



Organic Newsletter

Winter Edition, 2013

Forcing Branches for Winter Color

In the mid to late winter we begin to yearn for the spring; the warm air, and green, growing things. Forcing into bloom branches of trees and shrubs is a way to help soothe the impatience for winters end.



Early spring blooming trees and shrubs make the best choice for forcing, and shrubs are typically easier than trees. The reason we use early spring flowering shrubs is because they have already set their flower buds before the winter begins and after at least eight weeks of temperatures below 40°F-usually mid-late January- they are ready to be forced into bloom. (The later in winter they are picked for forcing, decreases the time it will take to flower.)

Some of the easier shrubs to force are forsythia (*Forsythia x intermedia*), flowering quince (*Chaenomeles* sp.), Cornelian cherry dogwood

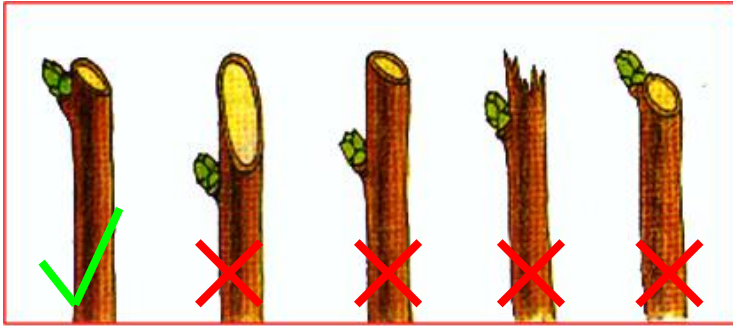
(*Cornus mas*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), pussy willow (*Salix* sp.), crabapple & apple (*Malus* sp.), peach (*Prunus persica*), cherries (*Prunus* sp.).

Branch selection is very important, and there are several factors to consider when choosing which ones to bring indoors. First, you want to select branches that have numerous flower buds. Typically you can differentiate the flower and foliar buds by size; flower buds are usually larger and plumper. (See below.)



Next, it is important to select branches that are healthy- free of diseases & injuries. Finally, try to prune branches from areas that are overcrowded. If not possible, consider what plant will look like when branches are removed, i.e. how will it affect the shape of the plant?, will it affect the spring display? Etc.

When ready to prune, follow good pruning practices and cut stems 6"-18" long. Make cuts just above a side bud, see diagram below.



When the branches are brought indoors cut the bottom of the stems again, on a slant, just above previous cut. (Cutting the stems on a slant helps with water absorption, as the bottom of the stem will not sit flat against the container.) If when pruning, the temperatures are below freezing, you will need to soak the branches in cool water- bathtubs work well- for a few hours or overnight, this reduces the chances of the buds bursting prematurely. Alternately, soaking doesn't need to be done if temperatures are above freezing.

When ready, place the branches in a container with warm water, no hotter than 110°F and no higher than 3" up the stems. You can also add a homemade flower preservative by following one of the instructions below:

- 2 cups lemon-lime carbonated beverage
- 2 cups water
- 1 /2 teaspoon household chlorine bleach

- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon household chlorine bleach

- mix with 1 quart water
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon household chlorine bleach
- mix with 1 quart water

Place in a partially shaded, cool area (60°F-65°F) until buds begin to show color. The branches can then be moved to an area with more light, but do not place in direct sun. A cooler location will also prolong the blooms.

Occasionally some plants will begin to grow roots in the container. If you want to try to grow a new plant, remove the branches from the water when the roots are 1/4"-3/8" long. Next trim the

stems 6"-8" and pot individually. Keep them moist until permanent roots form. When warm enough they can be planted outdoors but they may need protection from winter cold for a year or two.

Bring some happiness and color indoors this winter by forcing spring flowering trees and shrubs. (For more spring color, see our Fall 2010 Newsletter for information on forcing bulbs!)



What do snowmen eat for lunch?

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Icebergers!

*May the good times and treasures
of the present become the golden
memories of tomorrow!*

Happy Winter!

~The Organically Green Team

~*~

"I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently? And then it covers them up snug, you know, with a white quilt; and perhaps it says "Go to sleep, darlings, till the summer comes again."

-Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass

Plants for the Winter!

December:

Winterberry Holly
(*Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red')



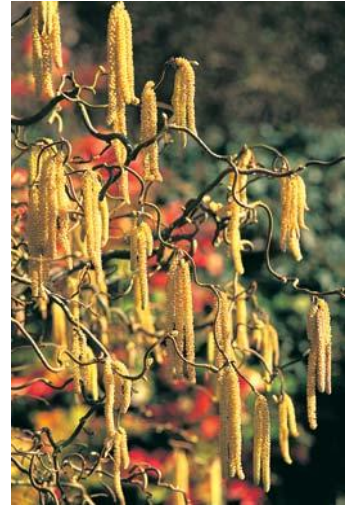
- ❖ Broadleaf deciduous shrub, to about 8 ft tall and wide, suckering, an upright rounded habit.
- ❖ Female plant is a heavy producer of bright red fruit. Fruit often persists throughout the winter and sometimes into early spring.
- ❖ Sun to partial shade.
- ❖ Adapts to many soil types, best in moist, organic soil.

January:

Harry Lauder's Walking Stick
(*Corylus avellana* 'Contorta')



- ❖ Deciduous shrub/tree, 6-8 ft height & width
- ❖ Stems curled and twisted., great for winter interest (Leaves also twisted)
- ❖ Flowers are yellow catkins
- ❖ Sun to part shade.
- ❖ Can tolerate poor soils



February:

Snowdrop
(*Galanthus nivalis*)

- ❖ Foliage is 6" long, gray-green and grass-like
- ❖ Has white pendulous flowers that bloom from mid-February to mid-March
- ❖ Does best in dappled shade to part sun
- ❖ Prefers organic woodland soil



Organically Grown

Lentil Burgers



Ingredients:

6 oz shitake mushrooms
1 can (15.5 oz) organic lentils, rinsed and drained
3/4 C fresh whole wheat bread crumbs (from 1 slice) (or substitute gluten-free breadcrumbs)
1 lg organic egg
1/4 C chopped celery
1 1/2 tbsp fresh thyme
2 tsp dijon mustard
1 C chopped onion
4 oz mild goat cheese
6 tbsp fine yellow cornmeal
3 tsp olive oil
4 whole wheat buns, toasted (or substitute with gluten-free buns)
1/4 C chopped roasted red bell peppers
1/4 C watercress

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 400° F.
 2. Remove stems from mushrooms and discard. Coarsely chop three-quarters of mushroom caps and put in food processor. Quarter remaining mushroom caps and set aside.
 3. Add lentils, bread crumbs, egg, celery, thyme, mustard, 1/2 cup of the onion, and 2 ounces of the cheese to food processor. Pulse until coarsely chopped.
 4. Form into 4 patties (3" diameter).
 5. Put cornmeal on plate and gently coat patties on all sides (patties will be very delicate).
 6. Heat 1 teaspoon of the oil in large nonstick frying pan over medium heat.
 7. Add reserved mushrooms and remaining 1/2 cup onion and cook until onion is golden, 5 to 6 minutes.
 8. Remove from pan. Add remaining 2 teaspoons oil to pan and cook patties, turning once, until golden brown, about 6 minutes.
 9. Transfer to baking sheet, top with remaining 2 ounces cheese, and bake until heated through, about 4 minutes.
 10. Serve burgers on buns and top with mushroom mixture, peppers, and watercress.
- (Serves 4)

Nutritional Facts per serving:

Calories 385.6 cal
Fat 13.4 g
Saturated Fat 5.5 g
Cholesterol 65.9 mg
Sodium 573.7 mg
Carbohydrates 50.8 g
Total Sugars 7.9 g
Dietary Fiber 11.7 g
Protein 18.7 g

Note: We recommend using certified organic ingredients, when available, in all recipes to maximize flavors and nutrition while minimizing your risk of exposure to pesticides, chemicals and preservatives.

Services for 2014:

We offer the following services to help increase the enjoyment and beauty of your property:

Tree / Shrub:

- ❖ Shrub & Tree Spraying / Fertilization Programs
- ❖ Integrated Pest Management
- ❖ Soil Restoration
- ❖ Plant and Soil Stimulation Program
- ❖ Deep Root Feeding
- ❖ Root Growth Enhancement
- ❖ Mature Tree Restoration
- ❖ Air Spading
- ❖ Radial Trenching
- ❖ Vertical Mulching
- ❖ Anti-Desiccant Spraying
- ❖ General Tree and Shrub Maintenance Removal

Turf:

- ❖ Lawn Renovation
- ❖ Fertilization
- ❖ Overseeding
- ❖ Core Aeration
- ❖ Estate / Property Purification

Organic Pest Control:

- ❖ Flying Insect
- ❖ Deer / Geese
- ❖ Rodent Repellent
- ❖ Organic Tick & Flea Control

We also offer Outdoor Holiday Décor.

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