

Gardeners keep wary watch

Unusually warm winter conditions wreak havoc

By DEAN FOSDICK
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW MARKET, Va.

Residential lawns that need mowing in Virginia well into December. Plum trees blooming in the heart of Boston around Christmas. Michigan lakes still free of ice in January. Topsoil not yet frozen in central Maine.

Our wintry world is standing on its head, weather-wise, and the lingering warmth has many gardeners concerned and confused. Should they be throwing protective covers over their blooming trees? Spreading another layer of mulch over their emerging flowers in anticipation of the blizzards yet to come? What's the typical grower to do?

"What can you do? It's out of your hands, really," said Scott Kunst, owner of Old House Gardens, an Ann Arbor, Mich., nursery specializing in heritage flower bulbs.

"We still have a lot of winter ahead. If it makes you feel any better, you can cover things with clay pots. But these bulbs have been coming up for millennia. This isn't the first spate of unusually warm weather they've seen."

Nature will sort things out and for the most part, leave blooming and fruiting plants little the worse for it, Kunst said. "The only time I've seen foliage or flowers damaged was one time in March when we got temps of about 5 degrees above for five days. They turned to mush. Even then, there was foliage under the ground that pushed its way up and the plants weren't seriously compromised."

"I've also seen flowers lying down on an early spring morning, seemingly damaged by frost, then by noon standing up, perfectly healthy. Most (bulbs) can take these things in stride."

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden in



A bee alights on a cherry tree at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens in New York. Above-average temperatures for

most of the winter have allowed flowers to emerge on this tree, which is usually bare this time of year.

New York City made headlines in early January when five of its ever-blooming cherry trees were profusely in flower. That species (*Prunus Fudan-Zakura*) is expected to begin flowering in late November, but not in such profusion. A few weeks of unusually balmy weather produced a spectacular run of thousands of blooms rather than the several hundred usually making an appearance.

"They're dramatic but sporadic," said Patrick Cullina, vice president for horticulture and facilities at the botanic garden. "They're not displaying every possible blossom, though. The bulk of our cherry collection is still asleep. The big show is still on (for spring)."

Many trees and shrubs require a dormant period in order to

bloom. A number of cherry, apricot and peach trees in the area along with forsythias, lilacs, rhododendrons and others have been tricked into thinking they already experienced a dormant period, Cullina said.

Such flowers lead usually to fruit, and while the early blooms likely won't have enough time to set fruit, that isn't such a problem with ornamentals, Cullina said. Ground that would be rock-hard this time of year in many sections of the country remains workable for cultivation. Take around Maine, for instance.

Lois Berg Stack, a University of Maine cooperative extension specialist in ornamental horticulture, went into her Orono backyard with a spade one day the first week of January, looking for the

depth of the frost line.

"I found frost only in the raised bed," she said. "There's apparently enough geothermal heat that flat ground has not yet developed a frost layer, even at an 8-inch depth. In the raised bed, where the soil is elevated and exposed to temperatures that are colder, there was a bit of frost about 1-inch deep, but I could easily dig through it."

Stack, however, isn't recommending that die-hard gardeners take their planting paraphernalia out of the potting sheds anytime soon, despite the current warm temperatures.

"There's lots of winter ahead of us," she said, "and I am hoping for many snowfalls. I have not put away my snowshoes and I expect to use them many times in the next few months. I can wait to plant peas."

ENGAGEMENTS

Leah Taylor Joe Matis

Gary and Nancy Taylor of Greenwood announce the engagement of their daughter, Leah LaVon Taylor of Greenwood, to Joe Matis of Indianapolis, son of Joe and Connie Matis of Greenwood.

Miss Taylor graduated from Greenwood Community High School in 2002 and attends Indiana University.

The future bridegroom graduated from Roncalli High School in 1999 and Hanover College. He is director of alumni and corporate relations at Roncalli High School, where he is also assistant girls varsity basketball coach.

The wedding is set for July 6 in Greenwood.



Ashley Santerre Daniel Wyss

Mitchell and Karen Santerre of Morgantown announce the engagement of their daughter, Ashley Elizabeth Santerre of Morgantown, to Daniel Thomas Wyss of Franklin, son of Thomas and Shirley Wyss of Franklin.

Miss Santerre graduated from Franklin Community High School, attended Anderson University and graduated from Ivy Tech Community College. She is employed at Franklin United Methodist Community.

The future bridegroom attended Franklin Community High School. He is employed by CTW Electrical.

The wedding is set for April 28 at Christian Chapel Church in Morgantown.



ANNIVERSARIES

Hoffman

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hoffman of Franklin celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house at Tabernacle Christian Church in Franklin.

Mr. Hoffman and his wife, the former Sue Clark, were married Jan. 9, 1957, at Edwardsport Christian Church in Edwardsport.

He is retired from Cinergy and is a substitute teacher for Franklin schools and founder of One PC Per Child.

She retired from Johnson County Health Department as the director of nursing.

They have two children, Jeff Hoffman and Maureen Hoffman-Wehmeier, both of Franklin; three grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.



Harris

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Harris of Whiteland celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with a second honeymoon to Florida.

Mr. Harris and his wife, the former Trina Densford, were married Jan. 9, 1982, in Whiteland.

He owns D.T. Services Custom Tinting.

She is a homemaker.

They have three children, Joshua Harris of Bargersville and Lee and Emily Harris of Whiteland.



Wilcoxson

Mr. and Mrs. Glen Wilcoxson of Edinburg celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with an open house at Hampton Inn in Taylorsville.

Mr. Wilcoxson and his wife, the former Dolores Byard, were married Jan. 5, 1957, at the Methodist Church in Edinburg. He retired from Cummins Inc. in Columbus.

She is a homemaker.

They have three children, Ginny Holmes of Derry, N.H., Vicki Troyer of Fort Wayne and Yancy Allen Wilcoxson of West Lafayette; and seven grandchildren.



NUPTIALS POLICY

Announcements of engagements, weddings and anniversaries of couples married at least 25 years are published on Saturday.

Announcements and photos may be submitted online at the Daily Journal Web site, www.thejournalnet.com.

Paper forms may be obtained at the Daily Journal's office at 2575 N. Morton St. in Franklin from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Photos are welcome and will be

returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Photos also can be picked up at the Daily Journal if requested.

Faux painting techniques go mainstream

By ROSEMARY SADEZ FRIEDMANN
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

Is the sponged-wall look an appealing one? Is the pickled look attractive? Is wood graining desirable? Would you like the look of a rich suede wall?

Is paying to have any of this done professionally not exactly as appealing, attractive or desirable?

Well, not to worry. There are faux finishes that are easy to apply even for the novice.

First of all, before tomatoes and raw eggs are hurled at my windows, I must say that having walls or furniture painted by a reputable and talented professional will probably result in a better finish. It will have that artistic quality that only a trained professional would be able to produce.

But if doing it yourself might be where it's at for right now, read on.

Sponge painting involves blotting paint onto a surface by means of a sponge. The surface must first have a base coat colored to complement or contrast the sponge color. Selecting complementary or contrasting colors for sponging can be the biggest



Applying a faux finish to your walls is an easy, though more time-consuming, process to do yourself instead of hiring professional painters.

problem. If the color is sort of OK but maybe too dark, water might be added or white paint might be mixed in to lighten it.

While all of that usually is done by trial and error, there are sponging kits available that come pre-matched. A light color used as the base coat will be pre-matched with a darker shade for the sponging. Then a clear coat is available

that will both glaze and add texture to the wall.

What about the ever-popular pickled look? To pickle wood, you would need to thin the paint to be used, brush it onto raw wood and then wipe it off. Thinning the paint is the most difficult part. Thinning too much results in not enough color; not thinning enough gives too intense of a color, partic-

ularly in the grooves of the grain.

Guess what? There are products out there that take all the guesswork out of pickling. These products are usually water-based, making them user-friendly.

Making a surface look like natural wood graining is the most difficult of the three faux finishes mentioned above. This one should really be done by a pro. But if you are a diehard do-it-yourselfer, there are products available that will make the completion of this job possible.

The products usually consist of a three-step process: 1) brush on the base color and let it dry; 2) brush on a graining glaze over the base color; and 3) while the graining glaze is still wet, use the graining tool (that usually comes with the kit) to make various grains on the surface, for example, mahogany, oak, cherry.

Suede walls are rich-looking and once needed the hand of a professional to look authentic. Now there are products available for the do-it-yourselfer that will help you along. The pre-mixed products impart the look and feel of authentic suede and can be used on wallboards, plaster, wood, masonry and brick.

Dynamic duos: decorating double-use rooms

By MARY CAROL GARRITY
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

Almost all of us have them: those hard-working rooms in our homes that we ask to do double duty. It may be a guestroom that also serves as a sewing room or a laundry room that has to work as an office.

In my house, my foyer doubles as a cozy sitting area and a grand hall for entertaining. This two-story entry is quite large, so rather than let this great space go to waste, I've filled one corner with comfy chairs and a table so I can lounge there while I read the mail.

I also use this expansive space for large gatherings. That's where we hosted our daughter Kelly's wedding, and many of my parties begin in the foyer, where I lay out drinks and appetizers.

Not long ago, my sister Judy and I had a blast turning her spare bedroom into a beautiful and functional office-guestroom

combination. During the work-week, Judy is a hard-driving editor for the Detroit News. But when her grandkids come to visit, she turns into cotton candy. We needed to create a space that was serious enough for work but also warm and welcoming for the wee ones.

You can drive yourself absolutely loony trying to make double-use rooms fit every need for every occasion. So save yourself the aggravation and don't even try. Instead, determine how you will use the space 90 percent of the time and let those needs steer your design decisions. Then, go back and make necessary accommodations for the room's secondary use.

Judy determined that her space would be used primarily as an office, so we started by moving her desk under the window to give her plenty of light to work by. On the other side of the room, we created a sleeping area that was cleverly disguised as a sitting room. I've had trouble finding daybeds

I love, and I'm not a fan of sofa-sleepers, so to solve this guest-bed quandary, I've come up with a creative solution. I use twin beds camouflaged as the world's cutest daybeds. To pull off this look, simply order a twin-bed frame with two headboards. The headboards act like sofa arms, cradling the plethora of pillows you need to make the bed look more like a sofa.

Judy's historic Tudor has a cozy cottage feel, so to stay in keeping with her style, we ordered cream, wrought-iron headboards. Since Judy has a weakness for pinks and greens, we made a garden of pillows out of sophisticated but sweet prints in these colors. We tucked two oversized, rolled pillows against the headboards, then rested two Euro pillows against them. We created a back for our "sofa" with a line of king-sized and Euro-sized pillows.

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