by scraping off dried grass and wiping it down with an oil cloth to prevent corrosion. It's also a good time to remove the blade for sharpening. If you have a four-stroke, you might as well wait until spring to change the oil—it will be fresher that way. Speaking of mowers, it might be a good year to put a cordless electric mower on your Christmas list. It would allow you to skip many of these steps, and the battery technology has come a long way in recent years.

A small bird, possibly a chickadee, is perched on a pine branch. The branch is covered in green needles and several brown pine cones. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky. The bird is facing right, and its body is partially obscured by the pine needles and cones.

### **Look after the birds**

Birds require housekeeping, so clean out your feeders and birdhouses. Remove any abandoned nests and use warm soapy water to scrub away any residues that might harbor disease. We provide food and shelter to our feathered friends because we love them, but too often neglect of these facilities can put them in danger. Now is a good time to keep house, so you're ready to welcome them back in the spring.

### **Water well**

Give your plants one last drink before bed because, unlike us, they won't have to wake up at 2 a.m. to use the washroom. In fact, roots are happier frozen in ice than in dry soil, so make sure you water deeply and pay attention to those plants that are under the eave and soffit of your home, which might have missed out on rainfall. We still like weeping hoses as the most efficient means for watering roots deeply, or consider getting a root-watering attachment. The root waterer looks like a spike that gets inserted into the soil and sends water directly to the root zone, so less water is lost to runoff.

### **Don't forget the pots**

Bring in the pots and scrub them with a stiff brush to remove any hardened soil. If you don't have anywhere to store them inside, make sure they are turned upside down so they do not fill with wet soil and freeze. When the soil freezes, it expands, cracking most plastics and clay. We have lost too many planters and pots this way.