

# December 2024 Newsletter

Happy Holidays!

*ON VAST SKIES ANOTHER WINTER ARRIVES*

and puts the wild world to bed. Shorter days and longer shadows, and clouds of rising breath. Solstice nights and Christmas lights, the restless world at rest.

*This is the silver season, when so much is reflected.*

Everywhere we look just now, we see light and shadow bending. A snowball fight refracted through a frosty kitchen window. A mountain range inverted on the frozen surface of water. A familiar face in a misty morning mirrow.

*In reflecting, we catch glimpses of both the known and the unknown.*

We see change and potential. Maybe laughter lines, maybe signs of sorrow. here we see yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Each reflection, a prism revealing rays of hope and joy and longing.

In this season, when the past is on our hearts and the future is on our minds, we will choose to stand fact-to-fact with the present, in the here and now, knowing that no season is an ending ...

## **DECEMBER MEETING:**

**Date:** December 11, 2024

**Time:** 9:30 AM - Set-up  
10:00 AM - Meeting starts

**Location:** Our Savior Lutheran Church  
745 Front Street South  
Issaquah, WA

## **GETTING READY FOR THE HOLIDAY CELEBRATION:**

### **AGENDA:**

**Brunch provided by all the members**  
**Gift exchange**  
**Donations for Toys for Tots**  
**Issaquah Food Bank donations**

**FOOD:**

Hostess: Sandra  
Crew: Everyone participates in set-up and clean-up

Last Name A - L - bring a SAVORY TREAT  
Last Name M - Z - bring a SWEET TREAT

**PLEASE NOTE:** Other than a microwave oven there are no appliances (stove, oven etc.) available for our use so plan accordingly.

**LETS SAVE ON KITCHEN SUPPLIES:**

Please remember to bring your own plate, napkin and silverware so we don't deplete the club's supplies.

Attention coffee and tea drinkers - remember to bring your own cup - it saves on club provided supplies as well as recycling and/or garbage (THANKS)

**GIFT EXCHANGE:**

For all those wishing to participate in a gift exchange you need to bring a new, wrapped garden related gift of approximately \$10.00 in value. This can be a garden themed ornament, yard art etc. Feel free to use your imagination!

**TOYS FOR TOTS DONATION:**

New unwrapped toys will be collected and delivered to a local Toys for Tots donation center.

**ISSAQUAH FOOD BANK DONATION:**

\*\* The Food Bank now has a list on their website of items that are needed and they only accept donations on designated days

\*\* Some suggested items are canned tuna, canned chicken, pasta sauce, Hamburger Helper and 2 pound bags of rice.

***OTHER TASKS TO KEEP ON YOUR CALENDAR:*****POST OFFICE TROUGH:**

A sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers to check on the trough and surrounding area to make sure it is tidy and to water during the summer months.

November was Debbie D. - thank you for volunteering

December - Joan H.

January - Georgann

## **JANUARY 8 MEETING**

Snack Committee:

Hostess: Lexie D.

Crew: Janet W.

Debbie D.

Jean P.

Joan H.

Horticultural Corner:

Lois H. - Hellebores or Plume Poppy (a surprise)

## ***THINGS YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED:***

### ***NOVEMBER MEETING:***

TREASURER REPORT (SANDRA):

\*\* There is \$1836.87 in checking and \$3037.41 in savings

\*\* It was confirmed that if Sandra needs to move money from the savings account to the checking account this is within her purview to do.

BLUE STAR MARKER (DIANNE):

\*\* On November 11 a celebration was held at the Blue Star Marker to honor all Veterans.

This was well attended. Dianne provided a floral arrangements and photos were taken for documentation for the grant that was received. Debbie D. will add the picture to the website.

GARDEN THERAPY (JOAN H.):

\*\* We will meet at the nursing home next door on November 26 at 10:00AM to make flower arrangements for the tables in their dining room. Everyone was reminded to bring clippers and greens from our yards. Gale will purchase the flowers.

PLANT A TREE (SANDRA):

\*\* Gale shared that the National Garden Club (NDC) has asked that they be sent 10% of any donation made to Plant A Tree. As a result Washington State has made an arrangements with the U.S. Forest Service to receive direct payment. We can still give instructions as to where we want the trees planted. Julie Darby was in charge of making these arrangements. Contact information is available at [WAGarden.org](http://WAGarden.org).

BELLEVUE BOTANICAL GARDEN (GALE):

\*\* Everyone was reminded to visit the Lost Bird Project in the Urban Meadow (which will be at BBG until September 2025).

SALES TABLE (DIANNE):

\*\* The table is open and ready for business!

\*\* Remember each month to bring items to donate as well as your wallet to buy, buy, buy!!

## POST OFFICE LANDSCAPING (GEORGANN):

\*\* There was a work day on a Sunday in October 20 (at 10:00AM). Five members attended, added 4 bags of potting soil and new plants to the trough. It looks great.

\*\* A sign-up sheet is being circulated for everyone able to take a month where they will check on the trough, tidy if needed and water during the summer months.

## ***Garden Therapy Report:***

On November 26 five of us (Joan H., Gale, Sandra, Lexie & Lois) met at Avamere Nursing Home and arranged flowers for the dining room tables. Several of the staff stopped by to thank us for helping add cheer for their residents. And, we all agreed that the fall flowers Gale was able to purchase were perfect ... cheery and fun to work with! Plus, with the recent storm we had an abundance of greenery. A photo was taken for documentation for the grant funding. A good time was had by all ...

## ***Horticultural Corner:***

Debbie D. Presented about Christmas Cactus

Debbie D. presented "All About Christmas Cactus"

\*\* Originated in Brazil - grown in coastal mountains near the ocean.

Actually grow on moss covered trees or in crevasses

\*\* Growing characteristics:

\*\* Can be sensitive to temperature and like bright indirect light

\*\* Don't overwater

\*\* Pruning results in a fuller plant

\*\* Can be propagated by placing cuttings in either water or good quality potting soil

\*\* Grow best in terracotta or clay pots in sandy cactus soil or general potting soil

\*\* Feed monthly with half strength fertilizer until blooms then stop feeding

\*\* Can live 20 - 30 years

\*\* In many climates they can be kept outdoors during warmer months

\*\* Can be found in a wide array of colors - red, pink, purple, orange and white being the most common

\*\* Christmas cactus has more rounded leaves where Thanksgiving cactus have more pointed claw-like leaves

## ***November Program:***

Linda White, ELWD President came and did a hands-on workshop. Everyone got a hollowed out green colored pumpkin and instructions for creation of a floral arrangement. Everyone then set about creating their own masterpiece to take home. Pictures were taken.

## ***SAVE THE DATES:***

**February 24, 2025** - General Membership Meeting

**May 18, 2025** - General Membership Meeting

## **EDUCATIONAL CORNER:**

# 17 Winter Container Plants That Will Brighten Up a Bleak Garden

Add color to your winter garden with these plants.

There's no denying that the garden can look bleak in winter. Summer and fall-blooming varieties have lost their flowers and many trees drop their leaves once temperatures begin to dip. But you can still add charm to your landscape with winter container plants. Many frost-tolerant varieties flourish in containers during winter, providing color and texture when everything else in your yard is past its prime. Ahead, we're sharing expert-recommended winter container plants that will survive the chilly season.

**RELATED:** [10 Hardy Winter Vegetables to Plant in Your Garden](#)

## Red Twig Dogwood

Red twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) can survive in areas that experience freezing winter temperatures. "Its red leaves (or gold if you go with the yellow variety) provide a striking contrast against a snowy background," says Justin Hancock, horticulturist for [Costa Farms](#). "No pruning is required over the winter, but you may want to water it if the soil in the container dries out." It's a wonderful addition to large containers.

Zones: 3 to 8

Size: 6 to 9 feet tall x 8 to 12 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun; acidic, well-draining soil

## Green-and-Gold

Green-and-gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*) provides a beautiful and enduring display even in the middle of winter, with its striking evergreen foliage that forms a spreading mat, says Mary Phillips, head of native plant habitat strategy and certifications at the [National Wildlife Federation](#). In early spring it will yield beautiful yellow daisy-like blooms.

Zones: 5 to 9

Size: 6 to 12 inches tall 36 to 48 inches wide

Care requirements: Partial to full shade; average, moist soil

## Moss Phlox

Moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*) is a [deer-resistant ground cover](#) that produces lush, evergreen foliage that remains vibrant throughout winter, says Phillips. In early spring, a profusion of delicate blooms forms. "Phlox's cold-hardy nature and compact growth habit make it an ideal choice for winter containers in zones 3 to 9," she says.

Zone: 3 to 9

Size: 6 inches tall x 24 to 36 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; moist, well-drained soil

# Hellebore

Hellebores (*Helleborus* spp.) add elegance to winter containers with their bell-shaped blooms that stay healthy even in snowy conditions. "This versatile perennial is available in various foliage textures, bloom colors, and blooming periods," says Phillips.

Zones: 3 to 9

Size: 1 to 2 feet tall x 1 to 2 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; moist, well-draining soil

# Dusty Miller

Dusty miller (*Jacobaea maritima*) has silver, velvety leaves that offer texture and contrast in winter containers. Laura Walsh, director of marketing for [Oasis Forage Products](#) especially loves how this plant looks alongside winter pansies (*Viola hiemalis*). "These plants grow well in cool temperatures, and their resilient nature and unique colors make them ideal for growing in [cutting garden containers](#) and arranging indoors, creating a cozy winter display," she says.

Zones: 7 to 11

Size: 12 inches tall or more x 12 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; slightly moist, well-drained soil

# Viola

Another beautiful pairing for pansies is viola (*Viola* spp.). "In areas that only get heavy frosts, pansy and viola are charming, colorful choices that can flower throughout the winter months," says Hancock. "They're one of the best plants for customizing your look because they come in just about every color you could ask for, from white to dark, purple-black. Keep them well watered and fertilize periodically over the winter for the biggest bloom show."

Zones: 3 to 8

Size: 4 to 10 inches tall x 4 to 10 inches wide

Care requirements: Full to partial sun; moist, well-draining soil

# Flowering Kale

[Frost-tolerant flowering kale](#) (*Brassica oleracea*) will add color to winter containers throughout the entire season. "Flowering kale is pretty low-maintenance, too," says Hancock "They typically don't require pruning and really just need some water if they don't get regular rainfall or snowfall."

Zones: 2 to 11

Size: 12 to 18 inches tall x 12 to 18 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; well-draining, rich loamy soil

# Hens-and-Chicks

Although considered a succulent, hens-and-chicks (*Sempervivum*) can last through the winter. "Hens-and-chicks are great additions to sunny containers. They require little attention and surprise many people that they can survive the winter," says Roger Davis, outdoor landscape manager in the east section at [Longwood Gardens](#).

Zones: 3 to 8

Size: 6 to 12 inches tall x 6 to 18 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun, part shade, light fertilizing

**RELATED:** [16 Types of Succulents That Are a Beautiful Addition to Your Garden](#)



# Wild Thyme

Add fragrance to winter containers with wild thyme (*Thymus serpyllum alba*). "Wild thyme is a great evergreen trailing thyme that is beautiful and smells wonderful," says Davis, adding that wild thyme is a great [companion plant](#) with hens-and-chicks.

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 2 to 3 inches tall x 3 to 10 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; well-draining soil

# Japanese Sweet Flag

Japanese sweet flag (*Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon') has beautiful golden foliage that adds soft texture to the edge of containers, says Davis. "It looks amazing all winter and will bring a splash of color to the winter season," he adds.

Zones: 6 to 9

Size: 6 to 12 inches tall x 6 to 12 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to part shade; damp soil

# Winter Jasmine

Winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) has beautiful arching green stems that add texture and height to containers all winter. "This flowering shrub will bring a bright yellow splash of color to let you know the grip of winter is over," says Davis.

Zones: 6 to 10

Size: 10 to 15 feet tall x 3 to 6 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun to part shade; well-drained soil

# Mahonia

Mahonia (*Mahonia* spp.) has intricate leaves that offer year-round interest. "Mahonia are wonderful architectural plants that produce yellow flowers during the winter," says David. "They do best in shade with some protection from the winter wind."

Zones: 7 to 10

Size: 3 to 4 feet tall x 3 to 4 feet wide

Care requirements: Part shade; well-drained soil

# Singleseed Juniper

For winter containers in sunny locations, singleseed juniper (*Juniperus squamata* 'Blue Star') is a beautiful choice. "Singleseed juniper provides an evergreen cushion of blue foliage for a sunny spot," says Davis, adding that deer seem to leave this plant alone.

Zones: 4 to 8

Size: 1 to 3 feet tall x 1 to 4 feet wide

Care requirements: Full sun; moist, well-drained soil

# Myrtle Spurge

Fill in containers with myrtle spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*), which prefers sunny and dry conditions. "Its prostrate stems can trail down the side of a container and will burst into amazing bloom in late winter and early spring," says Davis.

Zones: 4 to 8

Size: 6 to 12 inches tall x 6 to 12 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun; dry, well-drained soil

# European Wild Ginger

A beautiful evergreen [groundcover](#), European wild ginger (*Asarum europaeum*) is a perfect choice for shady containers. "The glossy circular leaves provide a bold texture that will contrast with feathery textured companion plants," says Davis.

Zones: 4 to 8

Size: 6 to 12 inches tall x 6 to 18 inches wide

Care requirements: Partial sun; moist, rich soil

# All Gold Forest Grass

Forest grass (*Hakonechloa* spp.) adds texture to winter containers. "Hakonechloa 'All Gold' is a unicorn in the container gardening world," says Chuck Pavlich, director of new product development at [Terra Nova Nurseries](#). This variety softens harsh designs with its graceful foliage and habit. "At the first frost, 'All Gold' changes to a mellow wheaten color. The foliage is gorgeous with either frost or snow on it and never becomes weedy," Pavlich adds. Many other varieties of forest grass are equally lovely, like *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' shown above.

Zones: 6 to 9

Size: 10 inches tall x 20 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; moist, well-drained soil

# Heuchera

Heuchera (*Heuchera* spp.), shown above, is a beautiful foliage plant for containers and gardens. For a specific variety, consider heuchera 'Changeling,' which is a chameleon in containers. "The variable yet muted color palette inspires other colored foliage in a container," says Pavlich. "Pink, salmon, burnished gold, taupe, tan, and moss green are in constant flux over the foliage."

Zones: 4 to 9

Size: 9 inches tall x 14 inches wide

Care requirements: Full sun to partial shade; moderately, well-drained, organic soil

