

Nursery News

- **Bulbs are in now.** Lots of new varieties and some interesting pre-packaged combinations this year. Plant now for explosive displays of spring colour.
- **If you are thinking about planting a tree this fall** now is the time to select one. We have our very best selection of the year right now.
- **Our fall hours:** open daily from 9-5 except holidays. We'll be open until Christmas and Wreaths. Please note we will be closed for Thanksgiving Day on Monday, Oct. 8th and Remembrance Day, Sunday, November 11th.



- This will be the **last issue of "Gardening News" for the year**, but we'll send out an email bulletin in November with maintenance tips and the schedule for the **Wreath Making Classes**. If we don't have your current email address, please let us know how to contact you by sending a quick note to russellnursery@telus.net
- **Questions, comments, suggestions, feedback?** We love to hear from you. Our

address is: Russell Nursery, 1370 Wain Rd. North Saanich, B.C. V8L 5V1 Our phone number is 656-0384 or email us at russellnursery@telus.net

Concert Notes. The **Sidney Classical Orchestra** has its next concert on Friday, November 2nd. Entitled Classical Symmetry, it will feature **Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante** and **Haydn's Symphony #59**. The concert is at 7:30 p.m. at St. Elizabeth's Church, Third Street, Sidney. **Tickets will be available at the nursery.** For more info see their website at www.sidneyclassicalorchestra.ca

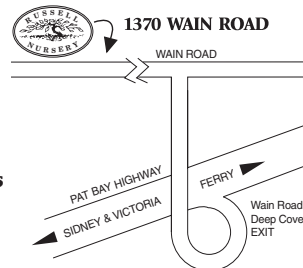
Russell Nursery in North Saanich

- Trees • Shrubs • Perennials • Pottery
- Seasonal Annuals and Herbs

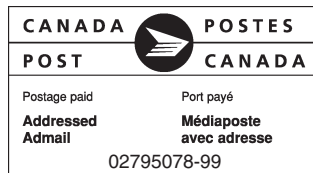
Unusual and hard-to-find plants along with all the old favourites for your garden. Specializing in trees, shrubs and perennials. Wide Selection of Japanese Maples.

1370 Wain Road, North Saanich – Phone 656-0384

Regular hours open daily 9-5:00 except some holidays



Russell Nursery
1370 Wain Road
North Saanich, BC V8L 5V1



Fall 2007 GARDENING NEWS

Gardening Class Schedule

Russell Nursery is pleased to offer another round of gardening seminars in October and November. The classes are free except for the fall pruning workshops. The classes last about an hour. Class size is limited: **please call to reserve a space at 656-0384**. The nursery is located at **1370 Wain Rd. in North Saanich**. Limit of two classes per person.

- **Designing a Courtyard Garden** - with Sandra Cranz. Saturday, 6th October at 10:00 a.m.
- **The Right Tree for the Right Spot** - with Chris Hyde-Lay. Saturday, 13th October at 10:00 a.m.
- **Gardening Successfully with Deer** - with Alison Sproule. Saturday, October 20th at 10:00 a.m.
- **Putting your Garden to Bed for Winter** - with Stephan Cranz. Saturday, 27th October at 10:00 a.m.
- **Pruning Japanese Maples** - with Brian Russell. Sunday 18th and 25th November at 10:00 a.m.
- **Dormant Season Pruning of Trees and Shrubs** - The fall pruning workshops are taught in small groups by professional arborists. There will be a \$10.00 fee per person to help defray costs. Enrolment is limited. The same class is given on three different Saturdays: November 3rd, 17th and 24th at 10:00 a.m. or at 12:00 noon.

Staff Plant Favourites:



Craig's Pick: Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy' (Redbud) The sight of one of these in full flower in early spring is guaranteed to chase away the winter blues! The leafless branches look like they

have been painted rosy pink and are a startling contrast to the surrounding dull greys and browns. This show is followed by wine-red heart-shaped leaves that hold their colour well into the summer. Hints of yellow and orange appear in the fall. At 20-30 feet with a rounded habit this is a nice tree for a small garden. **'Forest Pansy'** needs well drained soil and grows well in full sun or part shade.

Katja's Pick: Aronia melanocarpa 'Autumn Magic' (aka Chokeberry).

The name says it all! Glossy green leaves turn red and purple in fall. Fragrant white flowers in spring are followed by handsome purplish-black berries that show well against the colourful foliage. Adaptable to either dry or wet soils, in sun or partial shade. Deciduous, but never "bare" or uninteresting as fruits persist into the winter, making them an excellent source of food for the birds in the early spring. Grows 3 to 6 ft. high. Use in borders, or large groupings. Very ornamental - has "specimen" possibilities as the centre of attention.

Laurie's Pick: Skimmia japonica subsp. reevesiana 'Rubella'.

In a never-ending attempt to simplify my life/garden there are a few easy care plants that I

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Russell Nursery in North Saanich

1370 Wain Road, N. Saanich 656-0384
Regular hours – open daily, 9-5

have truly come to appreciate. The quiet beauty, four season interest and low maintenance charm of *Skimmia reevesiana* 'Rubella' put a smile on my face every time I walk by them skirting the base of my *Garrya elliptica* 'James Roof'. Pleading in foliage, flower and form and well suited to our northwest climate, they offer dark rose flower buds in fall, opening to white fragrant flowers in late winter with glossy leathery leaves in a neat, compact (2' x 3'), mounding form. Skimmias perform well with few requirements - well drained, somewhat moist, acidic soil in full to part shade (avoid afternoon sun). Except for some light trimming for holiday decorations, they seldom need pruning. In the nursery trade dwarf skimmias are considered a "bread and butter" shrub, but as common as they are, rarely does a plant perform so well with such little effort from the gardener.

Kim's Pick: *Euonymus alatus* 'Fireball' (aka Burning Bush) is a very elegant shrub. Spring's bright green leaves darken in the summer before turning traffic stopping red in the fall. Its naturally compact habit (4-6' h x 4-6' w) allows it to be grown as a stand-alone specimen or tucked into a border. It will tolerate heavy pruning and can be used as a hedge. The interesting fruit, a hanging red capsule that parts to expose an orange-red seed, attracts birds and may hang on into late fall. 'Fireball' will grow in sun to partial shade (though too much shade will lessen the fall colour). It will handle a wide range of conditions, except for wet soil. It is easy to transplant and grow, drought and sea-

side tolerant and relatively disease and pest resistant (...including deer!)

Faye's Pick: When I saw **Mahonia 'Charity'** looking happy even in a torrential downpour, I stopped for a second look. The book says it is



"good looking all year". Yes, it can be a bit prickly, and sometimes it's best to keep your distance, but generally it is undemanding and easy to get along with. Happy in any garden, it loves the company of ferns and rhodos, and is generally disease resistant and long lived. When the winter sunshine alights upon its face, it brings warmth and pleasure to its visitors. All this perfectly describes my favourite uncle, and that's why I bought this very special plant for his 70th birthday! Uncle John was thrilled with this excellent winter-flowering shrub, which will even grow well on a north wall, a site often difficult to deal with. He also loves its showy, fragrant yellow flowers. It prefers acid soil, but tolerates alkaline conditions. It doesn't like hot and dry areas or desiccating winds - a moist woodland is its ideal residence. This is a good sized, architecturally interesting plant, definitely a shrub with attitude!

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Winter Gardening in Containers - by Faye Ford

Even though the autumn sun still warms our gardens, it's a good time to start thinking about brightening the short, dark days of winter. Many parts of our landscape will be dormant, but with creative use of containers and the rich array of plants with winter interest, we can enjoy colour and a fresh look right through until spring.

The Path to Success:

- Plant early to allow roots to establish while the soil is still warm. Containers exaggerate weather conditions, so choose plants well within our planting zone, some recommend going two zones colder.
- Larger pots, minimum 14" diameter, give the best display. Be sure they are frost resistant. Good drainage is very important during winter when too much wet and cold causes root rot. Be sure the drainage holes will not become plugged; stones or shards of pottery over the holes are essential. Resting the pot on "feet" helps with drainage and allows air to circulate.
- Use a good quality, rich, well draining soil; we have a recipe in the shop for long-term container plantings.
- Water only when the soil is dry, and never during freezing weather. During heavy rainfall it's easy to forget those pots right by the door under the eaves. They will need weekly checking.
- Major fertilizing isn't required in winter, since there will be little or no new growth. Feed in the spring with a balanced slow release fertilizer, such as Acer 20-10-10.
- Size doesn't really matter. You may well choose plants that will eventually grow into garden-sized specimens, but enjoy them as potted beauties in the short term.
- Since growth will be minimal, plant winter pots more densely than you would summer containers.
- Have fun. It's not the whole yard! A container planting provides the opportunity to be daring, adventurous, or even whimsical.

Now for the fun part - choosing the plants.

I like to choose a colour theme first, based on the foliage. Do I want a cool, frosty look? Or shall I drift into the warmer, golden tones? Should I command attention with brilliant chartreuse? Within the confines of a container,

texture becomes important. Try contrasting conifers with broadleaf evergreens, adding a grass or trailing ivy for variety. Picture the gentle fronds of a fern with something mossy and moist like selaginella beneath its arching stems. Deciduous shrubs with bright berries can be underplanted with bulbs for a spring-time surprise. Tuck in some pansies for colour all winter.



Let us inspire you! We love doing containers - they're fun, especially in the winter when a lot of the normal rules don't apply. Have fun choosing your own unique combination of plants. Here's a partial list of possibilities to get started with:

EVERGREEN GRASSES: *Carex* (often in shades of bronze), Blue Fescue, Black Mondo Grass, *Liriope spicata* (grass-like evergreen perennial), New Zealand Flax (not a true grass).

EDGE PLANTS: *Ajuga reptans*, Kinnickinnick, Bearberry cotoneaster, *Gaultheria procumbens* (Wintergreen), Salal, Ivies, *Lithodora* 'Grace Ward', Creeping Jenny, *Muehlenbeckia* (Wire vine), *Pachysandra* (Japanese Spurge), *Sedums* and *Sempervivums*, *Selaginella*, Dwarf periwinkle.

CONIFERS: There are many, many small conifers suitable for potting, best to wander through that section and see what calls to you.

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS: *Berberis*, *Callicarpa*, Red osier dogwood, *Euonymus alatus* 'Compacta' (Burning Bush).

EVERGREEN SHRUBS: *Arbutus unedo* 'Compacta' (Strawberry tree), Boxwood, *Cotoneaster* varieties, Golden Eleagnus, *Euonymus* cultivars, Holly, *Leucothoe* 'Rainbow' and 'Scarletta', Curly leaf Privet, *Lonicera nitida* 'Baggeson's Gold' and 'Lemon Beauty', Myrtle, Dwarf Heavenly Bamboo (*Nandina*) *Osmanthus* varieties, *Pieris*, Rosemary, *Sarcococca* (Sweet Box), *Skimmia*, Evergreen Huckleberry.

FERNS: Hart's Tongue Fern, Deer Fern, Autumn Fern, Sword Fern.

BULBS: For container planting the dwarf varieties hold up best and are less likely to flop. Dying leaves can be hidden under evergreen foliage.

EVERGREEN PERENNIALS: *Asarum* (Wild ginger), *Bergenia*, *Euphorbia* varieties, Dusty Miller, Hellebores, *Heuchera* (Coral Bells), *Tiarella* (Foam Flower).

Gardening Book Reviews - by Susan Tice



Books about plants can be even more seductive than the plants themselves and just as hard to resist! No need to resist these two highly practical books as you'll find yourself going back to them again and again

The American Horticultural Society Pruning and Training by Christopher Brickell

Formerly known as the Cavendish Book of Pruning & Training, this is a comprehensive and practical guide to the pruning and training of more than 800 ornamental plants. The instructions and detailed 'before and after' illustrations are easy to follow and contain all the information needed to maintain attractive, well-pruned trees, shrubs, vines, roses and fruits.

Natural Insect, Weed and Disease Control

by Linda Gilkerson, Ph.D.

This new book is specifically for West Coast gardeners and is an indispensable tool for dealing with all the common pests found in coastal gardens. The excellent photos, drawings and descriptions make it easy to accurately identify pest problems and what to do about them. The emphasis of the book is on prevention through good growing practices and pesticide free solutions to problems that do occur.