

JANUARY - Jobs to do

Flower Garden:

- Cut away old **Hellebore** foliage to reveal emerging flowers – this also reduces the likelihood of fungal and bacterial diseases being harboured by the leaves;
- Order/buy summer bulbs such as **Lily, Gladioli, Dahlias** and **Begonia**;
- Pot up **Lily** bulbs in deep pots – grow them in the greenhouse and then use them to fill gaps in the border when they're ready to flower;
- Prune any late summer-flowering **Clematis**. If you wish to keep it tall, then just shorten all flowered side shoots to one leaf joint beyond the framework of the main stems. To keep your clematis small and to rejuvenate old clematis then prune hard back to about 30cm (1') off the ground;
- Use leafmould, compost or well rotted manure to **mulch** flower borders (provided the soil isn't frozen), placing a layer at least 5cm (2") thick, to put nutrients back into the soil, increase the temperature of the soil which helps protect plant roots over winter and help conserve moisture during the drier months. If you've still got leaves lying around in the garden, remember to collect them up and make leafmould (see Fact Sheet in the Members' Section of the Website);
- Think about planting the following for **colour** (flowers or berries) during the winter months in the garden: Primrose, Cyclamen, Veronica, Callicarpa (purple berries), Virburnum Bodnantense Dawn (pink perfumed flowers), Sarcococca hookeriana (winter box with a lovely perfume), Lonicera x purpusii (lemon-scented flowers), Hamamelis (witch hazel), Daphne bholua 'Jacqueline Postill', Chimonanthus praecox, Abeliophyllum distichum, Rosemary, Winter Jasmine, Holly, Vinca (periwinkle) Iris unguicularis, Berberis, Cotoneaster to name but a few.

Vegetable Garden:

- Dig over the vegetable plot, if not already done, removing all perennial weeds such as dandelion, couch grass and thistles (don't add these to the compost heap) and incorporating well-rotted manure/garden compost.

Fruit:

- Prune and thin out **Apple** and **Pear** trees whilst they are dormant. Cut back the new growth to one or two buds. Thin out branches that are twisted, growing and rubbing other branches to increase light and a good flow of air through the tree. To finish off, give the tree a **winter wash** (available from the Trading Centre), which will kill insect eggs that may be already on the tree.

Lawn:

- Improve drainage by spiking 10-15cm (4-6”) deep with a fork, or use a hollow-tine tool, then brush horticultural sand or sieved home-made compost over the surface.