

Suburban Gardener

Tips On Smuggling Down The Garden For Winter

By BETTY FRANKEL, Special Writer
The few red and gold leaves that have drifted down onto the lawn and driveway are more decoration than litter. However, they are a portent of things to come. Fall has arrived and soon the leaves will come showering down. Don't forget that leaves make wonderful mulch. They should be raked up and put on a compost pile. They will decompose. They will make a great soil conditioner and fertilizer to work into your garden beds next year or to use as a mulch. Frost can come any time now, so bring into the house plants that have been summering on the patio or under a bush in the backyard. Clean the pots before bringing them inside and inspect the plants for diseases and insects. Make cuttings of geraniums, coleus, impatiens and begonias. These will root readily in water or in damp sand. They will provide the start of an indoor sunny window winter garden. Also, you will have plants to set out again next year. You can lift the parent plants, but they generally seem large and ungainly when studied into pots. Also, they have wide ranging roots that are damaged when the plant is dug out, so the plants suffer severe shock and setback. If you are lifting plants to bring inside, cut them back a great deal to bring the top and roots back into compatible balance. Make cuttings to root from the parts you cut off and then there is no real loss. The older plant will sprout out and get fresh and bushy. JUST FOR FUN, to prolong the season a tiny bit more, lift and pot a few small annuals such as dwarf marigolds, lobelia or even sweet alyssum. They will bloom for a few weeks in a sunny window. You will need to hold back the season a little, plan to protect from the early frost: a few tomato plants and some strategically located annuals. Gather a supply of cardboard cartons, large paper bags or old bed sheets and when the frost warnings come cover the plants by early evening and remove the covers in the morning. Often early frosts are followed by several weeks of beautiful frost-free weather. There is still time to transplant perennials or to plant a whole new perennial flower bed. Remember to prepare the soil thoroughly and deeply and enrich it well if you are making a new bed. It is almost impossible to really work the soil in a bed filled with plants, so this is a job you won't be doing very often. This is the last chance to get the lawn patched up. Recess bare spots or set in sod. Give the lawn a fall feeding. This will thicken the turf. Next year it will get greener sooner and will be healthy, with fewer weeds. Early fall is a good time to transplant needle evergreens. Try to get this job done by mid-October so roots have time to make good growth. They should be moved with a ball of earth around the roots. Broad-leaf evergreens can be planted in fall, but most gardeners in this area feel that they get better results if these are planted in the spring. ROSES CAN be moved in late fall after they have become dormant, but again, many gardeners feel they get better results with spring planting. Leaf-losing trees and shrubs are safely moved when the leaves have colored. Even though the leaves have not been shed, once the color turns the connection with the tree is blocked by a layer of cork that forms at the base of the stem. Small trees and most shrubs can be moved bare rooted, but larger specimens should be balled and burlapped. Planting of deciduous trees can continue into winter, as long as the soil can be worked. However, earlier planting does give the roots a chance to grow this year so before the plant gets leaves next spring it has had two growth periods in which to get established. An advantage of winter planting is that when the ground is frozen solid the truck can drive over the lawn without damaging it. Thus a large tree can be delivered to a back yard planting spot without much trouble. Be sure, though, to have the hole prepared in advance. DON'T FORGET to lift and bring inside the tender bulbs that bloom in summer. Glads, cannas, dahlias, and tuberous begonias should be lifted after they have been nipped by early frosts, but before hard frosts come.

Here's How To Cut Fuel Consumption

While government considers the control of fuel use and abuse, here's how homeowners can cut fuel consumption and costs without sacrificing comfort. Be sure the house is well insulated. Windows and doors need efficient weatherstripping so heat will not seep out through openings around sash and frames. (Surveys show that an improperly weatherstripped window can cause as much heat loss as a hole in the wall the size of two building blocks.) Double glazing eliminates the need for storm sash, and substantially cuts both heat loss and condensation. TURN DOWN the heat and weatherstrip the doors of rooms you don't regularly use. For the best and most economical use of fuel, be sure the system is operating properly. Have equipment and the thermostats checked periodically. Lower thermostats at night and when the family is away from home during the day. Don't open outside doors unnecessarily. To keep warm air in and cold air out, doors should be good insulators and have tight weatherstripping. According to engineers, when the air is dry, your body loses moisture faster and you feel cooler. So you raise the temperature to compensate. A better solution is to install a properly sized power humidifier on your furnace to keep the indoor relative humidity between 30 and 45 per cent.



Tips On Pressing Flowers,

Now is the time to take advantage of the abundance of fresh flowers and gather blossoms for pressing, says J. Lee Taylor, specialist at Michigan State University. press the flowers open in a natural position. IF THEY cannot be arranged satisfactorily when you first put them between the papers, the petals can be rearranged a few hours later after the flowers have become limp and somewhat flattened. Place the folded newspaper in a book or between magazines in a warm, dry place and apply more pressure.

Mum Show

Oct. 7, 8

The annual chrysanthemum show arranged by the Tri-Town Men's Garden Club will be held this weekend at Southland shopping center. Registration time is 8 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday Oct. 7. The show is open to the public from 1 to 9 p.m. Saturday and from 12 noon to 9 p.m. on Sunday. All amateur mum growers may exhibit.

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