

# Create winter sunshine with fluorescent fixtures

You can make your own sunshine this winter by growing seedlings and established plants under fluorescent light.

Generally two 40 watt/cool white fluorescent tubes in a fixture are a minimum requirement. All of the manufacturers have special ones they promote for the purpose of indoor lighting. If you contemplate a new installation it will pay you to secure a book on the subject from the public library. This will assist you in getting the most out of such a growing program.

We know that the best light comes from the center area of the long 40

watt tubes. Therefore, place those plants requiring the most light in the center. Among those with high light requirements are orchids, geraniums, and bromeliads. If you have a fluorescent light garden you might have to move these choices right in the center area of the tubes.

If you are growing dieffenbachia, this plant can take a sunless northern exposure and at the far edge of your trays. Ferns, philodendrons and peperomia also require a minimum of light. Therefore this indicates that placement of plants under the lights requires a knowledge of their light requirements. So, switch them around a few times on their trays and soon you will be an authority on the "likes"

of your selected plants.

Some of our indoor gardeners have been struggling to bring camellias to flower. Number one they require a cool room. During the middle of the winter when I took my training we had to open the greenhouse vents for long periods to let in the cold air for the camellias.

The executive secretary of their American Camellia Society passed on this good word for forcing the buds which can easily black (never open, but fall off). Camellias like humidity.

Use gibberellic acid which is a chemical causing buds to open weeks and months ahead of time. The flowers are larger and keep better after cut-

ting. Four to eight weeks prior to wanting them to flower, use a mix 85 per cent gibberellic acid with a small amount of household ammonia, about 11,000 parts per million. Gibberellic spray is available in pre-mixed form in local plant stores.

Place a small drop in the bud scale cup around the light bud. Hybridizers, incidentally, are trying to develop yellow and blue camellias.

Many of our readers use products of nature for art work. It is always a

temptation to pick up and "do something" with the fall leaves. You can melt wax in a tin can, placed in a sauce pan of water. Turn off the electricity or gas before you begin your project. Dip the leaf in the paraffin, using its stem (petiole) as a handle.

When covered, place on top of wax paper. You can mount them, make postcards of them with a transparent plastic cover, or just enclose them in a letter as a sample of beauty you have seen this fall.

If you are the proud owner of a flo-

rescent light installation you might like to start seeds found in the kitchen or outdoors such as grapefruit, orange, dates, figs and other tree seeds. Be sure and place all seeds collected from trees in the refrigerator for two months to imitate the winter season.

When preparations for planting begin water the soil, mix well, then plant and follow up by placing a plastic cover over the surface until the seeds sprout. Place the container with the seeds at the end of the lighting tray (less light).

## Shrubs planted in fall develop strong root systems

By MARGE ALPERN

This time of year the soil is soft and moist, making it the ideal time to move, remove and plant evergreens, shrubs and trees. The ground is warm and more mellow than in the spring.

If you plant in the fall, the roots will have time to develop and establish themselves before the ground freezes. In the spring newly planted stock is frequently put in soil that is still too cold and perhaps very wet.

This condition discourages the adequate root development needed to help the plant withstand sudden rising temperatures and bright sunshine so typical of spring weather.

Unfortunately, most garden centers do not carry as much stock in the fall as they do in the spring. The recently held Nursery Day at Eastern Market was the perfect place to pick up a few replacements.

Prices were much lower than in the spring in the nurseries, and many of our finest flowers were there.

Greg Patchen of the Oakland County Extension Service and representatives of several of the botanical societies were also there just to help.

Speaking of replacements, I suggest you check the shrubs you planted last spring and make sure they're doing well. All four of the dwarf Alberta Spruce I planted last April are totally dead and will be returned to the garden center where I bought them. I'm sure they had been growing in containers that were too small, causing their root systems to be badly stunted before I ever put them into the ground. Replacement guarantees for spring planted material generally expire by Nov. 1.

TAKE SPECIAL CARE of the shrubs you planted last spring so they'll get through their first winter. Extra watering

during the fall is the best protective measure one can take.

Evergreen and especially the board-leaves, such as rhododendrons, azaleas and hollies, need additional watering. They continue to evaporate moisture through their leaves or needles even in the depths of winter.

It is important therefore to make sure the plant tissue goes into winter well supplied with reserve moisture. Once the ground freezes, roots can no longer extract water.

Burlap protection for young evergreens in open, sunny or windy places may not look great, but it's only necessary the first year of a plant's life.

Snow fencing around boxwood hedges may not look great either, but if you want boxwood you have to protect both the sides and the top from the wind, sun and weight of the snow.

Will-pruf is a commercial spray used to protect board-leaf evergreens from drying up. Follow the directions carefully. Many people report considerable success with this product.

ANOTHER HELPFUL PROCEDURE is heavy winter mulching, especially with oak leaves.

Pile up the ground or mulched leaves around the base and then lightly cover the small, low shrubs with unground leaves. Large flat oak leaves pushed down in among the branches work especially well.

In the spring, remove part of the heavy mulch and loosen the rest of the ground mulch. Allow it to remain and decompose, enriching the soil.

Oak leaves are very high in acid content which evergreens especially like.

Cleaning the edge of the woods of small "weed trees" has become a simpler job since we purchased a "grub-ax."

This hefty tool gets right down under the runner-root system of cherry and other invasive scrub trees.

Many hyper vigorous wildlings send out such root systems and these trees must not just cut off at the base or more new strong shoots will pop up again next spring.

Obviously what was acceptable underbrush on the edge of the woods last year benefited from my watering of the nearby garden and grew into real trees.

If these "edge of the woods" trees are not dug up they create a screen, blocking the view into the woods and closing the property down into a smaller space.

Removing and clearing the woods opens it all up and one can look into and through the woods. It's a job, but worth the effort.

Fall is an exciting garden season. Not just because it gives me a jump ahead on spring work, but because I love being outdoors in the haze of an autumn morning, feeling the soil as I plant young shrubs, bury bulbs, and prepare my garden for the long winter sleep.

AS THE GARDENING SEASON comes to a close I would like to thank Jim Verne, the young man who helps me in the garden. Jim, a senior at Latimer High School, has worked for me for several years, and has relieved me of many of the heavy tasks.

He is bright, cooperative, hard working and dependable. My only complaint is that he rarely can give me more than two or three hours-occasionally four hours-a week.

I met Jim through the Bloomfield Youth Employment Service and through the years I've had many other garden helpers from the agency. Without exception they have been fine young men, and I heartily recommend this service to everyone. Call 355-4245 if you need help.

LAST 3 DAYS to save during Jacobson's BABY WEARABLES SALE.



Infant and toddler's wardrobe needs are at substantial savings thru Saturday, October 21. For naptime: receiving blankets, quilts, gowns, blanket or gripper sleepers, crib sheets and pillows. Hooded terry towels and washcloths for bathtime. Playtime, daytime and dress-up time: snap or pullover shirts, waterproof pants, bibs, creepers, crawlers, sweaters, stretch-alls, long sleeve polos, jumpsuits, overalls and slacks.

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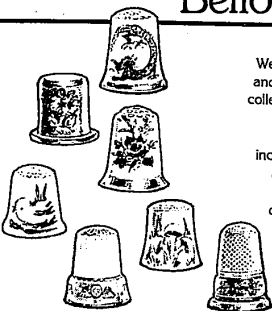
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Meet Roz Belford



We'd like you to meet Roz Belford, avid thimble collector, and founder of "Collector Circle" the international thimble collectors club. Saturday, October 21, 10 a.m. until 5:30.

You'll be fascinated by her account of the history and manufacturing processes of collectors thimbles, including hand-thrown ceramic, enameled precious metal and hand-painted china. Part of her personal collection will be displayed, and the miniature workmanship and detail is a marvel. In addition, we have a large selection to choose from for the enhancement or beginning of your own collection. Be with us.

BOO! It's almost time for Halloween tricks and Blum's of San Francisco candy treats.

Great pumpkin surprises for young tricksters, from a selection of taste delights. Left: Smiling 4-inch plastic pumpkin filled with 1½ ozs. of candy corn, party pop and a crafty witch. 2.25. Right: 7-inch pumpkin with 2½ ozs. candy corn, mask and party pop. 3.50. Halloween treat collection, \$1 to 3.50.

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