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Bareroot Update

By Melanie Potter



Bareroot roses and fruit trees are anticipated any day now. You can see a list of fruit trees on our website at www.walterandersen.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FruitTreeList2022.pdf.

When the roses arrive, it takes us a few days to unbox them, trim their roots and pot them into rich soil. All the roses we sell will be potted up for you. There will be some new varieties, old favorites and some that we haven't had for a while. See the list at www.walterandersen.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2022RoseListWAN.pdf. •

Choosing A Holiday Tree To Last A Season

By David Ross



About the same time that your Thanksgiving week was underway, our Christmas trees arrived. How do you know what type of tree is right for you? There are four primary types of trees available each year. They are:

Noble Fir

These are our most popular selling tree, with evenly spaced, nicely layered branches that allow ornaments to hang freely. Because they have relatively fewer, heavier needles, these stay the freshest.

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A Creepy Christmas

By Melanie Potter

It seems it was a Christmas miracle that a corpse flower bloomed locally on Halloween and something to be thankful for around Thanksgiving time as a second flower was anticipated to bloom. The rare, huge and incredibly stinky plant, *Amorphophallus titanum* makes the news anytime it flowers. It is not only a rare plant, but a rare occurrence when it blooms. Having it bloom at the San Diego Botanic Garden was sheer luck and many can mark it off their bucket list as something to experience, it is that special.

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This wasn't George Allmon's first rodeo. This was the second time he'd seen a corpse flower in bloom. Was George impressed? Yes, he was. There were many photos taken and several radio shows where the corpse flower was discussed as well as interviews with John Clements.

Boozing With Botanicals

by Ken Andersen



Bartender Taylor at Vidrio

Did you hear the story about a couple who walked into a bar and walked out with a lesson in plants? Well, that happened to me and my wife when we went to Vidrio in Raleigh, North Carolina for a nightcap.

We had the pleasure of meeting Taylor Martinez who was tending the well-stocked bar. One bottle that caught our eye was **Cynar**, an aperitif that was an infusion of 13 herbs and botanicals including artichoke. It's a liqueur that doesn't really taste like artichoke and is surprisingly good, sort of a sweet vermouth flavor.

Another spirit, an aperitif, she offered was **Amaro Montenegro**. Created by Stanisalo Cobianchi, a curious and rebellious character who abandoned his family's wish for him to pursue a religious career and instead embarked on an adventure traveling the world. This collection of 40 botanicals, includes spices, dried fruits, roots, seeds, bark, citrus peels, flowers and

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Choosing A Holiday Tree continued from p1

Fraser Fir

This tree is short needled, and is sometimes called a "silverback" because of the silver color of the underside of its needles. It is compact and upright, and stays fresh a long time as well, though generally not as long as the Noble.

Grand Fir

This tree has a pungent, distinct aroma, and looks like a Douglas Fir on steroids. The needles are a little larger and of more substance, but this tree usually does not stay as fresh as long as the two previously mentioned trees.

Douglas Fir

A very full, dense, fine needled tree. Because of this, they dry out the quickest.

When selecting a tree, look for trees that are dark green and appear fresh. Ones with firm needles that snap when folded should only drop old, dead, needles from the center when stood and shaken. Not only is freshness paramount, but size matters also. Know the height of

the ceiling in the room you'll display your tree and buy at least one foot shorter so you have plenty of room for the crowning ornament. Bear in mind the area the tree will take up and the foot traffic around it to help you decide your tree's fullness. If you are tight on room, the Fraser may make a good selection as they tend to be the 'thinner' of holiday trees.

To care for your tree, always use a stand that holds ample water. A fresh cut tree drinks a lot of water initially. Once a suitable tree has been selected, put a fresh 2" (approx) cut on the bottom to allow water to flow up into the tree. I also put a few vertical slices into the base of the trunk to allow additional water flow up the trunk. When the tree stops drinking, carefully re-slice up the sides of the trunk to allow water to flow again, taking care not to puncture the basin.

Add a commercial tree preservative, get the tree into water immediately, and keep your water bowl filled with a water/preservative at all times. •

Growing A Healthy Tree

By Kate Sessions Commitment

Like children, young trees need care. All urban trees need water, protection, and extra attention to keep them healthy and long-living.

The first three years of life are the most critical for your young tree. Here is a look at what trees need.

Watering

Watering regularly is crucial to help your tree survive its first 3 - 5 years in its new home. Deep water your trees twice a week with 5 gallons of water. In the second year, water once a week with 10 to 15 gallons of water, and in the second year, water every two weeks. Then water deeply once

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Botanicals

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Photo: Drumshanbo Gunpowder Gin

species of wood sourced from around the world. Of these 40 botanicals, only 13 are revealed and are categorized into three different aroma profiles: citrus, spice, and herbal.

Vidrio is the only bar I have found, so far, that stocks **Gunpowder Gin** and Taylor uses it to make one of the cleanest tasting martinis you will find. Gin seems to be a spirit that is experiencing a revival with many new varieties on the market. Some have the traditional juniper flavor of gin and others are much more complex and somewhat subdued. Gunpowder Gin is made with Gunpowder tea, a type of tea made in China where the tea leaves are rolled into small pellets. We also tasted **Bar Hill Gin**, a more traditional gin, and **Bar Hill Tom Cat Gin** which uses juniper as its only botanical, sweetened with raw honey and aged in American oak barrels giving it a light golden color and mellow finish. We sampled **Death's Door**, a traditional gin made with Juniper berries, coriander and fennel.

Should you happen to find yourself in Raleigh, North Carolina, do yourself a favor and take a plant class at Vidrio! •

A Creepy Christmas continued from p1

Here are some facts about this unusual plant:

- It is listed as Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with an estimation of fewer than 1,000 individuals remaining in the wild.
- The plants frequently grow up to 8 feet tall in cultivation.
- Referred to as the corpse flower or stinky plant, its putrid smell is most potent during peak bloom at night into the early morning. The odor is often compared to the stench of rotting flesh. John Clements, Horticulture Manager at San Diego Botanic Garden reported that the smell ranged from cooked onions, to smelly socks and feet, to something dead. At times, the smell is unnoticeable but Clements said during the evening when viewing the flower, his eyes watered.
- The inflorescence (a collection of flowers acting as one) also generates heat, which allows the stench to travel further. This combination of heat and smell efficiently lures

corpse-attracted pollinators, such as carrion beetles and flies, from long distances. Clements shared that in a short amount of time, the spadex temperature ranged from 64 degrees to 97degrees.

- The corpse flower does not have an annual blooming cycle. The bloom emerges from, and energy is stored in, a huge underground stem called a "corm." The plant blooms only when sufficient energy is accumulated, making time between flowering unpredictable, spanning from a few years to more than a decade.
- The flower blooms for 48 hours. The corpse flower at the San Diego Botanic Garden was hand pollinated during that time.
- Both stores have a corpse flower. Unfortunately, we don't anticipate either to bloom any time soon. •



Growing A Healthy Tree continued from p2

a month as the tree grows, during summer and any months that there is no significant precipitation.

Mulching

Mulching helps save water and promotes healthy root growth. Placing mulch, like wood chips, around the base of your tree has many benefits, from reducing temperature, to keeping out weeds, to protecting from moisture extremes. It's best to place mulch 2 - 4 inches deep and cover as much of the tree's root system as possible. Keep mulch 4 - 6 inches away from your tree's trunk.

Pruning

During the first two years, leave lower branches on your young trees to encourage growth. After two years, you can begin shaping your tree for healthy structure. Do not remove more than 25% of the tree's live branches in one year, and make sure there is always one central leader to encourage good structural growth. For more detailed information on tree pruning, check out the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree Pruning Guide, www.arborday.org/trees/tips. Remember, never "top" your tree! •

To Do List: December



Plant broccoli, beets, garlic & more



Look for pomegranates

Plant

- > Bulbs: Force Paperwhites now for Christmas blooms. Last chance for fall bulbs.
- > Color: Don't miss Pansies, Violas, Stocks, and Calendulas.
- > Vegetables: plant onions, garlic, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, beets, carrots, and more.
- > Plant conifers, junipers, evergreens, California natives and drought-tolerant plants.
- > Roses, roses, and roses are due the third week of the month.

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Poinsettias Share Holiday Spotlight

By Home & Garden Showplace / Walter Andersen Nursery Staff



Cyclamen

The **Holiday Cacti** and **Cyclamen** are great alternatives to the traditional poinsettia. These plants offer colorful holiday blooms, plus you can enjoy them all year 'round.

Holiday Cacti

The Holiday Cactus, also known as the Thanksgiving Cactus or the Christmas Cactus, can be bought during the holiday season in bloom. It should be placed in indirect sunlight, in regular indoor temperatures. Keep the soil moist and fertilize weekly.

To get last year's cactus to bloom, leave it at night at temperatures around 55 degrees while the plant is beginning to flower. If you can't store them at that temperature, don't worry. They will flower with 12 to 13 hours of darkness each night. One trick is to lay black plastic over the plant when the lights are on.

Cyclamen

Cyclamen, available in white, red, and deep pink, generally are dormant during summer months and bloom indoors during winter. Be sure to smell the blooms as some have a light, sweet scent. It's possible to have Cyclamen



Christmas Cactus

bloom from late fall to early spring by following these tips:

- > When you first purchase the plant, use a houseplant fertilizer once a week; taper off to once a month after a few weeks.
- > Cyclamen prefer cool temperatures, and night time temperatures in the 40s and 50s. If that isn't possible inside, put them outside overnight.
- > Provide indirect bright light and be sure to keep the plants away from heat ducts and vents.
- > When mature blooms begin to fade, try pulling off the flowers rather than cutting.

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To Do List

continued from p2



Look for living Christmas trees



Holly

> Potted pomegranates, figs, grapes, and cane berries are expected soon! Selection varies by store. Call for details or [check the website for the list](#).

> Look for Camellias, Azaleas, Pyracantha, Holly, Living Christmas Trees, Poinsettias, Christmas Cactus, Cyclamen, and Photinia.

Pest Control

> Dormant spray for diseases and over wintering pests. Use Liqui-Cop for disease control and Horticultural Oil Spray. •

Poinsettias

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A selection of Poinsettias available at our stores.

Editor's Note: Here are some WAN picks for the holidays.

Rosemary

Not just for the holiday season, plant this in the yard and have year-round access to a fresh herb. Make this a gift that keeps on giving.

Mini Christmas Trees

These are fun, easy to care for, and can be planted in the yard for year-round enjoyment. They are usually decorated and wrapped in decorative foil. Remove the foil to water and make sure the plant drains thoroughly before returning it to its decorative sleeve.

Orchids

Ken Andersen recommends Phalaenopsis because they are so easy to grow. Also called Moth Orchids, they tolerate low light and usually need weekly watering.

Bulbs

Don't forget Paperwhites and Amaryllis. If you are getting a late start with these, you can find them already potted up!

Poinsettias

The selection is huge and no longer limited to the traditional finds. Look for really white varieties (not yellow being sold as white), hot pink, lime green, striped, spotted, and gold. Some may even have glitter but that is just sprinkled magic and not nature. •



Rosemary

Old Ben: 10 Myths About Wild Birds

By Old Ben



1) There is NO need to feed wild birds in Summer.

Answer: Though there are abundant sources of natural food in summer, many times birds are providing food for fledglings and this helps them find food easily and without much competition. No matter which season, leave food outside for our feathered friends. This will keep many species returning to your backyard year after year.

2) If you feed birds, they will become dependent on your handouts, and will forget to search for food on their own.

Answer: This is simply NOT true. Birds get only 25% of their food from bird feeders. The remaining 75% comes from natural sources like insects, sap, spiders, pine nuts, grasses and so on. If feeders are not present, birds will not starve. They will resort to natural resources to gain food. However, during drought and harsh winters, it is very difficult for them to find food. It is always better to provide supplementary food through bird feeders. Rest assured that birds will not become dependent on it.

3) It is okay to feed bread to ducks.

Answer: This is a false notion. Giving bread to ducks is as good as feeding them junk food. White bread offers NO nutritional value, and can be a source of excessive fats for the ducks. It may even pollute waterways and lead to diseases. Animals and pests like rats, mice, insects, and predators will also be attracted to the bread. Feeding them cracked corn, vegetable trimmings, fresh pears or grape halves is recommended.

4) Bird feeders do NOT require cleaning.

Answer: This is a misconception. Fact, bird feeders should be cleaned from time to time. Without cleaning there is a good chance you will end up making birds sick. Due to exposure, bird feeders can become breeding grounds for bacteria and diseases. It is recommended to scrape off the old bird seed and clean the feeder with soapy water and a 10% solution of bleach. Rinse thoroughly and dry the feeder before putting it back. Clean your feeders a minimum of four times a year.

5) Birdseed NEVER goes bad.

Answer: Like any type of food, birdseed can spoil over time, especially if it is stored improperly. Seed can attract pests and rodents or become mildewed, and old seed dries out and is less likely to be eaten. If you store birdseed properly, it can last for weeks or months and still be suitable for your feeders. Choose a cool, dry area to store seed. Use airtight containers that will deter rodents and insects. Many seeds may be stored in your freezer for use later. All seed has insect eggs in it. Warm or hot conditions will allow the eggs to hatch. Freezing kills the insect eggs.

6) Uncooked rice will make birds' stomachs swell and explode.

Answer: ABSOLUTELY NOT!! Most birds eat all kinds of grains, including rice, with no ill effects at all. It's part of their natural diet.

7) Don't feed peanut butter to birds, they will choke on it.

Answer: NOT TRUE! I have been using peanut butter for many years, I have observed that my birds take tiny amounts, fly to the nearest tree or shrub, place it under a leaf or piece of bark and eat it as though it were a bug they just found. If you are uncomfortable giving high energy peanut butter to your birds, just mix

**Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year To You All!**

it with some black oil sunflower seeds.

8) Hummingbirds hitch rides on the back of geese.

Answer: No such thing has ever been documented!

9) This feeder is squirrel-proof!

Answer: While it is true that some bird feeder designs are more squirrel resistant than others, no feeder is 100% squirrel-proof. Squirrels are cunning and resourceful, and if the feeder has seed or food they like, they will spend hours discovering a way to get it, causing significant damage.

10) Don't bother to clean the bird bath, birds use mud puddles, don't they?

Answer: Unclean bird baths are perfect breeding grounds for algae, mosquito larvae and mold. Keep those bird baths clean and filled with clean water on a regular basis. •

Now is the BEST time to put out nesting boxes for the 2022 nesting season.

Old Ben's Workshop has a large selection and you can find them at both Walter Andersen locations. We have nesting options for most wild birds. From Barn Owls to the small wren, we have you covered. All our nesting boxes are American made in Old Ben's Workshop. We also have specialty bird feeders made by Old Ben's Workshop. They make great gifts and the birds love them. **Look for this sticker for the original Old Ben's Workshop products.** •



Holiday Reminders



Fri Dec 24

Christmas Eve

Poway store closes at 2pm

Sat Dec 25

Christmas

Both stores closed



Fri Dec 31

New Year's Eve

Poway store closes at 2pm

Sat Jan 1

New Year's Day

Both stores closed

**Garden
Talk
RADIO**

Listen to the WAN Experts
Saturdays 6am-7am
KCBQ AM-FM & KPRZ AM-FM

Garden Classes: December

Saturday classes are **FREE** and last about an hour. Complimentary coffee is served. During inclement weather, classes are held indoors in San Diego and on the covered, heated patio in Poway. Topics are subject to change. See the full schedule at <https://www.walterandersen.com/classes-events/>.

SAN DIEGO | 9:00AM **POWAY | 9:30AM**

**Our Garden Classes are on holiday
for the month of December.**
We will be back in January, 2022!



**Walter Andersen
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GardenTalk

Visit Our 2 Locations

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3642 Enterprise Street
San Diego, California 92110

619-224-8271

Open 8am-5pm | 7 Days-A-Week

POWAY

12755 Danielson Court
Poway, California 92064

858-513-4900

Open 9am-5pm | 7 Days-A-Week

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