

Garden News

City People's Garden Store



Catching Rain Drops

Winter/Spring
2005

Just one look at the mountains this winter reminds us that we might very well have low water conditions this summer. Little snow pack means limited spring and summer runoff. We all will have to practice our water conservation techniques. But this doesn't mean you can't garden. If you take some time this spring to prepare your soil and collect some rainwater, you will have a marvelous display of healthy plants.

Building the Soil

Plants draw their water from the soil through their root systems. Making sure your planting beds have good soil structure is the first step to reducing water needs in the garden. Tilling in organic matter into either sandy or clay soils will improve water retention and uptake. Organic matter breaks up tightly bound clay soils and adds water retention to fast draining sandy soils. Working in compost such as Gardner & Bloome Planting Compost will also feed the soil with nutrients and make it more hospitable to beneficial microorganisms that help plant roots take in moisture.

Collecting Water

Consider an old-fashioned technology: Harvesting rainwater in rain barrels. You can buy or make a rain barrel, and the water collected in spring can be used for your plants in summer. If you have

a lot of plants to care for, you can link several together to increase your storage capacity. Rainwater is more oxygenated and free of chlorine and fluoride additives, which plants neither need or want. It also lowers the pH of soil, giving plants more access to nutrients.

City People's cannot carry rain barrels due to space limitations, but see page 2 for a list of resources for buying or making your own.

Picking the Right Plants

Using drought-tolerant plants can reduce your garden's water needs. In their first year of planting, all trees, shrubs, and perennials need regular watering to get established (*consider installing a low water drip system, see page 2*), but you can reduce water use in the long run by choosing the right plants.

We will be carrying a large selection of drought tolerant plants this spring. Keep your eyes out for *Brunnera* 'Jack Frost', *Vaccinium ovatum* (Evergreen huckleberry), the potato vine *Solanum crispum*, the colorful annual *Portulaca*, *Koelreuteria paniculata* (Goldenrain tree), ground covers such as *Waldsteinia fragarioides*, *Osmunda regalis* (Royal fern), *cyclamen species* and countless others.

For a list of hundreds of plants to choose from, pick up a Great Plant Picks brochure or visit greatplantpicks.org and savingwater.org which have comprehensive lists of drought tolerant plants that do well in the Puget Sound area. ✿

City People's Garden Store

2939 E Madison

Seattle, WA 98112

Hours:

Monday-Saturday 9-6

Sunday 10-6



Inside this issue:

- Birdhouses
- Spring Workshops
- Hot Rose Colors
- Seed Line Up
- Repotting Houseplants

Watch it Grow

Madison Valley merchants are taking root

When City People's Garden Store opened 17 years ago, there were just a few scattered stores in the neighborhood. If I forgot to bring my lunch, it meant a trip in my car or a long, long walk.

Now there are numerous options for dining, takeout, and shopping just a block or two away. The area has been energized with new businesses and an active Madison Valley Merchants Association which was formed recently.

But with the area's growing vitality, we must face tighter parking conditions. New construction in the area slated for spring

might make this an especially challenging season for cars.

We at the Garden Store will be doing everything we can to make getting in and out of the store as easy as possible, and we welcome suggestions on how we can improve your shopping experience.

We hope that however crazy it may be out on Madison Street, you will always find the Garden Store to be a peaceful oasis where intriguing plants call your name.

And while you're in the area, take a look at the array of stores up and down the street. No need to bring a lunch!

Steve Magley, Owner



City People's Gardens Design & Landscape

Let our full-service landscape company help you obtain the garden you've always wanted

Design consultation,
installation, renovation,
maintenance, Irrigation

Call for appointments
324-0963

Resources for Rainbarrels and Water Conservation

Water & Land Division of King
County Dept. of Natural Resources
*Rain Barrel Information and Sources
for the Pacific Northwest*
[http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/PI/
rainbarrels.htm](http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/PI/rainbarrels.htm)

MJD Distributors, LLC 206.439.9038

Dan Borba's Rainbarrels
253.272.8173
www.naturalrainwater.com

Seattle Rain Barrels
206.940.7007
www.seattlerainbarrels.com

Hydro Tech Indoor Growing Supplies
206.547.2202

Al's Seattle Barrel 206.622.7218

NW Cooperage Co. Inc.
206.763.2345

www.realgoods.com

Drip by Drip

Save resources with a drip irrigation system

City People's Gardens Landscape & Design services can help you conserve water this year by designing and installing a drip irrigation system in your garden.

Drip systems are the most efficient method of irrigating. While sprinkler systems can be 75-85% efficient, drip systems typically are 90% or higher, which means much less water wasted.

Drip irrigation works by applying slow, steady, and precise amounts of water and nutrients directly to the soil and only where needed. Water soaks into the soil before it can evaporate or run off.

Good for the plant

Plants undergo less stress from variations in soil moisture. The water application rate can also be tailored to fit each individual plant's needs.

Good for your water bill

The low application rate and the use of automatic timers results in careful water control.

Good for your back!

Weed growth is reduced because areas between plants are not irrigated. And more plants can be watered at once, saving you the time and energy it takes to haul a hose around. ✨

For a consultation and estimate, call City People's Gardens Design & Landscape Division at (206) 324-0963.

Rose Raves

Get your color while its Hot!!



If you painted your kitchen “Persimmon,” bought Italian fabric online, and can’t wait for summer’s blaze, warm your garden now with our 2005 palette of roses in gold, apricot, and orange variations.

Crackling Fire

Diminutive in size, assertive in color, this coppery orange miniature will heat up a pot or enliven your landscape en masse.

Outrageous

Large clusters of yellow tinged orange blooms with a strong sweet citrus scent are offset against dark green foliage.

About Face

For the bold of heart, a hefty grandiflora, golden yellow with a bronze reverse. Fragrant and long lasting for bouquets.

Tuscan Sun

This award winning floribunda of 2005 is destined to be a classic. Abundant trusses of dusky apricot buds open to an intriguing coppery pink. Think Tuscan with an attitude.

For the hard-core perennial gardener, remember there is not a lot of warm and hot color available until later in the season. These rose selections are perfect additions to that sunny perennial border much earlier!

Our potted roses are expected to arrive toward the end of March. Please call ahead to confirm their availability. 524-0757



Spring Workshops

Savvy Seeding

Saturday, March 12, 11:00 am – noon

Learn to seed plants from a seed-saving enthusiast. City People’s annual buyer Jose Gonzales will show you just how easy and economical it is to start plants from seed. With the variety of seeds available to grow in our temperate climate, this will be a fun workshop. **Free.**

Northwest Rose Care

Saturday, March 26, 11:00 am – noon

Learn to select the best roses for your garden and care for them with ease. Caroline Fredette, Consulting Rosarian from the Northwest Rose Society will provide basic care and pruning knowledge as well as troubleshooting techniques. **Free.**

Creating Garden Mosaics

Saturday, April 2, 11:00 am – noon

Local mosaic artist Sara Donnelly will lead this fun and exciting hands-on class. Sara’s experience and creativity will allow you to gather the fundamentals of mosaic making as well as create some wonderful pieces for your garden.

Registration required, call Sara at (206) 634-2566

City People’s Spring Open House

Saturday April 30th, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Come celebrate gardening season with us! See the new plant arrivals and gardening gear of 2005 while enjoying coffee, juice, snacks, and in-store specials. Then stick around for our popular Spring Container workshop (*see below*).

Beautiful Spring Containers

Saturday, April 2, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Beautifully planted containers offer great accents to the home garden. Learn to create mixed container designs with flowers and foliage. Presented by Catie Corpron-Smith, City People’s Design and Landscape Manager and Container Designer. **Free.**

Indoor Gardening

Save some replanting energy for your houseplants

While your attention may be focused on the spring displays outside, your plants indoors need your attention too. They are beginning active growth just like their outdoor relatives and will thrive if given some well-deserved attention.

Repot or Not

Determining whether your plant needs a larger home is the first step. Most indoor foliage plants prefer to be a little pot bound, but they will show signs of stress when their quarters are getting too tight. If they seem to wilt a lot, if they are drying out fast, if you can't get your fingers into the soil, or if the roots are poking out of the edge, it's time.

Make sure your new pot is the right size. It should only be one size larger than the pot it is living in (move a 6" into an 8" pot, an 8" into 10" etc.). If a container is too big, the extra soil will hold more water than the plant can use, and the roots will rot before the soil dries. Over watering is the number one cause of indoor plant failure.

How To

Use a quality, fast draining potting soil like Whitney Farms Potting Soil or any of the special mixes they make for African violets, cactus, etc.. When you take your plant out of its old pot, take a look

at its root system. If its roots are wound around tightly enough to take the shape of the pot, gently loosen them so they will grow into the new soil.

Put new soil in the bottom of the pot and set the plant on top of it.

Make sure the soil surface will be an inch below the edge of the new container. Fill the soil in around the root ball only as high as the original soil level, tamping down gently. Water thoroughly to settle the soil.



A Little Extra Something

Some people like to use SuperThrive® or a similar product to ease transplant shock. Whether repotting or not, fertilizing your plants in spring will give them extra oomph. Make sure to follow label directions carefully. Too much fertilizer will build up in the soil and burn the roots. Fertilizing a very dry plant can also cause burn, so make sure to water well first. Crispy brown edges on leaves is one symptom of fertilizer burn. Your plant will appreciate regular fertilizing through fall.

Your garden may be calling, but under the din of planting, pruning, composting, and mulching, listen for the soft voice of your indoor companions. Your attention this spring will make the difference all year. 🌿

From the inside ...

Sully's GardenAlls

These fun-colored garden overalls are both lightweight and strong. Made of durable coated fabric with built-in kneepads, tool loop, pruning tool pocket, and adjustable elastic straps.

Machine washable.

S, M, L

\$80.00

Kishima Bamboo Furniture

Kishima's attractive accent pieces are constructed from 6 to 7 year-old solid bamboo. Bamboo skewers instead of nails hold the joints, which make these suitable for both indoor and outdoor use.

Director's
Chair
\$109.



Accent
Table
\$89.

Home Tweet Home

Karen Phipps is the buyer for the bird department at the Garden Store and knows first-hand the rewards of backyard birding.

March and April are busy months for birds. They are looking for the perfect location to build their nests as spring approaches. You can entice them by having a bountiful garden with lots of shrubbery for them to nest in. Robins, for instance are usually attracted to a sheltered area like in a large wisteria or in a climber against a home.

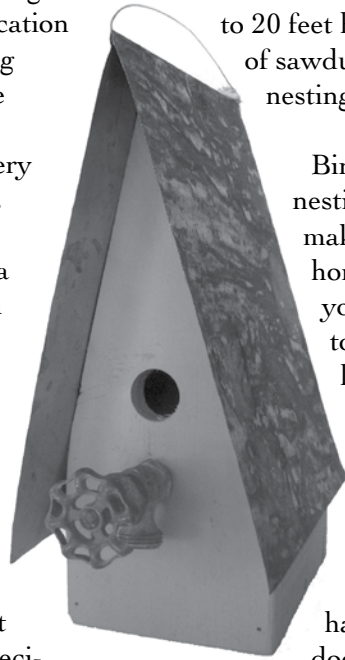
You can also hang a birdhouse nearby. By placing birdhouses around your garden, you can give the homeless a home. But birds are just as picky about choosing a place to live as we are, and different species require different specifications. There are many types of birdhouses which attract different birds depending on the size of the entrance hole and where they are situated in your yard.

Right now I have five birdhouses of all types placed throughout my tiny city garden. Here are just a few I'm trying this year:

Wren houses have a 1 inch entrance hole and should be placed between 5 to 10 feet off the ground. They also like small basket-like shelters that hang on arbors amongst vines. These little birds don't mind a swaying home, but most other species prefer a firmly anchored house.

Chickadees prefer a house with a 1 1/8 inch hole, 4 to 8 feet high. A small tree or thicket might be a good spot.

The **Northern Flicker** needs a larger entrance—2 1/2 inches in diameter. They can be placed 8 to 20 feet high. Put 4 inches of sawdust inside for nesting.



Birds will need nesting materials to make their house a home. Hopefully, you haven't been too tidy and you've left some nesting material for them to gather.

I hang yarn (leftovers from knitting projects) on a twig wreath hanging by my door. I've seen

finches come up and gather it for their nests, thanking me with a song.

You can also purchase **Best Nest Builder**. Hang this bundle of all-natural nesting material from a tree where birds can gather from it. And do remember to clean out your birdhouse in the fall.

If you are so lucky to have a couple choose your garden as home, know that you are giving back to nature in a small way. Happy birding! 🌿

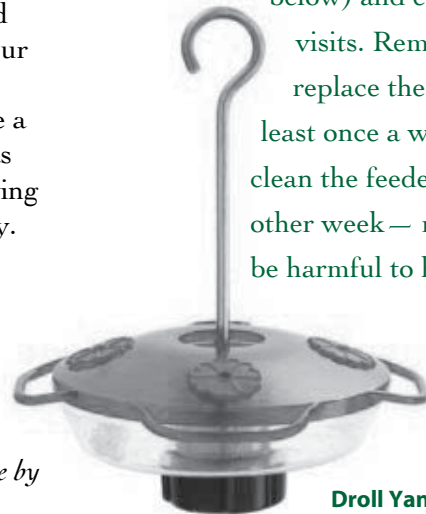
Come visit our bird section at the Garden Store. We carry an assortment of locally hand-crafted birdhouses from the simple to ornate. Above birdhouse by Bird, Bed & Breakfast.

Hummingbird sightings

You may have caught a glimpse of a hummingbird buzzing about in the middle of winter. If so, that is Anna's Hummingbird—the only hummingbird that doesn't migrate in winter, much to the delight of backyard bird-watchers. Seems there are enough winter flowering plants here to sustain these little birds year-round.

You can help them out by planting some winter bloomers such as *Mabonia x media* 'Charity' and *Lonicera fragrantissima*, or you can hang a hummingbird feeder right outside your window, like the **Droll Yankee Flyer-2** (pictured

below) and enjoy the visits. Remember to replace the nectar at least once a week, and clean the feeder every other week—molds can be harmful to hummers.



Droll Yankee Flyer-2

Sow Many Seeds for Sale!

Try your hand at sowing plants from seed.

Nothing can be more rewarding than growing a plant from scratch.

Buyer Cheryl Scullion carefully picks these seed lines for quality and value.

We also carry all the seed starting supplies that you will need for sowing indoors or out.

Territorial Seeds
The Oregon based company tests its seeds rigorously to meet high germination standards and excellent taste.



Botanical Interests
Beautiful packaging is one of the draws of these seeds—great for gift giving and receiving. Inside the lovely water-color print packages are untreated, high quality seeds.



Seeds of Change
is committed to providing high-quality certified organically grown seeds. Their mission is to help preserve biodiversity and promote sustainable organic agriculture.



Dragonstone Farm
offers sweet pea seeds also sold to growers at the Pike Place Market. Many distinct colors and combinations of colors are available.



Renee's Garden
All of the cottage varieties are represented in this diverse line of flower, vegetable, and herb seed. Collection packets like *Rainbow Garden* include mixes of seed to grow.



Ed Hume
This classic, family owned Northwest seed company offers a very wide range of seeds selected specifically for our maritime climate.



Plants of Distinction
from English Garden Emporium offers highly unusual varieties of flowers. Auricula primrose, Passiflora, and Mecopsia challenge one to try starting some of these exotic beauties from seed.



City People's Garden Store

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Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 324-0737

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or landscape orders.