

# Hip, hip, hooray for wonderful rose hips

## GARDEN SPOT



MARTY FIGLEY

Athens, not often heard, is, "The oak bear mast, the briars scarlet hips," so we do find that he knew about the fruit of the rose.

Those wonderfully red seed capsules don't receive the attention that roses do, so perhaps if we share some interesting facts about them we will all learn about rose hips and appreciate them more.

Rose hips contain much vitamin C. During World War II, syrup was made from rose hips to supplement the diet of soldiers because rose hips have a much higher content of that vitamin than citrus fruit. British volunteers gathered the hips from hedgerows to make the syrup.

Hips are still prized as food and medicine.

Today we can gather our own hips (or hips, as they were called long ago) and make our own concoction.

The flavor of hips is tangy yet sweet, and they can be used fresh, dried or preserved. The most prevalent use today is to steep them for tea.

Rose hip syrup, puree, jam, jelly and sauce can be used as is or as a flavoring in other recipes.

The process to prepare hips is

quite involved. Trim off blossom and stem ends with scissors, cut in half lengthwise, remove the tiny hairs and seeds in the center, and rinse.

Don't use aluminum utensils or pans, or the vitamin C could be destroyed.

Dry the hips by spreading the halves in a single layer on screens or trays and place in a dehydrator, an oven on the lowest setting, or a dark, dry, well-ventilated place. Store in glass jars in a cool, dark place.

If you wish to try a recipe for soup, here's one that is adapted from *A Herb Cookbook* by Painter, published in Auckland.

Combine 3 cups prepared fresh hips with 6 cups water in a saucepan and simmer for 26 minutes.

Cool and drain hips, reserve liquid.

Mince hips and combine with liquid and 1/2-cup sugar. Bring to a boil, stirring.

Combine 1 tablespoon each cornstarch and cold water and slowly stir into the hip mixture; boil until mixture thickens.

Remove from heat and add 2 teaspoons lemon juice and 1/2-teaspoon each grated lemon rind and ground ginger; mix well.

Cool and refrigerate. Serve chilled, topped with a spoonful of heavy cream or sour cream in each bowl.

I understand now why we don't run across more recipes that use rose hips - what a job!

Never use hips from roses that have been treated with a pesticide that isn't clearly labeled as safe for food crops.

These bright orbs are also a delightful addition to dried flower arrangements and wreaths. The color lasts for many years.

You will find hips in clusters on old-fashioned shrub type roses like the rugosas. I didn't

cut all the spent flowers from my Bonica roses and they are full of hips. Gather them now (we've had our first frost), or enjoy their colorful beauty on your shrub roses and let the songbirds enjoy them this winter.

Congratulations to the following South Oakland County Resource Recovery members, who received special recognition for their hard work at the recent Annual Volunteer Awards Program:

Howard Knorr of Beverly Hills; Peter Bray of Birmingham; Barbara Bini of Bloomfield Hills; John Keane of Bloomfield Township; Peggy Mainati of Farmington Hills; Celeste Watts of Franklin; Penelope Morris, Martha Humphrey and Holly Pinder of Berkeley; Dena Serrato of Royal Oak; and Ann McInnis of Springfield Township.

### GOODGARDEN TIP

When you get your Christmas tree home, cut 1/4-inch from the bottom of the trunk and set it in warm tap water to keep it fresh. Keep water in the stand when you take it indoors. A spray of Wilt-Pruf will also hold moisture in the needles.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham.

You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.



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## CALENDAR

■ Paterson Carney Florist, 239 Pierce in downtown Birmingham, has scheduled Holiday Floral Design Workshops.

Carnation topiaries, a hot look for this season, will be the subject of the workshop 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 13. Students will learn how to create a cone-shaped topiary with Oasis foam and carnations that can last through Christmas. Cost is \$20, plus materials. To register and for more information, call (248) 647-7477.

■ The Belle Isle Botanical Society and the Detroit Recreation Department will host their annual Stroll Through the Conservatory 5-8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14, on Belle Isle in Detroit. The event is free.

Call (313) 852-4065. The building will be especially lighted for the occasion, highlighting Detroit's collection of rare and unusual plants.

Hot cider and donuts will be provided.

■ The unusual Garden Park of Holly, 976 E. Maple in Holly, is open for tours each Thursday. Call Sandra Hilly at (248) 634-9300 during park hours (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for more information.

■ The greenhouse at Cranbrook, 380 Lone Pine in Bloomfield Hills, is open 9-11:30 a.m. every Monday.

Many plants are available for purchase.

For more information, call (248) 645-3147.

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