

## **November Greetings to our Gardening Friends!**

Every year when the season ends for Harlequin's Gardens, we feel a measure of sadness, knowing we won't see or talk with most of you until next spring. We take our relationships with our customers personally, and we will miss you, and your support and encouragement. It is heart-warming to us that so many of you have demonstrated such loyalty and goodwill and trust in us, and care for the Earth, and we are ever grateful. 2011 has been a very good year for Harlequin's Gardens, and you have made it possible for us to have arrived at our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Imagine that! This fall and winter we are planning a variety of ways to celebrate and share this milestone with you. We will keep you posted about special events, sales, new offerings, etc.

### **FALL CROPS**

Lately, we've been harvesting parsnips, kale, parsley, upland cress, carrots, swiss chard and celeriac (celery root) from our vegetable garden, and fresh greens and salads from our cold-frame and greenhouse. Eve will soon be placing bags of leaves over the rows of root crops to keep the soil from freezing, making it possible to harvest throughout the winter. Our kale has magnetized a large colony of aphids, so when we harvest the leaves to cook, we soak them for about a half hour in a sink-full of cold water with 2 tablespoons of salt and 2 tablespoons of vinegar. This dislodges most of the critters, and gently rubbing will take care of the rest.

A few days ago, Eve was cleaning up a large ceramic planter where she'd grown annual flowers and foliage plants. When she pulled on the dried remains of the two chartreuse-leafed 'Margarita' ornamental sweet potato plants, a big, fat tuberous root came up with each, and we remembered that it's an edible sweet potato. The tubers, sometimes called Cuban Sweet Potato, have a thin pink-red skin and pale yellow flesh. We baked them last night and found them absolutely delicious – something like a cross between a russet potato and the familiar orange-fleshed sweet potatoes – lightly sweet and aromatic, with a rich, flaky texture.

### **FALL GARDEN CHORES**

Because of the heavy snowstorms and strong wind, many trees and shrubs need **corrective pruning**. Be very watchful working under any trees if there is wind, as damaged branches can continue to fall for some time. **In April 2012, Mikl will give a class on pruning storm-damaged trees and shrubs.**

There are not too many garden chores required at this time of the year. If your **ornamental bulbs** haven't been planted yet, now is a good time to do it, while the soil is not too wet and before the ground freezes. If your bulbs came without planting instructions or you've lost track of them, a good rule of thumb for planting at the proper depth is to set the bulb at the bottom of a hole that's three times the height of the bulb. If you are planting Anemone blanda (Grecian Windflower), it's hard to tell the top from the bottom, so you can plant them sideways. Eve also soaks the hard Anemone tubers in water for a few hours or overnight to assure that they'll be moist enough to get started.

It's not too late to **fertilize and topdress** your perennial and shrub beds. You can casually sprinkle any organic, low-nitrogen fertilizer (Yum-Yum mix, etc.) and toss a light layer of compost over it, then water thoroughly.

Don't forget **winter watering**, especially for evergreens and roses, and most any plant that was planted in September or October. Evergreens continue to transpire (give off water) during the winter, because they have leaves or needles. If these plants cannot take up water, they will dehydrate and suffer, not showing injury until it's too late. And roses, with their green-skinned canes, are far more likely to perish in winter from dehydration than from cold temperatures. Water once or twice a month, in late morning or early afternoon so that the water has time to sink in before it freezes. Aside from conifers, some other evergreen plants that will benefit from some winter watering are Manzanita, Kinnickinnick, Scotch Broom, Spanish Broom, Hardy Jasmine, Oregon Grape Holly, and the evergreen Euonymus selections. Sagebrush, Curl-leaf and Littleleaf Mountain Mahogany, and Ephedra are probably fine without supplemental winter water, as long as they had adequate time to establish.

### **FALL & WINTER GARDEN CONSULTATIONS**

Mikl and Eve continue to provide **consulting services** through the winter. Most years, there are plenty of days that are warm enough and free of snow on the ground to make garden consultations and tree-health consultations practical. In return for giving us a small trickle of winter income, we offer a coupon for a 15% discount on a purchase of plants in the 2011 season. Here's a link to our Consultations page for more information:  
<http://www.harlequinsgardens.com/consultations/>.

### **\*\*\* HOLIDAY GIFTS from HARLEQUIN'S \*\*\***

For holiday gifts (or any other reason) this winter, in addition to **Harlequin's Gardens Gift Certificates** (see below), **we also have a very special, brand new book and a biodynamic planting calendar we can mail to you or the person you are gifting. Please note the prices below, and send us your check or money order (make sure it has your current address and phone number on it) and a note with the recipients' name(s) and address(es). Mail it to us at:**

**Harlequin's Gardens, 4795 N 26<sup>th</sup> St., Boulder CO 80301.**

We will also provide a **free gift-card with each order sent directly to the gift-recipient**; just be sure to let us know what you want the card to say, e.g. Happy Holidays from Mom & Dad.

### **BUTTERFLIES of the COLORADO FRONT RANGE - Hot off the press!**

The perfect gift for anyone who enjoys butterflies or appreciates the natural world. We are very happy to announce that we have on hand a big stack of **signed copies** of this wonderful new book **by Janet R. Chu and Stephen R. Jones**, two of **Boulder's most dedicated naturalists and foremost experts on our local butterflies**. This guidebook offers a page for each of the 80 species covered; each includes superb photographs taken in the field by the authors, and descriptions of the butterfly's appearance, host plants, life cycle, habitat, behavior, identification tips, and descriptions of similar species. The first section of the book concisely presents the anatomy, ecology and life-cycle of butterflies, and great advice on watching and photographing butterflies. Also included in this guide-book are a glossary of terms, an easy-to-use chart of the species, their habitats, their flight seasons, and whether they are abundant, common, uncommon or rare.

This beautiful paperback guidebook is **slim enough to slip in the back pocket of your jeans, (or a Christmas Stocking)**, and has a durable cover and binding.

**We can send the book by 1<sup>st</sup> class mail for \$17.95.** For each additional copy mailed in the same envelope, add \$14.10. Multiples will be sent by Priority Mail. These prices include sales tax, packaging and postage. We can fit up to 4 books in an envelope.

Chu and Jones say it best: “We watch butterflies because they’re exquisitely beautiful, have magical life cycles, and teach us about intricate and life-sustaining relationships among plants, insects and their host ecosystems.”

## **2012 Stella Natura PLANTING CALENDAR**

**The Stella Natura Wall Calendar** is an easy-to-use, informative and beautiful planting and gardening calendar that shows the best times to take advantage of the cosmic influences of the moon, sun and planets. This is a research-based system that is used by Biodynamic farmers and gardeners. We have been using this calendar for 20 years and believe it has helped with germination of seeds, root development of cuttings, and healthy plant development. More than just a calendar – it’s packed with valuable information and insights for successful growing, from seed to harvest. Mikl will be giving a class in Planting by the Moon in early spring.

**We can send the calendar by 1<sup>st</sup> class mail for \$20.50.** For an additional calendar mailed in the same envelope, add \$15.66. We can fit up to 2 calendars in an envelope. Price includes sales tax, packaging and postage.

## **GIFT CERTIFICATES**

Harlequin’s Gardens may be closed, but **Harlequin’s Gardens Gift Certificates** are **available year-round**, so **it’s not too late** to purchase Gift Certificates with a promise of spring for the gardeners and homeowners on your holiday list – see our Gift Certificate page at <http://www.harlequinsgardens.com/gift-certificates> for ordering instructions.

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**Wishing you all a season of peace, community and abundance,**

**Eve & Mikl Brawner and the staff at Harlequin’s Gardens**