



December 2018

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*The Mission of the Bowen Island Garden Club is to promote the love of gardening, encourage sound horticultural practices through education, & enhance civic beautification.*

**Upcoming Schedule:**



*The Garden Club's Christmas Lunch*  
*Tunstall Bay Clubhouse*

*December 10th, Noon-3:00*

*Please bring a sweet or savoury dish to share  
avoiding heated fish dishes because of allergies.  
Beverages will be supplied.*

## **President's Message**

Fellow Gardeners

Once again we have had some beautiful, albeit crisp, days. Last minute garden clean up is still an option! Choose to be out in the sunny part of the day and dress warmly!

We are looking forward to our Christmas Party which is from noon to 3pm on December 10<sup>th</sup> at Tunstall Bay Clubhouse. Please bring a savory or sweet for the occasion.

This year we would like everyone to resist tasting **BEFORE** the ringing of the luncheon bell which will be rung in a timely manner. This will allow us to display all the goodies in a beautiful array. We can socialize before lunch and then encourage our special guests to lead the way to the feast.



**AS ONE OF OUR MEMBERS HAS A LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY TO FUMES FROM ANY KIND OF SEAFOOD. PLEASE REFRAIN FROM BRINGING WARM SEAFOOD DISHES. IN ADDITION, WE ASK THAT YOU LABEL YOUR COLD SEAFOOD. AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, LABEL ITEMS THAT CONTAIN NUTS. AND ANYTHING THAT IS GLUTEN FREE. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS CONSIDERATION.**

We continue to look for enthusiasts for our executive posts and if you can put your name forward, please do. We are looking for a Vice President and a Social Convener for our two major parties, the Christmas Party and the Summer Garden Party.

*Lynn McArthur  
President*

**Annual General Meeting on Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup> 1 pm at the Legion** – Please mark your calendars. Details to follow in January edition of Cuttings

## **Call for Board Members 2019**

All board positions are up for election at our AGM in January. As Lynn mentioned, we are particularly in need of volunteers interested in the Vice President and Social Coordinator positions. Anyone interested in getting involved in whatever capacity is

encouraged to get in contact our nominating committee for more information:

[bowenislandgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:bowenislandgardenclub@gmail.com)

### ***Cuttings From a Winter Palette***

As a garden designer, a request I am often asked for is a cutting garden. The romantic idyll of tripping out to the garden, trug and secateurs in hand and being able to snip and pick bountiful bouquets without affecting the overall look of the garden, is one many aspire to. Huge stalks of delphiniums, armloads of peonies and roses by the bucketload. Oh, how it makes the heart pound. But wait!

It's now minus 2 outside, snow is forecast, and all those rows of perky perennials are tucked in and snoozing for the winter. Is there anything to cut? Maybe it's time to consider planting your own Wreath Border?

The term 'Wreath Border' perhaps doesn't cover all the amazing opportunities this type of garden can offer during the 'low' season, but calling it, 'the part of the garden where I can pick stuff that isn't dead looking', doesn't really do it justice either. Suffice to say, I'd like to encourage you to include plants that are fabulous for using in winter arrangements, floral displays and that are wonderful to use in your Christmas or winter wreaths. They might be part of your overall garden scheme or, if you have space, be the highlight of a winter

garden. (Please refer to November Cuttings for other suggestions not noted here.)

Many of these plants are slow growing but once established will offer up barrow loads of decorating fodder for sharing, as well as using indoors and out.

Coniferous evergreens such as pines offer extraordinary texture and are good as background or for filler. They take very well to pruning and shaping too. Our native Shore Pine – *Pinus contorta* var. *contorta* is extremely easy to grow.

Other beautiful conifer, *Abies grandis* – Grand Fir which has the added attraction of smelling of citrus once cut. *Abies procera* – Noble fir is a majestic tree and is strongly aromatic too.

For intense cedar aroma, always good in a front door wreath, try the Incense Cedar – *Calocedrus decurrens*. This has a very textural appearance which is superb combined with shiny leaved holly, or skimmia.



The much-maligned boxwood is something a lot of us grow, it's deer proof, droughtproof and evergreen. It really has only one huge drawback and that is that many are succumbing to Boxwood blight. To this end, many nurseries and growers now have an alternative available – *Ilex crenata 'Conversa'*, Japanese Holly. Very similar in growing habits as boxwood, sadly, it's not deer resistant. If that's not an issue, watch out this spring, as there will be many other varieties of *Ilex* available. Great for winter structure and superb for cutting.

Try *Eleagnus ebbingei* 'Gilt Edge' for something a little different. Deep green leaves with gold margins and heavily fragrant flowers in the fall, this is a must for a mixed border, cuts beautifully and looks great all year. This is particularly striking when combined with the reddish foliage of Heavenly Bamboo

Another very useful broad leaved evergreen is the very fast growing *Prunus laurocerasus*, Portuguese Laurel. The shiny leaves of this are very similar to the edible *Prunus nobilis* or Bay Laurel - both are a perfect accent foil to feathery coniferous plants.

A lovely, bright highlight to use is wreaths and arrangements is *Lonicera nitida* 'Lemon Queen', Boxleaf Honeysuckle – this also looks nice with cut roses in the summer.

If you have had success with Hebes, then I would recommend *H. 'Hinerua'*. This has handsome bright olive green foliage that offers lots of texture.



There are so many plants that cut well for winter decoration. Some, like cedar, spruce and cypress make a great base layer for something more exotic, such a seeded eucalyptus, which can be picked up from most florists at this time of year.

Don't forget dried seedheads of poppies, clematis, teasels and globe thistles can also be used with ingredients from the garden.

Once the holidays are over, remove ribbons and shiny baubles and your winter wreath should look handsome well into January and beyond,

In the same essence of producing home-made food for family and friends, it's always wonderful to say 'I made it myself' but even more so if you can add, 'and I grew it too'.

Merry Christmas everyone.

*Su Rickett  
Contributing Writer and Garden Designer*

### ***Wreath Workshop***

On November 29, 2018 nine garden club members got together for a wreath making workshop led by Laura Rahn. Each wreath created was unique and a lovely piece showcasing mother nature's bounty. Thank you Laura and Lyn for leading the workshop. And thanks to Sheila for supplying us with an exquisite selection of ribbons and ornaments. And lastly, thank you to Dale for making us coffee and joining in the conversation. I think a good time was had by all.

*Linda Barratt  
Speaker Coordinator*



### ***Membership***



A reminder that the regular 2019 yearly fee for two family members residing in the same household is \$20. However, as in previous years, there will be an Early Bird Special of \$15 if you renew or join before the end of February.

If you are not going to be on Bowen in January or February, you can renew by mail, please make your cheque payable to the Bowen Island Garden Club and enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. The mailing address is P.O. Box 271, Bowen Island, V0N 1G0. Please let me know if there are any changes in your e-mail address, home address, or phone number.

*Holly Cleator,  
Membership Coordinator*

### **Gardening Tip of the Month**

*Tips to make your Christmas tree last:*

- ✓ Start by checking the freshness of the tree when you buy it. Check its needles. On a moist tree, the needles will bend in your fingers; on a dry tree, the needles will snap. Dried out trees lose their needles easily. If you gently grasp a branch and pull on a dry tree, you'll end up with a handful of needles.
- ✓ Cut 1-2 inches off the trunk base when you get the tree home. Store it outside in water until you're ready to decorate. Check the tree stand twice daily to ensure water levels remain constant.
- ✓ The warmer the room is where your tree is stored, the faster it will dry out. Try to keep your tree away from fireplaces, heating vents, and other sources of warm air.
- ✓ After the holidays, clip branches from the tree and lay them over planting beds for winter mulch. The boughs provide ideal protection for garden plantings.

Source: Better Homes and Gardens  
Website

