



## ***“From the Winter Potting Shed”***

### ***Riverview Garden Club – Helpful Hints January 2025***

While our gardens are tucked in for their winter nap, we can take the time to dream about our spring and summer gardens. Here are a few suggestions on how to plan and prepare for spring as well as caring for your indoor plants.

#### **Planning:**

- Use garden notes, photos and sketches to assess areas that need plants
- Determine types and quantities of plants to order
- Order plants from seed and nursery catalogs

#### **Chores and Maintenance:**

- Inspect ornamental trees and shrubs for scale insects
- If a thaw occurs, apply an antidesiccant to newly planted, narrow-leaved or broad-leaved evergreens
- Check for frost heaving on perennials and cover with extra mulch if necessary
- Use wood ashes sparingly from the fireplace as a good source of potash. Careful - too much can increase the pH of your soil.
- Avoid the use of rock salt to melt snow as it is toxic to most plants; use sawdust, sand or cat litter
- Check on stored dahlia, canna and gladiolus bulbs for rotting and/or drying out
- Keep bird feeders filled throughout the winter

### **Pruning/ Fertilizing:**

- Prune storm-damaged branches promptly; this prevents tearing of the bark
- Prune forsythia, pussy willow, quince, etc. for forcing indoors

### **Indoors:**

- When buying houseplants in winter, be sure to wrap them up well for the trip home; this prevents the foliage from freezing and protects tropicals from drafts
- Give houseplants as much light as possible as days grow shorter
- Provide houseplants with increased humidity; mist often or place the houseplant over a tray of moist pebbles
- As houseplants grow more slowly in winter, increase the time between waterings but do not cut back on the amount of water
- On frigid nights, protect indoor plants from freezing; move them away from the glass
- Clean leaves of large and smooth-leaved houseplants like dracaena, philodendron, Ficus etc.
- Inspect houseplants for insect pests; remove by hand and spray with insecticidal soap if needed
- Clean clay pots by soaking overnight in a solution of 1 gallon water, 1 cup of vinegar and 1 cup bleach

### **Resource:**

“Winter Gardening Chores: January,” LuEsther T. Mertz Library  
Plant & Research Guides, New York Botanical Garden.

***Happy Winter Gardening!***