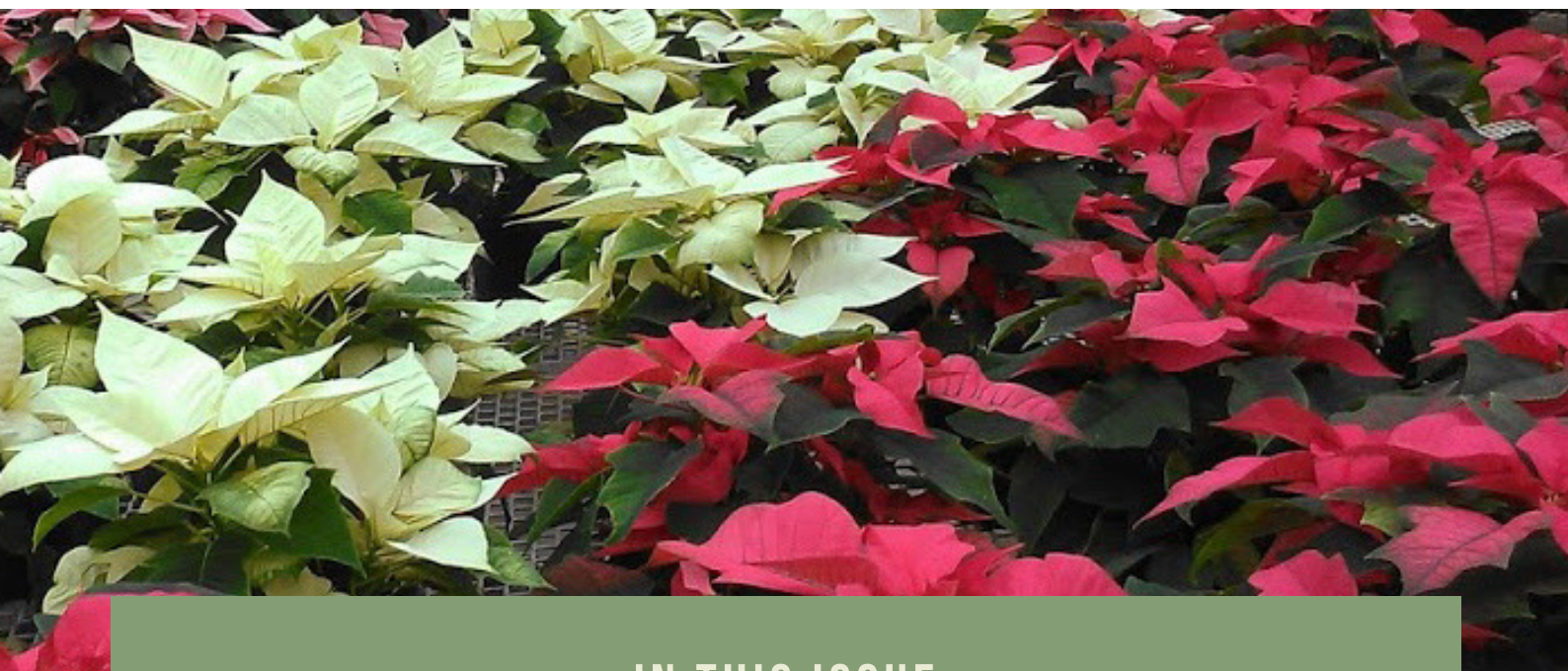


MSU IN BLOOM

MSU HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS



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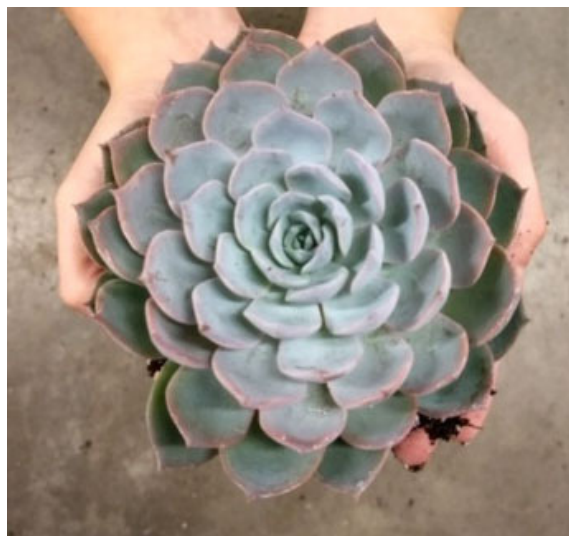
UPCOMING EVENTS

Curious Gardener Workshop-Lighted Evergreen Wreath	Dec 3
Holiday Open House	Dec 6
Poinsettia (and other plants) sale	Dec 6-21

HOUSEPLANTS AND SUCCULENTS AND SUCCESS – OH MY!

BY BETHANY TROY, PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER

The clock was ticking as the line of excited plant-sale-goers extended out to the gardens parking lot. Our volunteers inside were buzzing with excitement, continuously asking “Is it time?” Once Dan gave the OK, the doors opened and in came the flood of plant enthusiasts. Within one minute, the Opuntia was gone and placed on carts to go to their forever homes. What continued was plant chaos – friends of the gardens were filling their carts and boxes, some new to the craft while others were seasoned veterans. Questions were arising from every corner regarding care, longevity, and personal opinion. Some cries of “It’s so CUTE” and “LOOK AT THIS!” could be heard throughout the crowd. Smiling patrons showed their friends and family what they had found as they quickly rejoiced and continued shopping. The day remained steady and the lines moved quickly, as our trusty tag-pullers and register operators worked hard around the clock. All of this happened on repeat, until 7pm, when we closed our doors and said goodnight. Our staff and volunteers looked at each other with smiles on our faces while saying “What a success!”



Our Houseplant and Succulent sale is another way for The Horticulture Gardens to creatively raise funds to operate, perform routine maintenance, and hire and educate students, as we are largely self-funded. Thank you to those of you who came out and purchased a plant (or ten!) for your home. Our sale this year was a huge success thanks to you, and we can’t wait to do it again!



SUCCULENT SALE SUCCESS - CONTINUED

And in case you missed the fabulous Houseplant and Succulent Sale - we will be selling the leftover plants at our Holiday Open House (below) and for two weeks thereafter along with our poinsettias and wreaths! See below for more details.

MSU HORTICULTURE GARDENS

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2018 NOON — 7:30 P.M.

PLANT & SOIL SCIENCES BUILDING
1066 BOGUE ST. EAST LANSING, MI 48824
CONSERVATORY & HEADHOUSE, 1ST FLOOR



- NO ADMISSION CHARGE!
- POINSETTIA TREE UNDER EVENING LIGHTS!
- AT 5:30PM VISIT SANTA, EXPERIENCE CAPITAL AREA RAILWAY SOCIETY MODEL TRAINS & KIDS ACTIVITIES!
- ENJOY DECORATED HOLIDAY TREES, & REFRESHMENTS!
- NEW-PARKING!! PARK IN OUR GARDEN LOT OFF BOGUE ST. PARKING IS \$1.80/HOUR AND FREE AFTER 6PM. (COIN OR CREDIT)
- MSU-GROWN POINSETTIAS, CENTERPIECES AND WREATHS WILL BE SOLD. THE SALE WILL CONTINUE WEEKDAYS: DEC. 7TH TO 21ST, FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.



WWW.HRT.MSU.EDU/OUR-GARDENS



Season's Greetings

AFTER THE PARTIES

BY DAN BULKOWSKI, GARDENS AND GREENHOUSE MANAGER

So, its December 27th. All of the cleanup has been done and the holiday guests have left. Except for one, it is still lingering on the shelf by the TV. What to do about Mr. Poinsettia? Well, there are options on how to handle him. The first one is to take him to the curb with the leftovers (or compost pile). Poinsettias are fairly inexpensive and purchasing one here helps out the Gardens. Though most of us started with house plants as we began our gardening careers, a poinsettia can make a nice one.

I have seen several poinsettias, that with little effort, still maintain their red “flowers” (Alex, what are bracts, or modified leaves) for a long time. At least until early summer. As long as your home is between 65-75 degrees, and the plant is placed near a window that has a decent amount of light the poinsettia will maintain its color. Water is important as well. Underwatering and

overwatering will cause the plant to drop leaves. In the greenhouses, they are watered about every 2-3 days. When I have one at home, I only need to water it about once every 7-10 days. I know when by lifting the plant up. If it feels light it's time, if there is some heft to it, I wait. When I do water, the pot cover is removed and over the sink water is added until it drains from the bottom. The poinsettia is left in the sink for a few minutes to drain, then recovered and placed back by the window. Not too close, any drafts will cause this Mexican native tropical plant to lose some leaves.



The above information will keep your poinsettia house plant alive and looking decent. However, if you want your Mr. Poinsettia to return for the

holidays in his full color, a few additional steps can be taken. Maintain watering and fertilize twice a month. In early June, and again in late July, trim back the stems about 4 inches. That will cause the plant to become a little more fuller. Then, starting October 1 make sure the poinsettia has at least 14 hours of complete darkness every night until Thanksgiving. Mr. P needs short days to start the coloring up process. I'm talking complete darkness. A yard light, a TV on, or any little bit of random light at night will cause it to stay green until Valentine's Day. During this time as well, night time temperatures have to be between 60-70 degrees. Above is a photo of Doug and Pam Badgero's Mr. Poinsettia from last year. Its coloring up nicely, and by the holidays will be in full color display.

With a little proper care, at least one of your holiday visitors can be around as a welcome guest for a while. At least until you get tired of it and put it on the compost pile.

2019 MEMBERSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

BY JENNIFER SWEET, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

If you are trying to find the perfect holiday gift, we have you covered! For as little as \$40, you can give the gift that keeps giving year-round. Memberships are great for individuals or families, and they provide many exciting benefits.

All individual level members receive:

- Admission to AHS Reciprocal Gardens- visit hundreds of gardens across the nation for FREE
- VIP member-only Plant Sale invitation; shop the night before we open to the public
- 10% discount on all Plant Sale purchases
- Discounts on popular MSU Horticulture programs

Some higher tiered memberships may include:

- All above-listed benefits for the entire family
- Invitation for two to our Wine & Chocolate Donor Reception
- Free parking
- Free registration to our most popular event, Garden Day
- Free commemorative brick in our perennial walkway



Benefits vary based on membership type. For additional details and to order your membership today, please visit:

http://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our_gardens/garden_memberships



TAKING THE STRESS OUT OF HAVING A REAL CHRISTMAS TREE

BERT CREGG, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION, DEPARTMENTS OF HORTICULTURE AND FORESTRY
JILL O'DONNELL, MSU EXTENSION

The scent of a real Christmas tree in the house, the allure of a family outing to select a real tree and the appeal of buying local are among the reasons people buy real Christmas trees. For some, especially people who grew up in households with an artificial tree, buying and setting up a real tree may seem like a daunting task. With a little planning, however, having a real tree can add a fun and enjoyable family experience to the holidays.

Where to put your tree

Before buying your tree, decide where in your home you are going to display the tree. Keep the tree away from direct heat sources such as fireplaces or furnace vents because these may cause the tree to use more water and dry faster. Double-check that there is adequate floor space for the height of tree you want to display. The taper (ratio of tree width to height) of real trees varies, but is usually around two to three. This means you need a 4-foot wide floor space for a 6-foot tall tree.

Real Christmas tree options: Pre-cut versus choose-and-cut

Consumers can buy trees already cut at a tree lot or they can cut their own at a choose-and-cut farm. Common options for buying pre-cut trees include big box stores and supermarkets, garden centers and freestanding tree lots. Pre-cut trees at box stores or supermarkets offer the convenience of buying trees while doing other shopping. Buying at garden centers or stand-alone tree lots supports local businesses or, in some cases, charitable groups such as scout troops or churches.

Pre-cut trees are usually grown on large farms that specialize in wholesale production, are harvested and then shipped to retail outlets. Choose-and-cut farms are usually smaller tree farms where consumers can wander fields, find their tree and cut the tree with saws provided by the farm. Many choose-and-cut farms also provide family-themed agri-tainment, such as hay wagon rides, petting zoos, bonfires, gift shops and hot chocolate or cider stands.



Some good choices for live Christmas trees include (left to right): Blue spruce, Douglas fir, Scots pine, and Fraser fir. For more information, see: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/choosing_the_right_christmas_tree.

REAL CHRISTMAS TREE - CONTINUED

Fresh tree, Fresh cut, Fresh water

Keeping your real tree hydrated is critical to making sure it does not drop needles and to keep it from becoming a fire hazard. This means following three simple steps:

Fresh tree. If you cut your own tree at a choose-and-cut farm, you know the tree is fresh. If you can't put the tree up in your house right away, store in a garage or other unheated space with the cut end in a bucket of water until you are ready to display it in your house. For pre-cut trees, do the 'pull test'. Gently pull on the end of the branch with your thumb and forefinger. Fresh trees should hold onto all their needles. If a tree loses needles when you do the pull test, keep looking.

Fresh cut. Before setting up your tree in a display stand, cut off a half-inch to an inch off the base of the tree. This will enable the tree to take up water more readily once it is in the stand.

Fresh water. A fresh tree will use up a lot of water, especially in the first week it is in the house. A good rule of thumb is to choose a stand that will hold a quart of water for each inch of diameter of the bottom of trunk of the tree. Most 6'-7' trees have a trunk diameter of 3"-4" so choose a stand that will hold 3 quarts to a gallon of water. Check the stand daily and re-fill to replace water that the tree has taken up. Fresh water and plenty of it is best; research has shown that additives such as aspirin, bleach, soda pop, or floral preservatives do not provide any benefit and can even reduce needle retention.

Take-down tips

Use a turkey baster or a large sponge to transfer any water remaining in the tree stand to a bucket or plastic container. To reduce the amount of needles lost while taking the tree out, lay a bedsheet on the floor and gently lay the tree down on it. Wrap the sheet around the tree to collect any loose needles they may come off while taking the tree out of the house.

Recycling: The last step

Recycle your tree at the end of the holidays and don't let it end up in a landfill. Some communities have curbside tree pick-up for recycling and many others have central drop-off points. Check your local paper or community websites for recycling options in your area.



Some more good choices for live Christmas trees include (left to right): Balsam fir, Black hills spruce, Concolor fir, and White pine. For more information, see: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/choosing_the_right_christmas_tree.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY KRISTIN GETTER, PHD. MSU HORTICULTURAL DEMONSTRATION GARDENS DIRECTOR

SEASON'S GREETINGS

It has been an exciting autumn season in the MSU Horticulture Gardens! We successfully hosted our Indoor Plant and Succulent sale, two Curious Gardener workshops (another coming up!), and are gearing up for the Holiday Open House which includes our annual Poinsettia sale (which will also include leftovers from our succulent sale!).

PRIORITIES

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Garden's current top priority is to have a new sidewalk installed from our Children's Garden Classrooms (inside the Plant and Soil Sciences Building) to the 4-H Children's Garden so that our young visitors have a safe passage to and from these locations without walking through two active parking lots (as they do now). I presented the hazardous situation to MSU's Safety and Security Committee and *they have agreed to pay for the whole project – to be performed in May 2019* (after our Spring Plant Sale)!

CAN YOU HELP IN A SMALL WAY?

We are in need of a larger capacity food processor, used or new for our children's garden cooking. Please contact Jessica Wright (garden4h@msu.edu or 517-353-0452) before donating to make sure she hasn't received 10 of them already!

Now, we have a new priority. Our current welcome kiosk will be in the way of the new sidewalk, so we must move it elsewhere. Due to its age, however, it likely won't survive a move. We are currently looking at some options as to where to place it and what to replace it with. I will work with the Dean and our MSU Infrastructure and Planning Team to determine an affordable solution.

OTHER NEWS

We welcome Daedre McGrath (pictured right with her daughter Ramona Violet), our Annual Trial Garden Manager, back from maternity leave on December 3rd! We are very excited to have her back.

