

THE

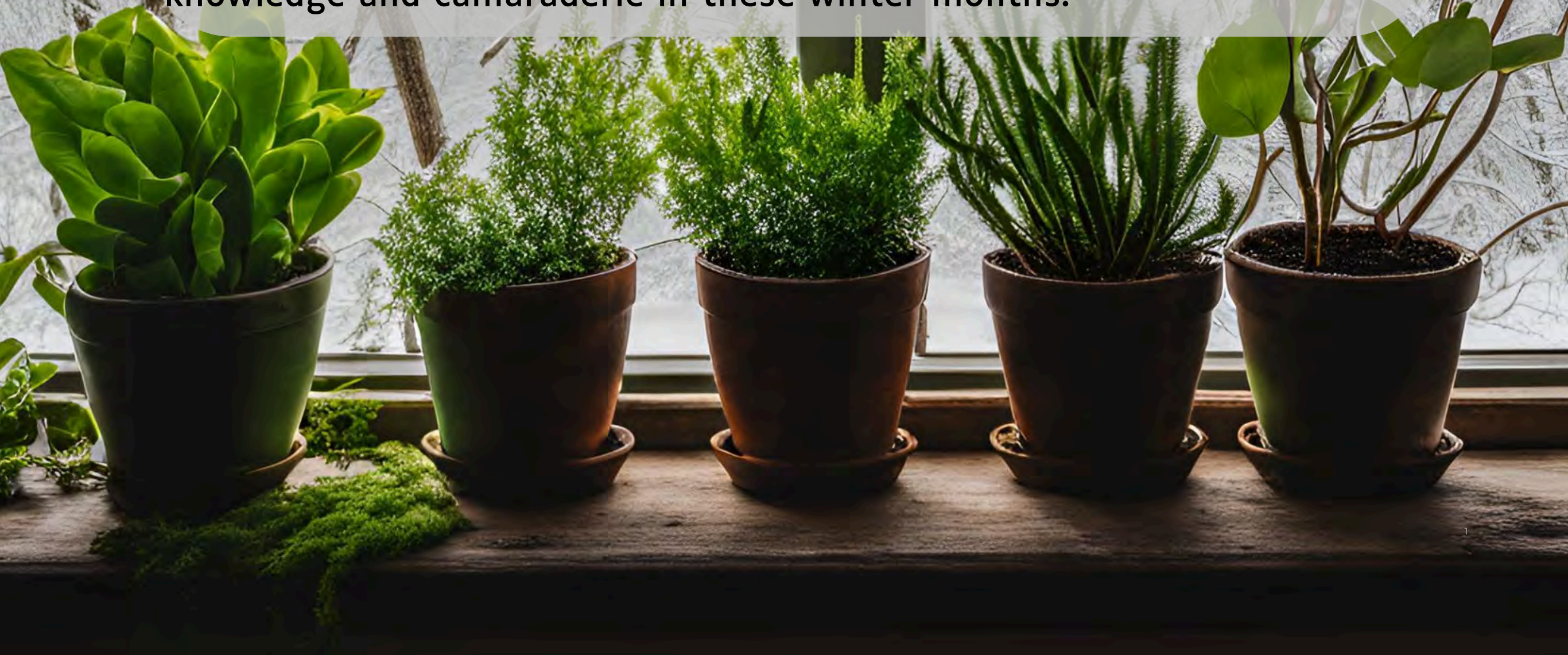
GREENHOUSE

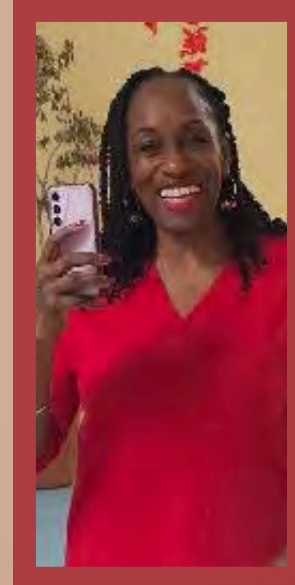
BEET

GARDEN CLUB OF TEANECK NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2025

Welcome to the January edition of our Garden Club Newsletter!

While snow might blanket our landscapes, it certainly doesn't blanket our enthusiasm for gardening and sharing gardening knowledge with one another. This month, we're diving into topics that keep our green thumbs active even during the frostiest of days. Discover how to tackle greenhouse pests that can sneak in despite the cold, explore the art of winter-sowing seeds to get a head start on the growing season, and delve into strategic garden planning to ensure a bountiful harvest come spring. So grab a hot cup of tea, cozy up, and let's cultivate knowledge and camaraderie in these winter months.





2024 Holiday Party!

Article by Sara Berndt

The Garden Club of Teaneck's annual Holiday Celebration Potluck Party, held on December 18th was a delightful celebration of the season, bringing together members and their families for an evening of festive cheer. The venue was beautifully decorated by Altagracia Tolentino and team, with fresh poinsettias, twinkling lights, and homemade centerpieces adorning the tables. A large Christmas tree stood to the side, along with a tower of gifts and tables with ornaments created by members earlier in the season.

The event featured a potluck-style dinner where everyone contributed delicious homemade dishes, reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the club. Dishes included vegan, vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods from seasonal favorites to festive desserts, creating a perfect blend of food and fellowship. Everything was well organized and clearly labeled providing for a culinary experience. Who knew the club has such talented chefs! The party included surprise entertainment from the Teaneck Men's Choir who serenaded the group with several Holiday tunes. In addition, we were treated to Maya singing cheerful holiday tunes. The party committee planned activities that reflected the club's love for gardening and community. One highlight was the popular gift exchange, where members swapped small presents. Guests enjoyed various games including Flower Bingo, a game testing their knowledge of flower identification.

As the night drew to a close, members left with full hearts and a renewed sense of community spirit, looking forward to another year of gardening adventures and shared moments. The Garden Club of Teaneck's Christmas Party once again proved to be a wonderful blend of tradition, camaraderie, and the joy of the season.



WINTER SOWING

based on the information session by Myriam Fieulleateau and Aviva Appleman

Winter sowing is a gardening technique developed by Trudi Davidoff over 20 years ago in Long Island, New York. She discovered that using containers as mini-greenhouses filled with potting soil could mimic the natural winter conditions many seeds need. This method allows seeds to chill outdoors during winter, enabling them to sprout optimally when temperatures rise.

Winter sowing is a low-maintenance way to start garden plants and offers several benefits for gardeners. It's space-efficient, allowing plants to thrive outdoors without taking up indoor space, which is especially helpful for those with limited room. Additionally, it's budget-friendly and requires minimal equipment—no grow lights or greenhouses are necessary.

Winter sowing reduces pest issues like fungus gnats and aphids, allowing plants to thrive with less weed competition and eliminating the risk of damping off. Seedlings acclimate better to outdoor conditions, germinating at optimal times according to seasonal changes. Hard-coated seeds need no pre-treatment, simplifying the process. The recommended start for winter sowing is December 21, waiting for consistent outdoor temperatures below 45°F for ideal germination conditions. Overall, this method leads to robust seedlings for a thriving garden.

Supplies Needed:

- Clean and empty milk jugs or soda bottles
- Potting soil or seed-starting mix
- Seeds suitable for winter sowing
- Duct tape
- Scissors or a utility knife
- China or Grease Marker (not Sharpie, it fades in the sun)
- Watering can or spray bottle
- Labels (use plastic labels because wood can rot)

Winter Sowing Calendar:

Dec-Jan-Feb:

Native plants: Columbine, Coneflower, Hollyhocks, Milkweeds, Grasses
Perennials: Carnation, Chamomile, Calendula

Hardy annuals: Bachelor Buttons, Lupine, Lettuce, Spinach, Brassicas, Leeks, Onions, Celery, Lavender, Mint, Rudbeckia, Snapdragons, Peas, Thyme, Oregano, Cilantro

March to April:

Impatiens, Mexican Sunflowers, Carrots, Lettuce, Snowpeas, Celosia, Marigold, Cosmos, Zinnia, Coleus, Basil, Bok Choy

Mid-April:

Okra, Tomatoes, Eggplants, Squash, Pumpkin

How to Guide:

Prepare the Containers: Begin by thoroughly cleaning your milk jugs or soda bottles. Use scissors or a utility knife to cut them in half, leaving a hinge, so the top acts as a lid. Poke several drainage holes in the bottom to allow excess water to escape.

Fill with Soil: Add a few inches of potting soil or seed-starting mix to the bottom half. Ensure the soil is moist but not waterlogged.

Plant the Seeds: Sow your chosen seeds on the soil surface, following the recommended depth and spacing guidelines on the seed packet.

Secure the Containers: Close the top of the jug or bottle and secure it with duct tape, leaving the cap off to allow for air circulation.

Label and Place: Use a permanent marker to label each container with the seed type and date. Place the containers outside in a sunny but sheltered location where they will receive natural precipitation.

Monitor and Water: Keep an eye on your containers, and water them if the soil appears dry. As temperatures rise, seedlings will emerge. Gradually open the tops to acclimate them to outdoor conditions before transplanting.

Transplant with seedlings are: 2-4" tall, have at least 2-3 sets of true leaves, when they are crowding each other in the containers, and when outdoor temp is ideal for type of seedling.



Sources for More Reading:

[Winter-Sowing: an easy, low cost technique for starting seeds](#)

[Winter Sowing Seeds](#)

[Guide to Winter-Sowing](#)



Flower of the Month, January: Carnation

This beloved flower is renowned for its frilled petals and delightful aroma. Carnations are available in a variety of colors, including white, pink, red, purple, and green. Frequently included in bouquets and arrangements for weddings, formal events, and various celebrations, they symbolize love, devotion, and loyalty. Their versatility goes beyond visual appeal, as they are also utilized in perfumes and essential oils for their unique fragrance. For gardeners, cultivating carnations can be a fulfilling experience, as these resilient flowers can thrive in different climates with proper care.

To ensure robust growth of your carnations, select a sunny location with well-draining soil. Consistent watering and fertilizing will promote healthy plants, while deadheading wilting blooms encourages ongoing flowering. Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just starting out, the satisfaction of witnessing these vibrant blossoms in your garden makes the effort worthwhile.

[How to take Carnation Cuttings](#)

[The Ultimate Guide for Growing Carnations](#)

Have a freezer full of frozen garden veggies?

Try making a hearty vegetable soup!

Start by heating a tablespoon of olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add a chopped onion, a couple of minced garlic cloves, and sauté until the onion is translucent. Toss in diced carrots, celery, and potatoes, letting them cook for about 5 minutes. Pour in 4 cups of vegetable broth and bring it to a boil. Add a can of diced tomatoes and a cup of your favorite frozen vegetables, like peas or corn. Season with salt, pepper, and a teaspoon of dried thyme or oregano. Let it simmer for 15-20 minutes until the vegetables are tender.

Serve hot with crusty bread for a warming and satisfying meal.

GARDEN EATING

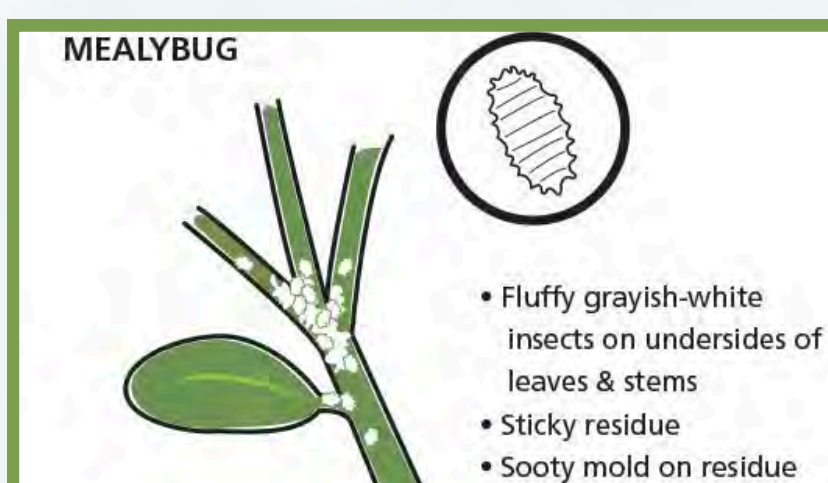
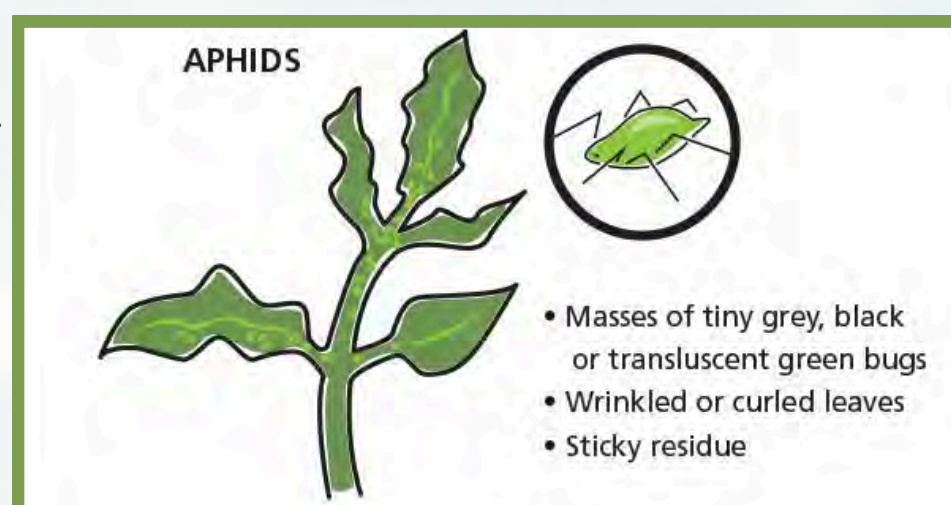


Uninvited Guests: Tackling Greenhouse Pests

Greenhouses in New Jersey create a perfect environment for year-round plant cultivation but can also attract pests like aphids, whiteflies, spider mites, and fungus gnats. Identifying and managing these pests is essential for a healthy greenhouse ecosystem.

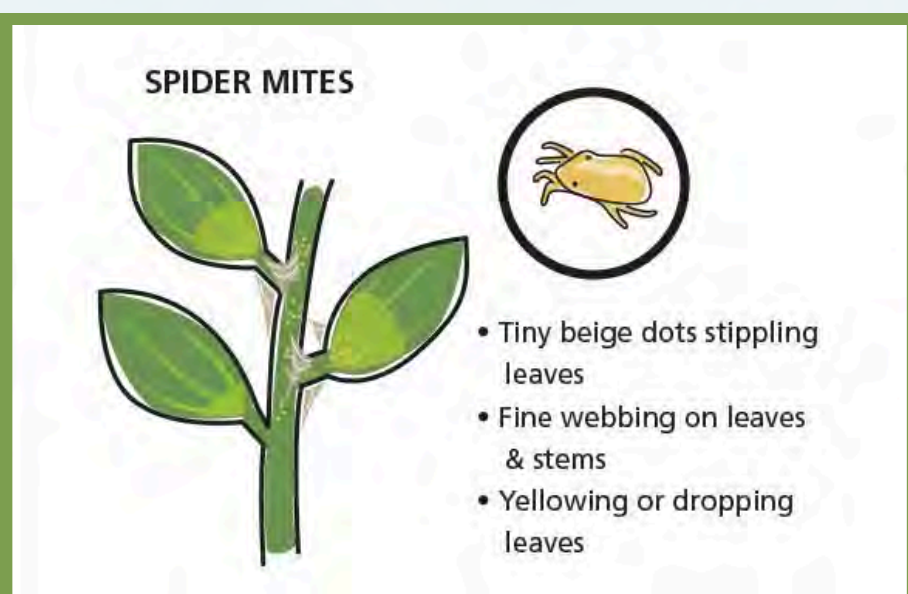
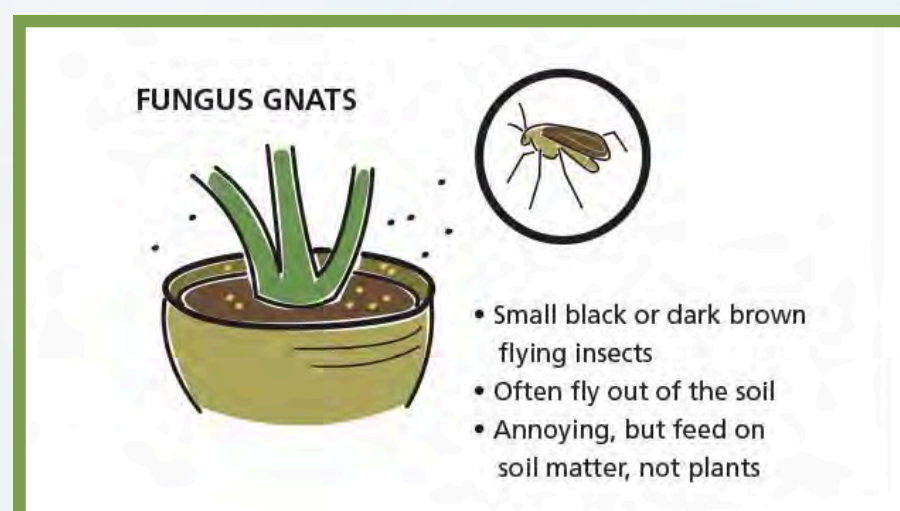
For more information and photographs, Click on the infographic.

Aphids are small, soft-bodied insects found on leaves, varying in color from green to black. They excrete sticky honeydew, which can promote sooty mold growth on plants. Effective control methods include introducing natural predators like ladybugs or using insecticidal soap as a non-toxic option.



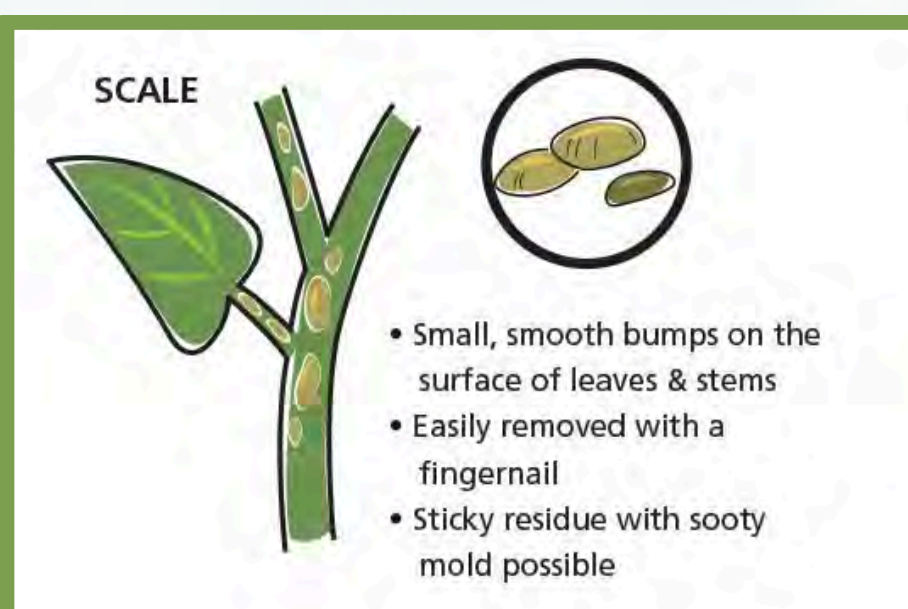
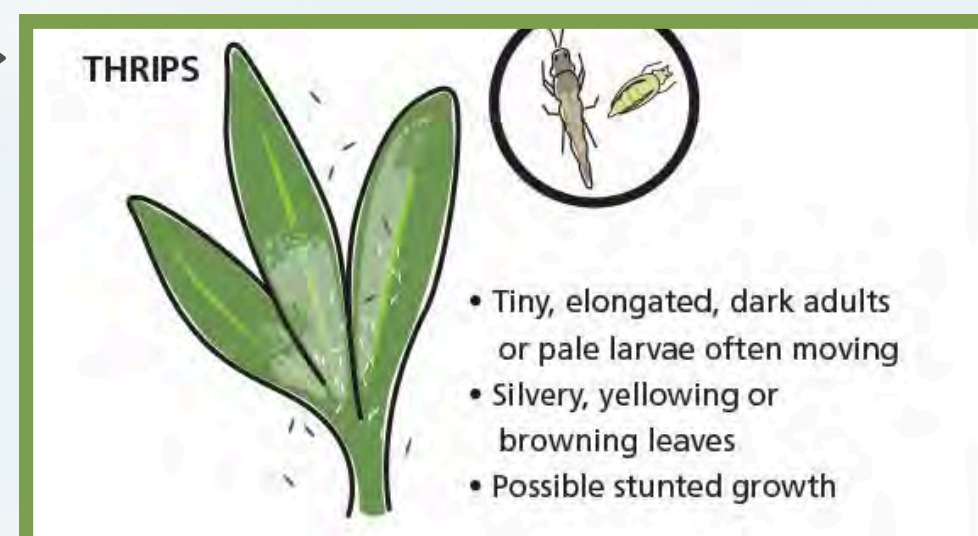
Mealybugs are small, sap-sucking insects that appear as white, cotton-like masses on plants. Early detection is crucial to prevent damage, as they thrive in warm, dry conditions, causing yellowing leaves and stunted growth. To remove them, isolate affected plants, wash with water, and apply a water and mild dish soap or neem oil solution. For severe infestations, use insecticidal soap or horticultural oils. Regular monitoring helps prevent future issues and maintains plant health.

Fungus gnats are small flies found near moist soil, with larvae that can damage plant roots, especially in seedlings. To control them, allow soil to dry between waterings and add sand or grit to deter egg-laying. Biological controls like *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) or beneficial nematodes can effectively target the larvae.



Spider mites are tiny arachnids that damage plants by sucking sap, causing a stippled or bronzed look, often accompanied by fine webbing. To manage them, increase humidity and spray plants with water to dislodge them.

Thrips are tiny insects under 1/20 inch long, with fringed wings, that feed on plant sap, leading to stippled leaves and distorted growth. They can be yellow, brown, or black and are often hard to spot. To eliminate them, introduce natural predators like ladybugs or lacewings, or use insecticidal soap or neem oil. Regular plant inspections and garden cleanliness, such as removing debris and weeds, are also important.



Plant scale is an insect pest that affects many plants, both indoors and outdoors. It appears as small, hard, or waxy spots on stems and leaves, often in brown, white, or yellow. Signs of infestation include sticky honeydew residue, yellowing leaves, and stunted growth. Regular inspection is essential for early detection and management.

You can physically remove scale insects by gently scraping them off with your fingernail or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil, gently washing the leaves

Maintaining hygiene in the greenhouse is crucial for pest management. Regular inspections, prompt removal of infested plants, and debris clearance contribute to a healthier environment. These practices help New Jersey greenhouse growers manage common pests and promote a thriving plant ecosystem.

GARDEN GIGGLES

your go-to source for gardening humor!



Why did the snowman go to the party?
Because he heard it was going to be a "chill" event!

Why did the gardener take a nap with a bag of seeds?
Because they wanted to get a "head start" on their "dream" garden!



JANUARY GARDEN PREP: WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

January may appear to be a quiet month for gardening in the Northeast, but it is actually a vital time for planning and preparation. Although the ground is likely frozen and covered in snow, gardeners can take advantage of this period to prepare for the upcoming growing season. [Start a garden journal](#) and document your previous year's successes and challenges (see side panel).

Additionally, this is an ideal moment to research and order seeds, since popular varieties tend to sell out quickly. (Look out for next month's article: [Where to Buy Your Seeds?](#))

Another essential task is to prepare your tools and equipment. Ensure that your gardening tools are sharp and clean, making them ready for spring use. Take stock of your fertilizers, soil amendments, and other gardening supplies, replenishing any that are running low.



If you're considering a garden journal, start by reflecting on last year's successes and challenges. Record which plants thrived or struggled, any pest or disease issues, and the solutions you discovered. [This journal](#) will serve as a valuable resource for the next season, helping you track progress, observe weather patterns, and inspire future gardening projects.

January is also a great time to plan your garden layout, considering crop rotation and companion planting to maximize both space and yield. Furthermore, evaluate your composting system; if possible, turn your compost pile, or start a new one if needed. By engaging in these preparatory activities, you will establish a solid foundation for a successful and productive gardening season. While planning, think about incorporating native plants into your garden. These plants are well-adapted to local conditions and can attract beneficial insects and pollinators, fostering a healthier ecosystem. January is also a good time to participate in [gardening workshops or webinars](#), which can provide fresh insights and techniques to enhance your gardening skills.

For those with indoor plants, January is a perfect opportunity to give them extra care. Check for any [signs of pests](#) or diseases, and ensure they receive adequate light and humidity, particularly considering the dry indoor air during winter months.

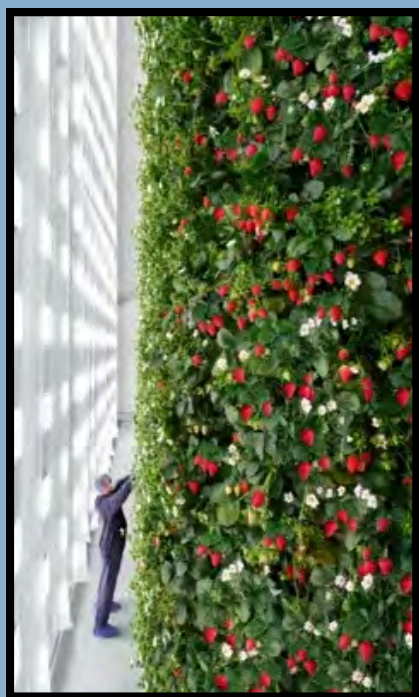
By dedicating time to [these activities](#), you will set yourself up for a rewarding gardening experience once the warmer days arrive. Happy planning, and may your garden thrive in the months ahead!

GARDEN READING

Year Round Strawberries?

Innovations in Indoor Farming

Plenty Unlimited Inc. has launched the world's first large-scale indoor farm dedicated to cultivating Driscoll's strawberries in Richmond, VA. The Plenty Richmond Farm, set to produce over 4 million pounds of strawberries annually in less than 40,000 square feet, uses vertical farming technology to ensure year-round production with peak-season flavor. Governor Glenn Youngkin emphasized the farm's significance for local agriculture and economic growth.



Plenty's innovative system has been developed over a decade to support various crops, including strawberries, with controlled conditions for optimal growth. The farm employs AI to analyze over 10 million data points daily, enhancing flavor and quality. Pollination is managed through a patented method that improves efficiency and uniformity.

The farm aims to supply fresh produce within a day's drive of over 100 million consumers, utilizing 97% less land and up to 90% less water than traditional farming. It is expected to create over 60 jobs and is part of a larger 120-acre campus projected to generate over 300 jobs and an investment of \$300 million.

The Green Wall Revolution:

How Vertical Gardens Are Cleansing Urban Air

(Source Article: By Ellie Gabelon, Innovators Magazine, 8/19/2024)

Vertical gardens are increasingly popular in urban environments, bringing vibrant greenery and improving air quality amid rising pollution. These living walls can be standalone or integrated into buildings, effectively filtering pollutants like carbon dioxide and particulate matter, thus creating healthier urban spaces. With air pollution worsened by dense populations and various emissions, innovative solutions are crucial.

Vertical gardens can be made using hydroponic or soil-based methods, allowing for aesthetic customization. They promote biodiversity and lower indoor temp, aiding energy conservation and increase comfort. Plants like spider plants and peace lilies play a key role in air purification by absorbing and neutralizing harmful substances. Recent advancements, including robotic planters and automated nutrient systems, enhance the efficiency and sustainability of vertical gardens. These innovations simplify maintenance, improve plant care, and enable real-time health monitoring.

Promoting vertical gardens can lead to cleaner air and better urban living conditions, paving the way for healthier, more sustainable cities for future generations.



Photo of Vertical Urban Garden in Madrid, Spain by Dr. Marilyn Figueroa

WANT MORE GARDENING ARTICLES?

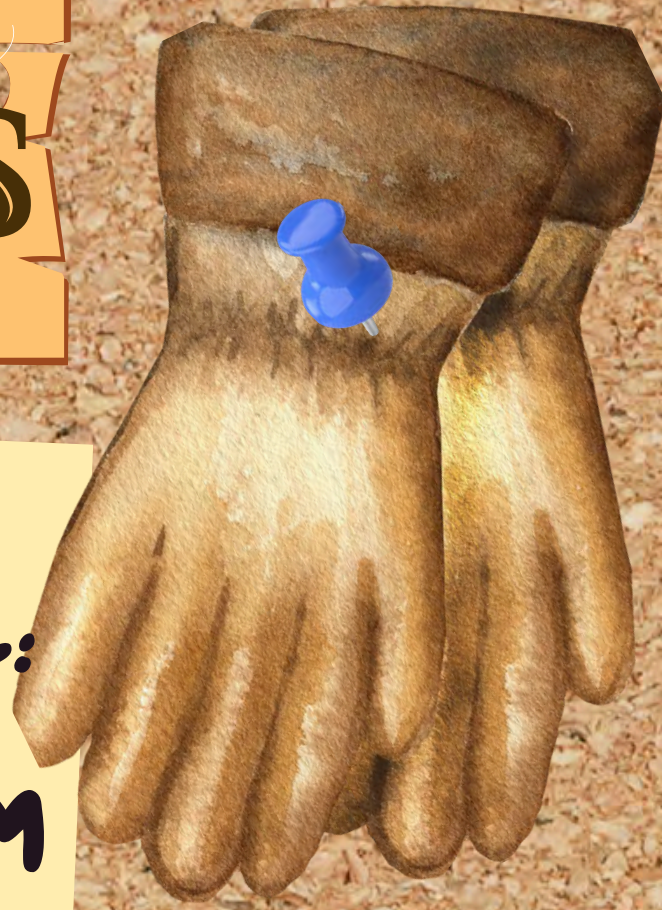
[Gardening Tools You Can Use in your Garden in the New Year](#)

[7 perennials to plant in January](#)

[Georgia Might Be Getting a New State Flower This Year](#)

[Bald Eagles and Osprey No Longer Endangered in NJ](#)

GARDEN POSTS



WORKSHOP: Jan. 26, Sunday
3-5 PM
Indoor seed-starting
From seeds to transplants
presented by Myriam Fieulleateau

Come and learn how to successfully start
and grow your own seedlings for your garden.

Space is limited
→ **RSVP: by Thursday, January 23, 2025**
<normelia10@yahoo.com>

When: **SUNDAY, January 26, 2025**
Time: 3-5 PM
Location: Garden Club of Teaneck Greenhouse
300 Linbergh Boulevard, Teaneck NJ 07666

Next Meeting:
Sat 2/1, 10AM
Rhodda Center

The Garden Club now has an
active WhatsApp group! This
private digital space is designed for
the members of the Garden Club to
connect, share insights, and
collaborate with the group.
Whether you want to share an
update, seek advice, or ask those
questions that have been bugging
you, come join the group!

Reach out to sow your
stories, feature your
favorite plant, or sprinkle
some wisdom and insight
to all members!
Let's grow together!

Garden Club
Contact Information

Remember to continue
bringing in cardboard
box trays to build up
our stock for the
plant sale!



Winter Sowing of Native Plant Seeds

Wed. January 22 at 7:00 PM

Ridgefield Park Civic Center, 159 Park Street

UPCOMING GCT TALKS:

ALL EVENTS ARE AT THE
RHODDA CENTER, 7PM

THURS, FEB 20 2025
VEGETABLE GARDENING

THURS MARCH 13, 2025
BOTANICAL GARDENING

THURS APRIL 10, 2025
ALL ABOUT DAHLIAS

Garden plot
contracts are on
member benches.
Sign and return
them to Annemarie,
or contact her for a
contract.

Thank you for taking the time to read
our latest issue!
Stay tuned for next month's issue where
we delve into the month of Roses, Love
and Chocolate (...gardens?!)
We will also discuss the best places to
order your seeds!



See you Next Month!

WEBSITE: THE GARDEN CLUB OF TEANECK

FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/GARDENCLUBOFTEANECK

EMAIL: GARDENCLUBOFTEANECK@GMAIL.COM

LOCATION: DIRECTIONS AND MAP