

GARDEN GAZETTE

January – March 2016

John Christianson, Editor

CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

An Enticing Selection of Common and Uncommon Plants . . . Friendly Service . . . Expert Advice

A Gentle Reminder

Sometimes I read the obituaries and recently I read of a woman who wanted to be remembered for how wonderful her family felt when they were with her. What a lovely legacy! Then, a few days later as we were coming home from work and I turned the car quickly around our mild switch back corner (cars fly up behind us at 50 to 70 miles per hour when the zone is 35 miles per hour) to escape the car careening around the curve behind us, I looked back at Emma to make sure she was fine. I told her I was so impressed that she always remembers to buckle up. I commented that she would probably be a very watchful and careful mother when she has children just as I am so careful. She answered that she would, but she 'was also going to dance and sing and be silly and have fun with her kids!' It seemed like a matter of fact statement rather than a criticism but it was that word 'also' that caused me to think I might take my role as 'Mother' a little too seriously. I do not sing and dance and have fun with her often enough. Later we were in Seattle when a grown man, dressed in a suit and top coat and highly polished shoes (obviously a business man and not a street person) came strolling down the street singing 'I'm a man of means by no means, King of the Road'. He had a resounding, very deep baritone voice and (being the avid people lover and watcher that I am) I wanted to follow him and find out his story. He was definitely not singing for money. He looked like he was singing for the sheer joy of song. And, it made me happy. Since then I have thought again about a woman who took ferry tickets at the landing in Mukilteo many years ago. We would watch her dip and twirl and soft-shoe it to music in her head as she took tickets from cars passing on both sides of her. She was graceful and efficient while never missing a ticket. And, she made me happy. So...this year, when Emma helps us plant potatoes on Saint Patrick's Day and peas on Presidents' Day, and lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, onions, squash, beets and pumpkins throughout the Spring, we will sing and harmonize, dip and twirl, as we plant the garden. We can sing 'Inchworm', 'Sunshine on My Shoulders', 'Shine on Harvest Moon' and, the perennial favorite in the Pacific Northwest, 'Singin' in the Rain' simply because there is so much to sing about. We will enjoy each others company and the fact that we can sing and dance and garden together. This will make us happy! And, hopefully, when I am gone, she will remember how good she felt when she was with me.

Toni Christianson

reprinted Essay from Garden Gazette 2004



NORTHWEST
FLOWER & GARDEN
SHOW

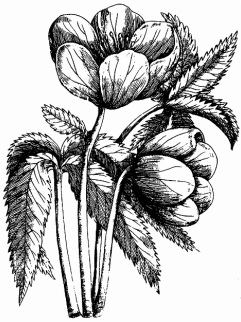
Flower Buses to the Northwest Flower & Garden Show

This year, the Northwest Flower and Garden Show takes place February 17 - 21. We are happy once again to offer our "Flower Buses" so you can enjoy the show without the stress of driving and finding parking. Buses leave the Nursery at 8:30 a.m. and return at around 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February 17, 18 and 19. The cost of a combination show ticket and bus ride is \$52. Call the Nursery (360-466-3821) to reserve your space. The Nursery also has early bird tickets for just the show (\$17 per person, a \$5 saving over the at-the-door price). While at the show, check out the great plants and garden antiques we have for sale at our booth.

Primrose ~ Antiques and Fancy Goods *A Sale for Two Seasons ~ Fall and Winter*

Our bi-annual, storewide sale in Primrose starts January 2. All fancy goods will be 20% off with the exception of antiques. All Christmas will be 40% off with the exception of feather trees and antique ornaments. We want to clear the tables, armoires, shelves and pedestals (most of which are antiques and also for sale) to be ready for our new Spring inventory which will include English and French antiques from our long delayed container from Europe. Due to circumstances beyond our control it did not leave England in October as planned. It is out on the Atlantic in a big container vessel and will first arrive in New York and then come across the country in a long-haul truck to Primrose...with arrival still unpredictable. Some of our fancy goods for Spring include a new line of linens, delightful English soaps we discovered on our buying trip and CDs of each year in music going back to 1940. You can purchase these CDs as gifts for year of birth, year of graduation, year of engagement or marriage, year of turning sweet sixteen or any other special occasion you would like to honor with the memory of music from a special time. We will also be showcasing many ideas for Easter decorating including planted Easter baskets, planted cloches and terrariums, Easter bunnies, chicks and lambs and all the flowers that make Spring so wonderful. These will include pansies, primroses, tulips and daffodils used in unusual ways to brighten your homes and welcome the new season. This will all start happening right after our **January Sale of Two Seasons**. We're thinking Spring even if the weather has not quite caught up with us yet!

A Fascination for Hellebores *Christianson's Tenth Annual Winter Festival* Saturday and Sunday, February 27 -28 Guest Speaker **Riz Reyes** presenting *Hellebores: A Primer for Gardeners and Floral Designers* Saturday at 11:00 a.m.



On this weekend in February our vintage 1946 Propagation House will be filled with a profusion of Winter color. Flower color in Winter is unusual enough in our Pacific Northwest but to have flowers that bloom dependably through rain, sleet, and snow with long lasting flowers and beautiful variations of color will be a great discovery for those gardeners unaware of this genera. And for those of us familiar with Hellebores we know what a single plant can do for our spirits if planted along our walk to and from our home to our driveway or mailbox. One established plant makes a welcoming statement but a large drift of plants makes a grand statement. And this can happen by letting the flowers set seed and naturalize in a part of the garden. Even after the flowers fade, these plants look great for the rest of the year. The dark green, bold and unusual foliage that surrounds the flowers in Winter adds texture to the garden until the following Winter when the foliage needs to be cut down to make way for new Winter flowers and foliage.

Helping us celebrate this Winter flower will be noted Horticulturist Riz Reyes, who will present the basic types, culture and breeding of Hellebores. He will also discuss using them in the garden and containers. After his presentation, Riz will demonstrate how to incorporate Hellebores as cut flowers into floral designs. All in all, an inspiring and educational morning for those seeking Winter color in their gardens.

David Austin's Best Rose...Ever!

First introduced at the Chelsea Flower and Garden Show in 2014 to rave reviews, the lovely Olivia Rose Austin is a new English Shrub Rose for 2016. Bred by David Austin, it is named for David's granddaughter and he regards it, as perhaps, his best rose ever. The repeating, silky flowers are shallowly cupped with soft pink rosettes that have a strong, pleasing, fruity fragrance. It is regarded by David to be one of the most disease resistant of all the roses he knows. This rose is a vigorous grower to a compact 3-1/2 feet and exemplifies the old rose appearance of the best English Roses. We have a great selection of this variety. What a lovely addition to your rose garden or mixed border.



It's Bare Root Season!

During the month of January, we receive many different varieties of bare root fruiting trees and shrubs, and flowering trees and shrubs. Bare root plants have many advantages over potted or balled and burlaped types. First, the roots adapt well to our native soil conditions. Second, bare root trees and shrubs cost less than potted or balled and burlaped because shipping from growers is less expensive and the labor to pot or wrap the root ball is missing. Finally, bare root plants are so much lighter and easier for you to transport - you can fit a whole orchard in your car!

It's important to keep the roots moist at all times. Ask one of our Nursery experts about how to properly condition and plant a bare root tree or shrub. Be sure to come into the Nursery soon for the best selection. The bare root season ends April 1st, when leaves emerge and the plants need to be potted into soil.



The Beauty & Versatility of Twig Dogwoods

Driving along country roads, it's common to see the native red and yellow twig dogwoods growing in the roadside landscape. The colorful branches stand out among the bare, brown wood of other deciduous trees and shrubs and add a bit of color to the gray Winter landscape. Growers have introduced several variegated varieties that add great seasonal interest to your garden. These include:

Cornus sanguinea 'MidWinter Fire' that grows to 5' tall and 6' wide. Yellow Winter stems are tipped with red and with leaves that turn a golden yellow in Fall. Another *sanguinea* variety is 'Arctic Sun'. This dogwood is shorter, growing only to 4' tall with bright yellow Winter stems sporting crimson tips which are particularly showy. *Cornus alba* 'Ivory Halo' is a tatarian dogwood cultivar that is noted for its compact size, variegated (white-edged) leaves and bright red twigs in Winter. It is a rapid-growing variety that reaches 4-6' tall on erect, usually unbranched stems. With most twig dogwoods, tiny white, fragrant flowers appear in late Spring. Flowers give way to clusters of dark purple drupes in Summer. Fruit is not showy, but is attractive to birds. Twig dogwoods adapt to a variety of cultural conditions, including wet and soggy soil, which makes them a favorite plant among gardeners. They look most spectacular when planted as a cluster or a hedge, but also work well singularly. We currently have a nice selection of these different varieties, well priced in bare root form.



Christianson's Winter & Spring Calendar

Indoor Gardening With Unusual Houseplants

Saturday, January 16 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee \$8

Our Indoor Plant Buyer, **Eric Andrews**, loves strange, uncommon and unusual house plants and wants to share these amazing species with you. Join Eric as he shows his favorite varieties in their common market size and what they look like in the wild. He'll also cover the care and feeding of these interesting plants that are easier to grow than one would think.

Water Conservation In A Permaculture Landscape

Saturday, January 23 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee \$8

Climate extremes of drought followed by excessive flooding make it increasingly difficult to maintain a beautiful and stable landscape. **Kathy Anderson** of *Bountiful Landscapes* is a Water Ecologist who will show how to use Permaculture principles to catch and hold water in your landscape. Create a Foodscape, Rain Garden, or Hugelkultur to enhance what your garden already offers. Bring a sketch pad to jot down ideas!



Christianson's Winter & Spring Calendar - continued

Moss In Japanese-Inspired Gardens

Saturday, January 23 1 – 2 p.m.

reservations required class fee \$8

Moss invites itself into our gardens, just as it did centuries ago in early Japanese gardens. The gardeners recognized its irresistible pictorial qualities, its soothing presence, and reductive simplicity. From that point on it became a quintessential element in Japanese garden design. **Hans Wressnigg**, of *NIWA Japanese Inspired Landscapes*, will show you how moss is used in Japanese gardens, and how you can make it an integral part of your garden plant palette.

Impressionistic Flower and Garden Photography

Saturday, January 30 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee \$8

Inspired by the nineteenth century French Impressionist painters, more and more garden photographers are discovering with long exposures, they can use their cameras as a “digital paintbrush.” Expert photographers **John and Kathy Willson**, will teach you how to “paint with your camera” using shutter speed to reveal flows of motion and form not otherwise noticed or recordable with automatic camera settings. Time will be budgeted for “hands-on” demonstrations in the Nursery at the conclusion of the forty-five minute classroom presentation.



What Is All The Buzz About?

Saturday, January 30 1 – 2:30 p.m.

reservations required class fee \$8

Most of you know about the plight of bees but do you know you can host a non-stinging native bee in your own garden? Our orchard mason bee is a hard working Spring pollinator that is safe to have around kids and pets. **Missy Anderson**, King County Master Gardener and co-owner of *Rent Mason Bees*, will be here to teach all she knows about these important pollinators: hosting, proper care and healthy propagating.



Foodscaping For The Urban Garden

Saturday, February 6 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee \$8

Foodscaping uses Permaculture techniques involving patterns found in nature to create sustainable, multi-layered and multi-dimensional food systems while still retaining an aesthetic landscape. Join **Kathy Anderson**, of *Bountiful Landscapes*, as she discusses the different ways to create a beautiful landscape that also creates sustenance for your family and wildlife.

Renovating Old Fruit Trees

Saturday, February 6 1 – 2 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8



Over time, fruit trees can lose vigor or suffer the consequences of neglect. **Ani Gurnee**, of *Aulos Design*, will explain the benefits of renovating old fruit trees and the best approach and techniques to use in order to achieve added production in your trees.

Orchids: But Can You Get It To Bloom Again?

Saturday, Feb. 13 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

reservations required \$8 class fee

You don't need a greenhouse or special equipment to get your orchid to bloom again. All you need is an east or south windowsill and a little understanding of how orchids differ from typical flowering plants. Join orchid expert **Robert Marshall**, of the *Mount Baker Orchid Society*, as he covers potting and re-potting, blooming and re-blooming, watering, light, humidity and temperature. And perhaps, patience.

Basic Rose Pruning

Saturday, February 13 11 a.m. - noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Learn the tried and true techniques for pruning roses. Rosarian **John Harmeling**, will teach the three steps of pruning for health, shape and best bloom quality. Whether you have tea, rugosa or climbing roses, this class will guide you towards keeping your roses healthy and blooming for years to come.

Basic Fruit Tree Pruning

Saturday, February 13 1 – 2 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

In order to get the best fruit production, different varieties of fruit trees require different approaches to pruning. **Ani Gurnee**, of *Aulos Design*, will show you the tried and true techniques used in order to maximize fruit production and eliminate problems down the road.

To make your reservations for classes and events,
please visit the Nursery or call us at
360-466-3821 or 1-800-585-8200.

Christianson's Winter & Spring Calendar - continued

Structural Pruning For Young Trees

Saturday, March 5 11 a.m. - noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Nip it in the bud! Doing just the right pruning when a tree is young can prevent the need for costly, difficult pruning or structural failures when the tree is mature. In this lecture and demonstration, Certified Arborist **Christina Pfeiffer**, will present simple steps for training young trees for future structure and beauty and how to make the right cuts for the best results.

Japanese Garden Design Techniques

Saturday, March 19 11 a.m. - noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Japanese gardens are often considered visual objects but it is their characteristic spatial development that is fundamental to making them feel Japanese. Join **Hans Wressnigg**, of *NIWA Japanese Inspired Landscapes*, as he covers enclosure techniques, capturing outside scenery, balance, planes and volumes.

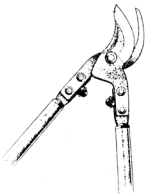


How to Prune... So You Don't Have to Prune So Often

Saturday, March 5 1 - 2 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

Great looking plants with less work and waste. Come learn how in this talk, by arborist **Chris Pfeiffer**, about ways to use the right methods, tools and timing for the most effective pruning of garden shrubs and trees. Chris is a horticulture consultant, instructor and garden writer with over 30 years experience in landscape management and arboriculture.



Spring Garden Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, March 19 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

reservations requested complimentary

Join **John Christianson** for his first tour of the year through the lovely English style gardens of *La Conner Flats* located next to the Nursery. Meet John in front of the schoolhouse then stride over to La Conner Flats to see what plants are showing an inspiring Spring display. Waterproof shoes and raingear are recommended, depending on the weather.

Starting, Planting and Staking Dahlias Made Easy

Saturday, March 26 11 a.m. - noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Learn how to grow floriferous dahlias from tubers, cuttings and seeds using inexpensive grow lights and propagation mats. **John and Kathy Willson**, former owners of *Swede Hill Dahlia & Sunflower Farm*, will demonstrate fool proof methods for getting your dahlia tubers off to a great start for amazing Summer blooms.

Hugelkultur Demonstration

Saturday, March 26 1 - 3 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$16

Curious about Hugelkultur? Interested in learning how to build one? Hugelkultur is a German word for making raised garden beds filled with rotten wood; loaded with organic material, nutrients, moisture retention and air pockets for the roots of what you plant. Join Water Ecologist **Kathy Anderson**, of *Bountiful Landscapes*, as she builds a small Hugelkultur at the Nursery. This is a two hour class outdoors, so be sure to dress for the weather.

Species Rhododendrons: These Are Not Your Father's Rhodies!

Saturday, March 12 11 a.m. - noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Bob Zimmerman, of *Chimacum Woods*, will explore the distinctly different world of species rhododendrons. These plants don't look like the rhodies most of us are used to. They offer a broad range of leaf shapes, colors and patterns. Bob has just returned from an amazing rhody exploration in China and will describe and show pictures of some of the most interesting species, including many available at the Nursery.

Gardening With Wet Soils

Saturday, March 12 1 - 2 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

Do you think of wet areas in your garden as a problem? They can become some of the most ornamental treasures and hospitable habitats of your property! **Ani Gurnee**, of *Aulos Design*, will share inspiration for plants, site preparation and maintenance. You might create the impression of a wandering water course, a meadow or a woodsy nook. Who knows...the wet area may become your favorite part of the garden!

To make your reservations for classes and events, please visit the Nursery or call us at 360-466-3821 or 1-800-585-8200.

January - March Specials

January 1 - 31

House & Conservatory Plants

tropical plants for home or greenhouse
(free repotting with plant & pot purchase)
25% Off

February 1 - 14

Blooming Witch Hazel

our Winter favorites
Heather
Winter and Spring flowering plants
20% off

February 15 - 29

Roses

our biggest Rose Sale of the year! including
antique, English, climbing and drought-
tolerant rugosa roses
20% off

February 27 - 28

Hellebores

hundreds of our favorite Winter-flowering
perennial
20% off (2 days only)

March 1 - 17

Bare Root

the best selection of the year
fruit, flowering and shade trees, berries,
lilacs and hydrangeas
20% off already low bare-root prices

March 18 - 31

Camellias

Winter- and Spring-flowering beauties –
many in bloom!
20% off

Weekly Radio Broadcast The Garden Show

Sunday Mornings with John & Mike
AM 660 KAPS • 10:30 a.m.

Stay in Touch

Website: www.christiansonsnursery.com

Garden Notes: Our monthly emailed newsletter
<http://www.christiansonsnursery.com/whats-happening/newsletters/>

Facebook: Like us on our website

Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/christiansonspr/>

Mark Your Calendars!



NORTHWEST
FLOWER & GARDEN
SHOW

February 17 - 21, 2016

Tickets will be available for purchase
at our Garden Store (\$17 for early
bird tickets and \$22 during the show).
Call today to reserve your spot on our
'Flower Buses', heading to the show on
February 17, 18 and 19 (\$52 pp).

CLASSES & EVENTS

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Moss In Japanese-Inspired Gardens 1:00 p.m.

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What Is All The Buzz About! 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

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Basic Rose Pruning 11:00 a.m.
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Wednesday – Sunday, February 17 - 21

Northwest Flower & Garden Show

February 27-28

Winter Festival: A Fascination for Hellebores

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Hellebores: A Primer for Gardeners & Floral Designers 11:00 a.m.

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Hugelkultur Demonstration 1:00 p.m.

**Winter Hours: Open Daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(Daily till 6:00 p.m. starting March 1)**

From Bellingham: Take Exit 230. Go 5 miles west on Hwy 20 to Best Road. Turn south, go 2 miles on Best Road.
From Everett: Take Exit 221. Go 8.5 miles west on Fir Island Road to Best Road. Continue north on Best Road. Nursery is 1 mile north of the intersection with Chilberg/Calhoun Road.



360-466-3821 • 1-800-585-8200

CHRISTIANSON'S
Nursery & Greenhouse

15806 Best Road • Mount Vernon, WA 98273
www.christiansonsnursery.com