

Save ashes for bug control

It is easy to become inspired by the beauty of the snow. Sometimes you get carried away to the point of feeling sorry for those friends who scamper to southern climates to avoid the winter weather.

The compensation for we who are left in the north is to enjoy the beauty of the snow and the profile of the barren trees against the sky. Friendships are especially heart-warming during the winter cycle as hospitality is tested in this season.

This time of year those with fireplaces are using a lot of wood for a warm, cheery atmosphere. If you save the ashes to put in the garden, it is especially important not to use ashes from newspapers or magazines — the inks contain elements detrimental to many garden plants. Wood ashes contain many minerals that are beneficial to plants.

Wood ashes may be spread on the soil at any time of the year, mixed with mulch, tilled in, or side-dressed around plants. Use ashes very sparingly near acid-soil plants and keep them away from germinating seeds and seedling roots.

Keep ashes not being used immediately indoors or in a covered container so rain can't leach out the nutrients.

Save some for pest control. Sprinkled on the ground or foliage, ashes deter cutworms, bean beetles, squash bugs and



down to earth Alice Burlingame

many borers. Snails and slugs literally dry up when they encounter a line of wood ashes.

We have among our readers many gardeners who have a large collection of houseplants. Some have greenhouses. Here is an idea that will appeal to a person with a minimum number of houseplants or the home grower with a large collection.

The "rooting in rolls" propagation method has suggested a new technique for raising cuttings.

The rolls method uses an 8-inch-by-36-inch sheet of clear plastic, laid flat and covered for half its width with damp sphagnum, peat or sand 1/4-inch deep.

Hardwood or driftwood cuttings of the usual 6 feet to 8 feet lengths, treated with rooting hormone, are laid across this 4-inch band of medium, parallel to each other and 1 inch apart (more if they have foliage), with the bottom ends 1 inch from the edge

of the medium. Thus 3 to 5 inches of the cuttings are left "above the ground," protruding beyond the medium and plastic.

Then the bottom half of the plastic is folded up over the cuttings and medium, and the plastic is rolled up from end to end. The resulting bands, held with rubber bands, is stored standing upright in a cold-frame or other area affording light and proper temperatures. Water, if needed, is simply poured through the top as if into a pot. The cuttings are removed when roots 1/2 inch to 3/4 inch long have formed.

Many of you received beautiful potted plants for the holidays. Remember, they are entitled to tender, loving care. They respond to natural light, but do not put them too close to cold glass.

A real warm house necessitates daily watering. Remember when you received them, you said, "How lovely to be remembered at this time of year."

Herbig to conduct

Music Director Gunther Herbig returns this month to lead Detroit Symphony Orchestra concerts, his first appearances here since October.

Joining him will be cellist Heinrich Schiff, making his Detroit Symphony debut in performances of Lalo's Cello Concerto at 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 30, and 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1.

Both performances are in Ford Auditorium. Maestro Herbig will open the concert with the Black American composer Hale Smith's "Ritual and Incantations." Although the work contains no folk materials, it is an evocation of the ritualistic and incantatory phenomena derived from West Africa.

Smith, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio, served as adviser to the Black Music Center at Indiana University in 1969. Last year he retired from the faculty of the University of Connecticut with the title of professor emeritus.

The program will close with Schumann's Symphony No. 3 in E Flat, "Rhenish." Although Schumann never named his Third Symphony, the piece, written during his musical directorship in Dusseldorf, evokes the picturesque vistas and the generosity of the German people.



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