



Winter Gardening

Linda Moran, Frederick County Master Gardener

For the hands on gardeners among us, winter looms large and long. Only so much looking at the beauty of your garden's structure and it's variety of textures will suffice. For some gardening related activities that may help to revive your spirit, consider these possibilities.

Visit one of the many indoor gardens that are accessible as a day trip. The U. S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D. C. has a wide variety of garden rooms including an orchid display, a two story space filled with tropical plants and trees, a collection of many of the historic buildings in Washington fashioned from all natural materials, and a children's exhibit with opportunities for hands on experiences with plants. In other words, something for everyone. Brookside Gardens in Wheaton features a collection of tropical plants in their conservatory and their staff designed and creative Christmas light show is always a treat. If you missed it this year you'll want to plan ahead for next December. A seed exchange is scheduled for January 29.

A trip to Longwood Gardens in Delaware will require more time but is a visual feast in the winter when spring flowers seem far away....Their conservatory has a sumptuous winter display, and the greenhouses are filled with a huge variety of plants that include fruit trees, grapevines, bonsai, orchids, catci, and tropicals. A fabulous children's water garden is in the conservatory and will delight almost any age child or adult.

Another drive and well worth the time is the Philadelphia Flower Show from, March 6 through the 13th. The theme this year is 'Paris' and along with an always dazzling array of exhibits there are seminars, a marketplace and afternoon tea...Best to plan ahead for space availability.

Books are a great way to relax and dream about the elusive perfect garden.

The following titles came highly recommended by garden writers in 2010:

- ..Succulent Container Gardens by Debra Lee Baldwin
- ..The Resilient Gardener by Carol Deppe
- ..Bark, An Intimate Look at The World's Trees by Cedric Pollet
- ..Gardening for a Lifetime - How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older by Sydney Eddison
- ..Edible Landscaping by Rosalind Creasy

My personal favorite was Our Life in Gardens by Wayne Winterrowd and Joe Eck.

It is just out in paperback...Enjoy.

Locally, the Master Gardeners are offering a series of seminars from January into April that will give you a head start on planning for spring gardening. The following list will help you decide which best fit your needs and interests.

January 27...Green Gardeningprotect our environment by practicing green gardening techniques and bring your landscape to life as a habitat for birds, butterflies.....

February 10...Alternatives to the Lawn.... incorporate more shrubs, perennials, small trees, vines and vegetables into your outdoor space. Bring pictures and dimensions of your space for design ideas.....

February 24...Garden Cents....Money spent on the right tree or shrub for the right space in your garden will actually grow in value as well as in size. Become better informed as you make decisions for your landscape.

March 10...Herbs....Selecting and buying your herbs, site selection and soil preparation, tending to and using your herbs and pests and diseases to watch for.

March 24...Integrated Pest Management vs Organic Gardening....An exploration of best gardening practices which combines both the old and the new.

April 14...Creative Containers: Pots to Bathtubs....using creative containers for annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables and succulents...includes design ideas, plant combinations and plant care.

Information for the seminars is available at Univ. of Md. Ext. Service telephone 301-600-1595

For more information about Horticulture or the Master Gardener Program in Frederick County, call the University of Maryland Extension Frederick County Office, (301) 600-1596, or visit <http://www.frederick.umd.edu/>. Our mission is to educate Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Equal Access Programs.