



BLACKSTONE VALLEY GARDENERS

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November 2009

Volume XII - No 32

November Meeting

Thursday, November 12th
BV United Methodist Church
61 Linwood Ave, Whitinsville, MA
7:00PM

"Rain Gardens"

Donna Williams

Donna, who is the Mass Audubon Conservation Advocacy Coordinator at Mass Audubon's Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary in Worcester, will explain how we can redirect all that rainwater rooftop runoff from running down your driveway into a specially-designed garden. Besides creating a beautiful garden area, you will be reducing erosion and flooding, attracting wildlife, and ultimately improving water quality. . . a win-win!

A Note from the President....

The October meeting was "a buzz" with excitement – 'glad you all enjoyed Diane and Tony. A warm welcome to new member: Paula Thompson of Whitinsville.

Three car loads of BVG-ers went to Pickety Place in NH on October 10th and enjoyed a scrumptious five course luncheon packed with fresh herbs and vegetables. We also stopped by a wonderful nursery and had a guided tour of the owner's specialty hosta and other plants. This garden will be on the 2010 National Hosta Society tour – *sounds like a future trek to me!*

There are no treks planned for November, but we'll try to get something interesting together for you in December.

I will miss the November meeting, but I know you will all enjoy it. I look forward to seeing you again at our festive December gathering.

Regards, *Jackie Bean*

MEETING PLACE

Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church
61 Linwood Ave, Whitinsville, MA



November Munchies:

Carol Bowen, Leni Carroll & Beth Howder.

Thanks for October's munchies: Jan Cooper, Barbara Griffith, Val Kara, Sandy Rosborough, Donna Sanford & Annie Smith.

Blackstone Valley Gardeners Logo Gear

We'll bring our stock of really nice items, custom made for club members, for you to browse at the next meeting.... *they make really great gifts!*

Visors.....\$15

Baseball Caps.....\$15

Aprons.....\$15

Canvass Bags.....\$17

Polo Shirts.....\$19 (Available in Navy or Butter)

Winter Gardening Tips

Many people see the fall and winter as a time to close down the garden and wait until the spring to start up gardening activities again. However, there are plenty of things you can be doing through the fall and winter months to continue enjoying the pleasures of gardening.

How to Add Interest to your Winter Garden

Your winter garden doesn't have to be a boring and bare landscape. Choosing plants that will look good during the colder months is more a matter of thinking about bark, berries, and shape. Many plants, such as Japanese maple, have unusual colors of bark. Other trees, like the Japanese Pagoda tree, have interesting fruits or seeds that form during the fall and winter. Deciduous vines like wisteria can form strange, twisting branches that look like surreal sculptures in the winter. Evergreen plants are an obvious pick for creating an attractive landscape for the winter.

Composting and Mulching

Although your yard and garden may look like it's in a state of hibernation during the winter months, there are important things taking place all year long in the garden that contribute to the overall health of your plants. For example, your soil is active all year long, and your evergreen plants continue to use nutrients. Thus, it's important that you replenish nutrients in the soil for the next growing season. Composting is a great way to do this. If you compost, you should continue to monitor your compost pile during the fall and winter. Turning your compost pile and adding organic material is an important fall and winter gardening activity. Mulching is another good activity for winter. Spreading out a layer of mulch over your garden will protect your garden soil from the elements and will help any plants growing in your garden. Mulch helps to insulate your plants' roots. Additionally, mulch will keep winter weeds from taking hold. A 3-4 inch layer of organic mulch such as shredded bark or wood chips will work well.

Growing Plants in the Fall and Winter

Thinking about growing plants during the fall and winter? It can be done! An obvious pick for winter gardeners is to grow plants in greenhouses or cold frames. These structures can help you grow a variety of plants in a controlled environment. Growing houseplants and windowsill gardens is another way to enjoy the winter months with plants. To properly grow plants indoors, you should have a spot that gets plenty of sunlight. You can use a variety of containers for your plants. Terrariums are also an excellent way to enjoy plants and gardening indoors.

Garden Tool Cleanup

Tool maintenance is an important part of fall and winter gardening chores. Keeping your tools clean and properly stored during the winter will help to give them a long life and years of use. Here are some basic tips for keeping your garden tools clean.

Before you store your tools, spray them off with water to remove potentially corrosive chemicals and dirt. If you can't remove the dirt with water, try lightly scrubbing off the dirt with a wire brush. Set your tools out to dry before you store them. In addition to cleaning your garden tools, you should oil any moving parts on tools such as pruners and garden loppers. Also, because wooden handles are constantly exposed to harsh weather conditions and use, the wood can wear and start to splinter. Apply a coat of linseed oil to wooden handles and let the oil soak in before you use the tools again.

Plan for Next Year!

Even if you don't grow plants during the winter, it is an excellent time to read up on gardening and plan your garden for next year.

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