

Horticultural Points of Interest – January 2019

- **Indoor Plants**

- Flowering
 - Short Day Flowering Plants
 - Poinsettia, Christmas Cactuses, Kalanchoe, Gardenia and some Begonias
 - Generally need a Night Length of 12 to 14 Hours to set Buds
 - Room Lights at Night will interrupt this Period and prevent Bud Set
 - Particularly sensitive to red Light so Incandescent Lights are especially bad in this Regard
 - Typically requires 4 to 6 Weeks of long Nights
 - Long Day Flowering Plants
 - Most Plants fall in this Category
 - Lack of Sun in the Winter may curtail Flowering
 - Augment Daylight with Fluorescent or Similar Lighting or Grow under Lights
 - African Violets and similar plants flower prolifically with 14 to 16 hours of Light
 - Dormant Period Flowering Plants
 - True Cacti and some Succulents must undergo a Period of Dormancy in order to flower in the Spring
 - Withdraw Water slowly eventually watering only enough to prevent shriveling of Bodies or Leaves
 - Cold Period Flowering
 - Phalaenopsis Orchids do best with temperatures of 60° F or more but a period with nighttime temperatures of 50° or 55°F will help trigger flowering
- Houseplant Pests
 - Mites
 - Tiny almost microscopic spiderlike and make webs on the underside of leaves
 - Large colonies cause yellowing of leaves and leaf drop
 - For small infections wipe Leaves particularly the undersides with Paper Towel dampened with soapy Water
 - Take Plant into Shower and wash Leaves thoroughly
 - Spray with Safer Insecticidal Soap per Instructions. Very effective.
 - Mealy Bugs
 - Millimeter sized white insects typically on leaf undersides or stems
 - Dab with Rubbing Alcohol on Watercolor paintbrush
 - Spray with Following which is effective for many different insects
 - Quart of water with 1½ tsp Bonide Eight Permethrin plus ½ tsp Safer Insecticidal Soap. Mix thoroughly. Follow all Manufacturers Precautions.

- Houseplant Pests (*continued*)
 - Scale Insects
 - Insects under a tightly held outer shell typically on stems
 - Look like miniature Limpets
 - Dab with Horticultural Oil on Q-tip or Spray with Horticultural Oil
 - Note: Use summer dose when spraying and follow all Manufacture's Precautions
- **Plants by Internet or Mail**
 - Catalogs arrive now
 - Major Advantage is to obtain Plants that may be impossible to find locally
 - Plants will be much Smaller than locally grown Stock in order to keep shipping costs under control
 - Probably no Flowers the 1st year. Shrubs often several or many years from Flowering
 - Beware of Descriptions like “#1 Size” or “Field Grown”
 - Pot Size is the best Gauge of what you will Receive
 - No Pot Size, Beware!
 - Most mail order firms provide Perennials in 3 or 4” Pots
 - Very small indeed but often priced near Garden Center Prices
 - Beware of jazzy plant names such as Wonderous Blue Penstemon
 - If you want named cultivars, make sure that is what you are getting.
 - Many of the jazzy plant names are made to closely mimic named cultivars
 - Be *very* Careful of the Shipping costs, which can add significantly to Cost
 - If you have internet access, check the Supplier on the Garden Watchdog of Dave's Garden (<http://davesgarden.com/products/gwd/>)
 - Based on feedback from Gardeners like us who have purchased products from these Vendors
 - Perennials from Suppliers in the Garden Watchdog's top 30 will be high quality