



Fraser Fir



Douglas Fir



Balsam Fir

TYPES OF CHRISTMAS TREES

With Christmas right around the corner, it is time to start thinking what kind of live Christmas tree we want to purchase. There are many choices the most popular being: White Pine, Scotch Pine, Noble-fir, Virginia Fir, balsam, Douglas Fir and Fraser Fir.

A Scottish botanist, John Fraser (1750-1811) named the Fraser Fir. John Fraser found the tree in the Appalachian Mountains during his exploration. The Fraser fir is locally called a “she Balsam” due to the resin filled blisters on the tree’s trunk. This tree can grow up to 80 feet tall and is pyramid in shape. North Carolina is the largest producer of Fraser Fir Christmas trees. These trees take between 7 to 10 years to reach 6 or 7 feet tall.

The Fraser fir is the most popular live Christmas tree sold. The top needles on the branch are dark green and the bottom needles are silver. This tree is very aromatic, and good characteristics for shipping.

The Douglas Fir has been used since the 1920s in the Northwest as the major type of Christmas tree. The Douglas Fir requires 7 to 10 years to reach saleable height. These trees can live for thousands of years due to the tough bark. This tree can grow up to 250 feet!

The needles are 1 to 1 ½ inches long and have a wonderful fragrance when crushed.

The Balsam Fir makes a beautiful Christmas tree. It has many desirable properties such as a great fragrance, long lasting needles, dark green and nicely shaped. The Balsam fir grows up to 60 feet tall. This tree requires 9 to 10 years of growth to produce a 7 foot tree.

Some interesting facts on Christmas trees:

- The US has one-half million acres dedicated to growing Christmas trees.
- Live Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states.
- The Christmas tree industry employs 100,000 employees and 21,000 producers.
- For every tree harvested 3 seedlings are planted.
- Live Christmas trees are recyclable.
- Eighty-seven percent of the artificial Christmas trees are manufactured in China.
- Thirty to thirty-five million live Christmas trees are sold in the US every year.

For more information on Christmas trees go to:
www.christmastree.org

FUN THINGS TO DO!

November

- 18 Olbrich Gardens** - Herb Fair 8:30 – 4:00
- 18 Boerner Botanical Gardens** - Winter Containers 10:00

December

- 2-30 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – Holiday Express – Flower and Train Show
- 9 Boerner Botanical Gardens** - Fresh Holiday Flowers 9 AM
- 9 Boerner Botanical Gardens** - Creating Live Wreaths 10:00 AM
- 12 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – Holiday Wreath Saturday 9 AM
- 13-14 Hyatt Regency Milwaukee** - Midwest Invasive Plant Network – Invasive Plants Assoc of Wisconsin
www.ncws.org

January

- 11 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – New and Better Woody Plants For the Home
- 18 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – Gardening With Heirlooms 6:30 PM
- 19-21 Wisconsin School For Beginning Market Growers** – Learn how to set up a successful organic market garden
(608) 265-3704
- 20 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – Botany 101
- 20 11th Annual toward Harmony with Nature Conference** – Native Landscaping Conference 920.987.5587
- 25 Boerner Botanical Gardens** – New Plants for 2007 6:30 PM

February

- 3-4 Alliant Center Madison** – Orchid Quest 2007 10-5
- 9-11 Alliant Center Madison** - Garden Show Friday 4-9 Saturday 8-6 Sunday 10 - 4

For more info:

www.boernerbotanicalgardens.org

www.olbrich.org

“Can’t We Just All Get Along” Sometimes we can’t!

Plant	Keep Away From	Reason
Calendula	Sunflower, chrysanthemum, marigold	Attracts blister beetles
Coreopsis	Squash, melons, canna	Attracts cucumber beetles
Hosta	Marigold, pansy, petunia, geranium	Attracts slugs
Nicotiana	Potato, tomato, nener	Susceptible to same diseases

Did You Know?

Mint was traditionally used as rodent control.

Treat the Earth well.

**It was not given to you by your parents;
it was loaned to you by your children.
We do not inherit the Earth from our
Ancestors -- we borrow it from our
children**

Gardening Opportunities

There are so many gardening opportunities out there and here is one you might not know about. SMILES in Darien is looking for volunteers to help with their sensory garden. Tasks include dead heading, weeding, cleaning out and filling water features, watering and etc. SMILES is a non-profit organization that provides therapeutic riding to 350 disabled children. If interested please contact SMILES at (262) 882-3470.

Membership Meeting – December 13th! 6:30 PM

Recertification cards will be passed out.

Master Gardener Shirts will be distributed.

Award certification will be passed out to those who reach certain volunteer hours.

House Plant/plant rooting exchange.

Plantsman Allen Armitage new gardening CD will be reviewed.

Bring your Christmas cookies/ hors-d'oeuvres.

Nominations for various committees will be taken.



Another Great Tasting Tomato

Kellogg's Breakfast Tomato - This beefsteak heirloom hails from Michigan and weighs from 1 to 2 pounds. The color is like fresh squeezed orange juice, the consistency is firm not mushy and the taste is excellent.

Did you know?

The lilac is a member of the olive family. It gets its name from the Sanskrit word "Nila" meaning dark blue. Its rich pinnacles of flowers are mostly shades of purple and white and give off a strong sweet scent.
From Oprah's November Issue in O

Interesting Stuff from the Underhill Catalog!

Look at this! Not many dyes can boast about the Vestal Virgins!

Weld/Dyers' Rocket (*Reseda Luteola*)

Sun/Partial Sun certified OG Oldest yellow dye plant in the world. Mentioned in the Bible, in tales of the Vikings, used by Romans to dye the robes of the Vestal Virgins, favored in Persia in the Dark Ages, in Europe in the Middle Ages, it was also used to make inks for talisman and amulets used in "magick". Narrow lance shaped leaves host long, slender spikes of the yellowish flowers. This plant is becoming important again, as sources for "organic"(i.e. chemical-free) dyes are being sought.

Tarahumara Chia (*Salvia Tilifolia*)

Sun/Partial Sun certified organic 4'-6' Spikes of small vibrant blue flowers bloom in summer. Chia was the basic survival ration of Aztec warriors. In Mexico, the seeds are still roasted, ground and added to water, forming a gel, one tablespoon of which is said to sustain a person's energy level for 24 hours. A drink of the seeds, infused with water and flavored with lime juice is called "chia fresca" in Modern Mexico. Tasty and nutritious the seeds are also roasted and ground or mixed with corn and cooked in water to make "alole" that is flavored with honey, chilies or pimento.

Stevia - The "Sweetner of the Future"?

In the pursuit of a sweetener with no calories, Stevia has become a controversial herb. The FDA has even weighed in on this herb that has been used for centuries. Depending on the source it is said that stevia is 70 to 400 times sweeter than white processed sugar. Stevia has no calories, sugars, glutens and carbs. So what's the problem?

The USDA has ruled the herb "an unsafe food additive" and according to www.stevia.net has gone to great lengths to keep stevia off the market including "search and seizure" campaigns. One would have to wonder why an herb used for centuries and by millions of people around the world would be so controversial. According to Rob McCaleb, who is the president and founder of the Herb Research Foundation, the sweetness industry is politically and financially backed by "big money". If you are interested in learning more on how the FDA weighs in on this matter you can find more info through the Freedom of Information Act at www.fda.org.

Besides having no calories, stevia also can be used in baking and cooking, is non-toxic, is used for medicinal purposes such as digestion, and heals wounds when applied topically.

Care of Christmas Cactus Important After Holidays

B. Rosie Lerner, Purdue Consumer Horticulture Specialist

While the poinsettia remains the most popular of the holiday plants, a healthy Christmas cactus in full bloom is a great gift idea for that special gardener. But along with that bounty of blooms, send these tips for keeping the plant looking its best.

Most blooming plants will keep their blossoms longer in cooler temperatures. Keep the plant in a well-lit location away from drafts, from heat vents, fireplaces or other sources of hot air.

Watering seems to be the source of most problems with the Christmas cactus. The plant is a tropical type cactus and is not quite as drought tolerant as the name implies. However, it is a succulent plant and can store a reasonable quantity of water in the leaves. Water thoroughly when the top half of the soil in the pot feels dry to the touch. Discard the excess water, then do not water again until the top half becomes dry. The length of time between watering will vary with the air temperature, amount of light, rate of growth and relative humidity.

After the blossoms fade, the plant isn't much to look at. But a little extra care will help bring it back to full bloom next year.

While the Christmas cactus can adapt to low light, more abundant blooms are produced on plants that have been exposed to high light intensity. Keep your plants in a sunny location indoors. Plants can be moved outdoors in summer, but keep them in a shady or semi-shady location. Too much direct sunlight can burn the leaves. When it's time to bring the plants back inside in the fall, slowly adjust the plants to life indoors by gradually increasing the number of hours they spend indoors each day.

Well-drained soil is a must for Christmas cactus. Use a commercially packaged potting mix for succulent plants or mix your own by combining two parts plain potting soil with one part clean sand or vermiculite.

Pruning your Christmas cactus after blooming will encourage the plant to branch out. Remove a few sections of each stem by pinching them off with your fingers or cutting with a sharp knife. These sections can be rooted in moist vermiculite to propagate new plants. Christmas cactus will bloom if given long uninterrupted dark periods. Begin the dark treatments in about mid-October to have plants in full bloom by the holidays. Christmas cactus will also bloom if they are subjected to cool temperatures of about 50 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit at night. Plants will be ready for the holidays if the cool treatments are started by early November.

Crockpot Salsa Chicken

- 4 Chicken Breasts
- 1 Envelope Taco Seasoning
- 1 Jar Salsa (or fresh Pico De Gallo)
- 1 Cup Water
- 1 Tub Sour Cream

Throw all of the ingredients minus the sour cream into the crockpot. Set on low for 6-10 hours. Spoon out some of the liquid and add sour cream to thicken.

*** This is a tasty, easy way to prepare dinner.



Did you know that Pico De Gallo translates into English as beak of a chicken?

Composting With Coffee

By Kathy LaLiberte - When I go to my local coffee shop, I often come out with more than a cup of coffee. Near the door, they have a bin with free bags of used coffee grounds. Like most avid gardeners, I find it impossible to resist free food for my garden! In the spring, I spread handfuls of coffee grounds around my acid-loving plants – azaleas, blueberries, rhododendrons. The grounds are slightly acidic and besides helping to lower the soil pH, they foster the humus-rich soil texture these plants really love. In late summer and fall, I dig coffee grounds right into the vegetable garden after removing early-season crops such as peas and spinach. In the winter, I add the grounds to my compost pile. They're a good source of nitrogen at a time of year when that can be a little difficult to come by.

Here's a quick refresher about how to build a good compost pile by combining "green" ingredients such as coffee grounds, with "brown" ingredients such as dry leaves.

Browns & Greens

Efficient composting depends upon a well-balanced mix of ingredients, which generally fall into two categories: browns (high carbon), and greens (high nitrogen). The ideal ratio is 25:1 (brown to green) but most people find three parts brown and one part green works quite well. Remember to layer your ingredients, keep the pile moist (like a well-wrung sponge) and turn it occasionally to incorporate a fresh supply of oxygen for the microbes.

Here's a list of some common compost ingredients in each category:

Brown (3 parts)

- corncobs and cornstalks
- paper
- pine needles
- dry leaves
- sawdust or wood shavings
- straw
- woody vegetable stalks

Green (1 part)

- coffee grounds
- eggshells
- fruit trimmings
- vegetable peels and leaves
- grass clippings
- feathers or hair
- green leaves
- seaweed
- fresh weeds
- rotted manure

Walworth County Master Gardener Shirts Are In!!!

For those of you who ordered shirts they have arrived. They will be available at the monthly membership meetings to be picked up. If you don't make it to the meetings give me a call and we can arrange the pick-up.

Thanks! Annette (262) 495-8898
We will be ordering short sleeve shirts next spring. Watch for more info in the newsletter.

Holiday Open House

Hosted By - JoAnn Hollander, Rosemary Divock and Eileen Miller

Find That Special Gift for Family, Friends, Teachers
Also -

Gourmet Gifts
Samples to Taste and Try
Sunday November 19th from 1-5 PM
Bring Your Friends

344 Franklin Street, Genoa City Wi (262.279.3271)

HAWKS GARDEN TIPS FOR NOVEMBER

Water heavily all newly planted trees, shrubs and evergreens before the ground freezes.

Apply WILT-PRUF to broad-leafed evergreens and yews to help reduce winter burn. Apply when temperature stays above 32 degrees for 24 hours. Do not apply to Arborvitae or Junipers.

Winterize newly planted smooth-barked trees with TREE WRAP to protect them from sun scald, but be sure to remove it by early April.

Cover perennials, bulbs and small fruits with evergreen boughs after the ground has begun to freeze.

Start rose protection with rose collars and loose soil after Thanksgiving.

Spray plants prone to deer damage with repellents every three months when temperature remains above 40 degrees for 24 hours.

Protect shrubs prone to rabbit damage with cylinders of ½ inch hardware cloth before the ground freezes. Push the base of these cylinders into the soil to keep animals from burrowing underneath.

Select Amaryllis, Tulips, Daffodils, Paper Whites etc. for winter forcing.

Get the last of your bulbs in the ground before it freezes.

Apply the 4th step of the Hawks lawn fertilizer program later this month.

Reduce your mowing height to 2" for the last mow to help avoid snow mold problems.

Be sure to order your holiday decorations at least one month before you need them.

Hot and Spicy Pumpkin Nut Mix

Serves 12

1 egg white
1 cup pumpkin seeds
1 cup whole almonds
1 cup walnuts, pecans or cashews
2 tbs brown sugar packed
½ cup seasoning salt
½ tsp curry powder
½ tsp round cinnamon
Cayenne pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Put egg whites in mixing bowl and beat until foamy. Add pumpkin seeds, almonds and walnuts, and toss well to coat nuts with egg white.
2. Place remaining ingredients in small bowl and blend well with fork. Add spice mixture to nuts and stir combine everything well.
3. Coat non-stick baking sheet with cooking spray and spread nuts on sheet. Bake about 50 minutes stirring after 30 minutes
4. Cool for 15 minutes and break into smaller pieces. Allow to cool completely then store nut mix in an airtight container up to 1 week.

Pumpkin Seed "Power"

Facts:

¼ Cup Contains Percentage of the Recommended Daily Allowance

Magnesium - 95%
B1- 11%
B2- 16%
B6 - 4%
Niacin - 41%
Folic Acid 8%
Protein 39%
Iron 49%

Store seeds in an airtight container. Seeds can be kept for 2 months, if frozen they will stay fresh up to 6 months.

** submitted by Karen Miller
Thanks Karen!!

General Master Gardener Volunteer Education

Spring 2007

Where: Badger High School
Time 6-9 PM
Dates: January 11 – March 29th

Dates	Instructors	Topics
January 11	Chrissy Register UWEX	Introduction Soil Fertility/ Low Input Lawn Care
January 18	Chrissy Register UWEX	Weeds and Pest Management
January 25	Betty Adelman	Native Plants
Feb 1	Phil Pellitteri UWEX	Entomology
Feb 8	TBA	Landscaping With Herbaceous Plants
Feb 15	TBA	Backyard Wildlife
Feb 22	Mike Maddox UWEX	Plant Propagation
March 1	Chrissy Register UWEX	Invasive Species
March 8	Chrissy Register UWEX	Woody Landscape Plants
March 15	Karen Delehaut UWEX	Vegetables for the Home Garden
March 22	Brian Hudelson UWEX	Plant Pathology
March 28	Teryl Roper UWEX	Fruit For the Home Gardener

** April Dates will be set for review time/weather cancellations

WALWORTH COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION 2006 CALENDAR

<u>JANUARY</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>MARCH</u>
<p>Newsletter–Beginning of the Month</p> <p>Board Meeting–Jan 16</p>	<p>Mailing, 1 month ahead for Potluck</p>	<p>Board Meeting–March 13 Sweet & Maier, Elkhorn</p>
<u>APRIL</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>
<p>Newsletter</p>	<p>Board Meeting May 15 Sweet & Maier 6:30 pm</p>	<p>June 3rd Plant Swap at Fairgrounds</p>
<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
<p>Newsletter–July 15</p> <p>Board Meeting–Date to be determined (closed meeting) July 10th at 6:00 pm</p> <p>July 22, Dr. Griesbach of Delavan–Lilies \$5.00 charge</p>	<p>Possible Education Training August 12–Rodeck \$5.00 charge</p> <p>Fontana Frank Lloyd Wright Designs</p>	<p>Fair</p> <p>Board Meeting</p> <p>Need to determine dues and hours filing deadline</p>
<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>
<p>Early Oct. Fall Potluck/Start Monthly meetings</p> <p>Newsletter</p>	<p>Membership meeting Nov 8.</p> <p>Newsletter</p> <p>Board Meeting November 13 7 PM</p>	<p>Board meeting</p> <p>Nominations of Officers</p> <p>Membership Meeting Dec 13th 6:30</p>

