



BLACKSTONE VALLEY GARDENERS

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January 2007

Volume XII - No 9

JANUARY MEETING
THURSDAY January 11, 2007
"Found Art from Nature"

Marcella Stasa

Upton artist, Marcella Stasa, finds inspiration from natural items found along the Blackstone Valley, and shares with us her creativity and technique.



FLORA IN WINTER

February 1 – 4, 2007

Flora in Winter update: Research into art and horticulture in the T'ang Dynasty in China (618 to 906 AD) informs me that the equine funerary statue would have been a symbol of a person of the educated, wealthy class, perhaps a scholar or civil servant of significant stature. The statue would have been placed in that person's tomb, to carry him swiftly and surely into the netherworld. In the T'ang era, the Emperor, realizing that China needed a superior warhorse (to thwart invaders), sought the horses of Central Asia; and in so doing, opened up the "Silk Route," which resulted in great wealth and social change for China. One of many changes was the rise of the first privileged class (between opulent royalty and subsistence peasant), which now had time to consider such things as art and poetry, scholarship and sport, and gardening for other than food. Certain plants began to be brought into homes and gardens for their beauty, and assigned symbolism in paintings and poems. In keeping with T'ang usage, I have chosen for my design Chrysanthemums (Longevity); Lotus (Steadfastness and Continuity), whose seeds could avert famine as well as produce a new generation; and the "Three Friends of Winter" – Pine, Bamboo, and flowering Plum (all of which show life when all else is dormant). Also incorporated in the design are pieces of limestone from Shilin (the Stone Forest) in Yunnan, China. My sleuthing took me from New England Bonsai in Bellingham, to Imperial Gardens Restaurant in Milford, to Jackie Lee, maker of stone fountains in Chinatown, New York to find said stone. I am hoping to procure the actual Chinese Plum (*Prunus mume*) from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, in time for Flora. I'll keep you posted!

THANK YOU
For December goodies

All board members

Looking Forward To January treats

Since there was no sign up for snacks at the December meeting we ask anyone who can to contribute to the goodies table for January.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marion Desmond, 56 W River St, Upton MA 01568
508-529-6627

Maria M Masmanian, 2120 Quaker St, Northbridge MA 01534
508-234-0189

HAPPY NEW YEAR



NEXT YEAR'S GARDEN NOW

BVG bids "Thanks" to Jackie Collett for sharing with us what she does in the dark of Winter to prepare for the Summer to come:

Balkan Geranium cuttings taken in the fall (dipped in Rootone, "stuck" in Pro-mix and placed in a living room window), are now moved to her (cool) basement under Gro-lights, and pinched back frequently to maintain fullness (striking strong "pinchings" to increase her stock). She advises: keep lights close to plants to avoid "legginess."

January is the time to peruse seed catalogues (noting what she wants on the backs so she doesn't forget), kept handy in a basket near a favorite chair. Favorites are Select Seeds, Thompson and Morgan, and Burpee (more for vegetables, so not used so much any more "now that I only do flowers"), as these are sources for "heirloom" seeds, not often seen in garden stores. Seeds are ordered in February in order to get the slow-to-germinate ones (like Impatiens) started in March, and the quicker ones (like Zinnias) in April. Seeds are started in Pro-mix in plastic, flip-top muffin containers, upstairs where it's warm (daytime 68 - 70 degrees; night 60 degrees). When they have their first "true" leaves they go into 2 1/2 " pots in her basement under lights (again close), where the temperature is around 60 degrees all the time. (She notes that that's too warm for over-wintering bulbs such as Dahlias, which she keeps in her cool (45 degrees) porch.) In May, she puts her babies into a plastic greenhouse (from Gardener's Supply) on her patio next to the deck, facing Northeast (where temperatures fluctuate the least), and then she watches them like a mother hen, not even leaving home unless she has a babysitter ("A FUSSY one is best.")! The "tent" is kept open in the daytime, closed at night, until the frost is gone and the plants are hardened off enough to survive in the ground.

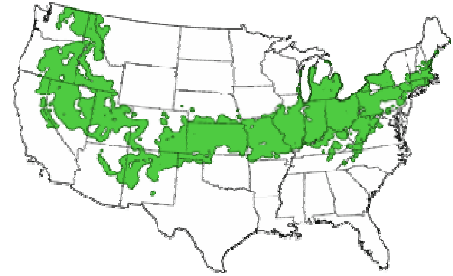
CHECK THIS WEBSITE

Check out the website

<http://www.arboday.org/media/zones.cfm>

For astounding information about NEW climate zones.

ZONE 6



CHECK THIS WEBSITE

For all the latest happenings of the
Blackstone Valley Gardeners

<http://www.bvgardeners.com>

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

Any member who would like to contribute to the newsletter or the website is asked to please do so.

Newsletter items can be emailed to Joan O'Brien.
Please note her new email address joanob@charter.net.

To add to the website please email Joyce Grant
jekgrant@comcast.net

FLORAL WORKSHOPS

To find out about any upcoming workshops please call Ann
508-278-3617

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PO BOX 394
N. UXBRIDGE, MA 01538

www.bvgardeners.com