



The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

The problem of winter hardiness. Why is it that some plants will survive a winter in one garden, and a mile away it will "winterkill"?

Usually we think that a plant survived a winter because it can stand the cold, or it died because it couldn't take it. Actually, the "winterkill" is only one of several factors which determine whether a plant will live through the winter. It is the other reasons why woody plants don't pull through:

(1) The soil. If it is poorly drained, due to clay or hardpan, water collects and the plant suffocates due to lack of oxygen to roots. Suggestion: Try to break up a heavy soil and add compost or humus. Do anything you can to help drainage. This includes using tile, putting crushed stone, gravel, etc. in bottom of holes.

(2) Air circulation. Trees or shrubs in low lying areas are "frost pockets," which means the temperatures may be lower there than in open spaces.

(3) Winter sun often kills broadleaved and narrow leaved evergreen trees and shrubs. Shade and burlap screens often prevent this type of injury.

(4) Age of plant. Certain shrubs and trees are particularly hardy after they reach certain age, and are tender in early life.

(5) Weather plays an important role in hardiness. If plants have had a lot of rain, especially late in summer and fall, they often go into the winter in a "succulent" state and suffer winter injury.

(6) Soils rich in nitrogen encourage tender growth and this often suffers from winter injury. There are other cultural practices such as heavy feeding, late pruning and it should be mentioned that disease and insect damage can weaken a tree or shrub.

GLOXINIA CARE FOR

CHRISTMAS. Gloxinias (correctly known as Stenandrium) make a fine Christmas item, if you can get it to bloom. We have new varieties so robust they can be grown the year round, without a rest period.

If you happened to dry yours off in summer, better haul it out of the cellar and start it up. It takes a soil, one-third each sand, peat and loam.

Place tuber in, cupped side up and cover completely with a peaty mixture. Water by placing the pot in a pan of warm water, and keep it in a warm room (70 degrees), dry air.

May Be Seen But Not Heard

The portable humidifier is an appliance that was once heard but not seen.

It was noisy and it could hardly be described as attractive. Today, however, it takes its place alongside the smartest furniture piece in either a living room, foyer or family room setting.

The new portable humidifier has elegance in styling and design plus the ultimate in quiet operation.

THE CABINET is highlighted by three caned decorator panels that give the appearance of a compact stereo set. Equipped with a summer cover of matching wicker-grain vinyl, the humidifier converts into an attractive piece of furniture when not in use.

Functionally, the humidifier eliminates the desert-dry atmosphere that prevails in most homes during the winter heating season. With an efficient water wheel moisturizing action, fresh, humidified and filtered air is circulated throughout the house.

As soon as you see sprouts, put plant in a bright window (without direct sun). If plant gets spindly it makes insufficient light, and if leaves curl under the edges, it also indicates lack of light, or poor drainage. Drooping of buds is due to dry air.

Enclosing plant in polyethylene tent will prevent bud drop, at least until the flowers have a chance to form. Turn your plant around every few days so it'll grow symmetrical. If you don't, it'll grow lopsided.

The so-called "winter" gloxinia has the same care as the regular "florist" type.



A WESTLAND HUNTER, Leonard Taig, returned from his 17th deer hunting trip last week with an eight-point buck, shot on state-owned land near Gaylord. Taig, 32, of 6151 Herbert, said it was his "biggest rack" in all of his hunting experience. In past years, he has brought down seven other deer. Taig is also an active bird and bear hunter. The deer shot on Monday morning, Nov. 17, weighs about 180 to 200 pounds. (Observer photo.)

Crown Apple Queen

EAST LANSING The 99th annual meeting of the Michigan State Horticultural Society is scheduled for Dec. 2-4 at the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium.

The meeting agenda includes reports by 13 Michigan State University scientists on production and management practices for fruit growers. Topics will include agricultural financing, mechanical harvesting of cherries, insect and disease control, spray equipment and fruit storage programs.

Highlight of the ladies' portion of the program will be the crowning of the 1969 Michigan Apple Queen during an evening ceremony on Tuesday, Dec. 2.

Of particular interest to growers will be commercial exhibits by over 60 manufacturing companies serving the orchard industry.

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Two widely divergent 1969 surveys have pointed up walnut's sustained popularity. One was a market study of leading furniture and department stores in 30 states, reported in Home Furnishings Daily, trade journal of the home furnishings industry.

Furnishing Market in Chicago. The first study, conducted by the Market Research Department of Fairchild Publications, showed that walnut was by far the leading wood in both modern and Scandinavian Modern furniture.

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