



Pumpkin Brook Organic Gardening, Inc.

Priscilla Hutt Williams

35 Turner Road, Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

(TEL) 978-597-3005 (FAX) 772-264-7886

phw@seedlingspecialist.com

Volume 2, October 2012

In This Issue

[Winter Interest Plants](#)

[Benefits of Leaf Mulching](#)

[Holiday Decorating Service](#)

[Winter Moth Alert](#)

[October Is the Time for...](#)

Greetings,

As we mentioned last month, Brent Heath of Brent and Becky's Bulbs will be at the Mass Horticultural Society on Thursday, October 18. Brent, with recommendations from Adrian Bloom and the help of master gardeners, will be planting his own bulbs in Mass Hort's Bressingham garden at Elm Bank at 10:00 am. Adrian designed the Bressingham Garden at Elm Bank.

At 2 in the afternoon, Brent will be conducting a Spring Bulb Container Workshop. Participants will plant a container that will produce glorious blooms throughout next spring. The theme for the container planting is "Warm and Wonderful." Registration is required. If you would like to participate, send an [e-mail](#) to Mass Hort's event coordinator.

From 7-8:30 on Thursday evening, Brent will give a talk on choosing bulbs for your garden as part of the Thursday Night at the Hort lecture series. Click [here](#) for more information and to pre-register.

Please click on the links to register or call the Mass Horticultural Society at 617-933-4973 for more information.

Something Golden



Chamaecyparis pisifera
'Filifera Aurea'

What Winter Interest Can Do for You

Wouldn't it be great to look outside on a snowy day and see something besides brown, black, grey, green and white? Think about adding these showy plants to your garden:

Something golden - *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Filifera Aurea,' the threadleaf golden Japanese cypress; *Juniperus virginiana* 'Gold Cone,' a dwarf selection of the native juniper with gold tips in winter; *Cornus alba* 'Bud's Yellow' or *Cornus sericea* 'Silver and Gold', yellow twig dogwoods

Something Red



Acer palmatum
'Sango Kaku'

Something red - *Cornus sericea* 'Cardinal' or *Cornus alba* 'Ivory Halo', the red twig dogwoods; *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red' or 'Sparkleberry', winterberries with bright red berries to attract birds in February; *Crataegus viridis* 'Little King', a selection of the native hawthorne with persistent red berries; or *Acer palmatum* 'Sango Kaku,' a choice Japanese maple with coral red bark in winter

Something yellow/orange - *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire,' a new color twig dogwood with shaded multi-colored bark; or *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold,' a golden fruited winterberry

Something with texture - *Betula nigra* 'Heritage' or 'Little King,' river birches with exfoliating bark; *Acer griseum* the exfoliating

Something Yellow/Orange



Ilex verticillata
'Winter Gold'

Something with Texture



Betula nigra
'Little King'

river birches with exfoliating bark, red greenham, the exfoliating paperbark maple with tones of a rich cinnamon brown; *Acer pensylvanicum*, the striped bark native understory maple of the northern woods; *Heptacodium miconioides*, Seven Sons flower with grey-white smooth flaking bark; or *Stewartia pseudocamellia*, a highly ornamental tree with multicolored bark

We're still planting woody plants through November 1st, so it may not be too late to add something special to your landscape. Contact [Priscilla](#) to discuss options.

Benefits of Leaf Mulching

Every autumn in New England we get to witness a spectacular show when the leaves turn to bright oranges, reds and yellows. But soon enough the show ends, the leaves begin to fall and what remains is a bounty of nature's very own mulch. Rather than bagging and hauling away this resource, consider the many benefits of shredding the leaves so that they can be used as leaf mulch, right on site.



Preparing for leaf shredding

Here are the benefits of leaf mulch:

- Cuts down on watering
- Recycles local leaves
- Controls soil erosion and retains soil moisture
- Regulates soil temperatures
- Reduces weeds
- Mitigates drought stress
- Adds nutrients and improves soil structure while adding beneficial fungi and microorganisms

Leaf mulch can be thought of as compost waiting to happen. Have you ever been out in the middle of the woods and observed the soil? It's a rich brown color with a great earthy smell. It's teaming with beneficial microorganisms and organic matter. This soil is created year after year by decomposed leaves. Fallen leaves contain 50-80% of the nutrients taken from the soil and air during the growing season. As the leaves decompose those nutrients are released back into the soil and made available to plants. Shredding leaves speeds up the decomposition process and creates uniform, aesthetically pleasing mulch.

Leaf mulch can also be stored to later be used as necessary carbon-rich "browns" balancing out the compost pile. Brown materials can be hard to come by in summer when so many nitrogen-rich "greens" are abundant from weeding and deadheading. If you've planned ahead and stored a few garbage bags of leaves in your garage over the winter, you won't have any problem making an ideal compost come spring.

Pumpkin Brook Organic Gardening offers leaf mulching as an option during our fall cleanups. We use a commercial grade leaf shredder that ensures a uniform and quality product. Contact [Priscilla](#) to arrange for this service at your property.

Our Holiday Decorating Service Can Save You Precious Time This Season

It's hard to believe, but the holiday season is almost upon us. With it come many joys and potentially some stress, too. I know that for me some of the stress comes from feeling like there's never enough time or energy to get it all done...the cooking, cleaning, shopping, and decorating. Let us help you relieve some of the to-do's on your list by helping you with the holiday decorating.



We can create a fall display for you!

We can provide you with tasteful design ideas, an efficient installation, in-season maintenance (like replacing those pesky burnt out bulbs, or keeping containers watered), and a timely post-season removal. Here are a few options to think about for different holidays:

Places to Visit

The Concord Museum has an ongoing exhibition from October 12th through March 17th sponsored by Edible Boston that you may be interested in visiting.

The exhibit is entitled, *The Greatest Source of Wealth: Agriculture in Concord.*

There are some "don't miss" programs in association with the exhibition that may be of interest to you. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

- Pumpkins, gourds, mums, jack-o-lanterns, and spooky motifs and lighting for Halloween
- Cornucopias, colorful dried corn, natural fall wreaths, and harvest baskets filled with fall annuals for Thanksgiving
- Winter containers filled with stems of red berries and red twigged dogwood, evergreen boughs, cones plus festive garlands and wreaths, candles warming the windows, lights tastefully trimming the house, and a living Christmas tree that can be re-planted in the yard

Whether it's Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, or any other holiday for that matter, [we are here](#) to provide you with the kind of look that suits your house, your personality, and shows off your holiday spirit.

Winter Moth Alert

This new pest on the scene seems to be in our area to stay, unfortunately. Sometime between Halloween and Christmas, the adult moths will emerge to mate and lay eggs in tree bark crevices. Then at the time that the trees leaf out and air temperatures remain at 55 degrees, the larvae will emerge to feast on the tender new leaves.



Adult Winter Moth

You've all seen the signs of trouble - multiple unsightly holes or defoliation in maples including specimen Japanese maples, shadbush, birch, apple and other fruit trees, and the list goes on. At that point, it's too late to do much of anything except wait for your tree to releaf. Several years of this cycle may cause the tree to die.

What to do? Now is the time to plan ahead.

Contact an [arborist](#) about monitoring and approving for winter

Contact an [arborist](#) about monitoring and spraying for winter moth. Fall is the time to sign up for automatic programs that these companies will roll out to your property at the appropriate time.

Pumpkin Brook lacks the spray equipment to work on large overstory trees. However, we'd like to experiment with banding trees this fall to prevent the flightless females from crawling up them. Please contact [Carmine](#) if you'd like to try this alternative approach.

If interested in learning more about winter moth, visit [UMass Extension](#) for more information.

October Is the Time for....



This array of asters and sedum can be seen at one of our customers.

- Bulb planting once soil temperatures have cooled to 55 degrees
- Transplanting shrubs and perennials - last call!
- Cutting back peony and phlox foliage to prevent fungal disease transmission through the soil
- Removing leaves from lawns and leave at least a layer of leaves on beds
- Leaving grass clippings on the lawn to return Nitrogen to the soil, right through the last mowing of season
- Shredding leaves for a natural mulch (see article)
- Making notes about additions and changes to next year's garden
- Checking arborvitae to be sure branches don't splay out in snow/ice season; prune back long tips and tie key branches with arborvitae
- Pulling spent annuals and vegetables from the garden and cleaning up area thoroughly
- Amending soil per test results, especially important for nutrient dense vegetable gardens and fruit crops
- Resting amaryllis and Christmas cactus in a dry, dark place with no water for the next several months
- Re-edging beds to make a clean line of definition



Time to rake the leaves!

Quick Links

[To Unsubscribe](#)
[PBOG Website](#)
[Click here to respond](#)

If we haven't scheduled you for fall clean up, [e-mail Priscilla](#). A good fall clean up will make for a beautiful Spring.

I'll hope to see some of you at Brent Heath's evening talk this week.

Sincerely,
Priscilla

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.