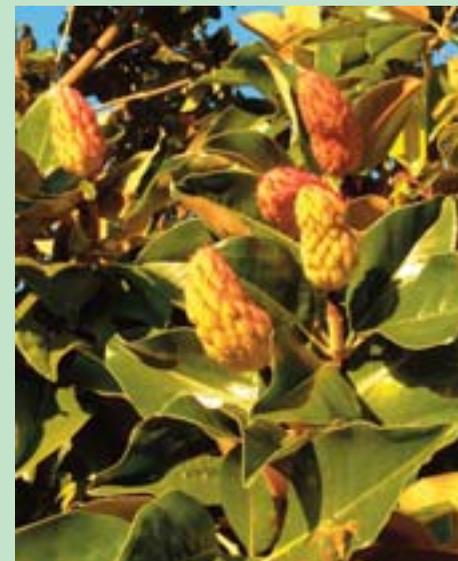


Cynthia Brian's Garden Guide for December

- **POT** an amaryllis for mid-winter blooms happening eight to 12 weeks after first watering. All you need is a small pot not much bigger than the bulb, soil and water.
- **ADD** alliums to your planting schedule for spring lollipop blooms. Voles, rabbits, deer and squirrels will not eat these onion family bulbs.
- **COVER** azaleas and tender shrubs with burlap, sheets or blankets (any fabric will do) to prevent damage from drastic drops in temperature.
- **HARVEST** prickly pear when the skins are red. Wear gloves and use tongs to peel before adding to salads.
- **CUT** branches from redwoods, cedars, pines and other evergreens to use indoors for your yuletide décor.
- **HANG** a spray of magnolia leaves tied in a colorful ribbon on your mailbox. Magnolias with the coned seedpods stimulate a festive welcome.
- **GATHER** pinecones. Sprinkle with a cinnamon oil for a lovely holiday fragrance.
- **CHANGE** out your current houseplants with colorful seasonal plants including cyclamen, paperwhites and poinsettia. Beautiful long blooming cymbidium orchids are currently available in stores. Orchids contribute an elegance and beauty to every room.
- **RAKE** the fallen leaves to add to your compost pile.
- **PRUNE** roses for the final burst of December blooms before the January pruning begins.
- **BE** eco-friendly and wrap gifts in used newspaper with twine. You'll save money while saving the earth. And while you are at it, repurpose Christmas cards into gift tags!
- **PLANT** cover crops to enrich the soil over winter. Good choices include fava beans, alfalfa, clover and mustard.
- **PURCHASE** a living tree for your Hanukkah bush or Christmas tree.
- **ALLOW** winter's coat of bright berries, rosehips, moss and boughs to be the inspiration for your decorating.



Magnolia cones turn red in December.

Photos Cynthia Brian



A combination of ferns and poinsettias brighten a porch.



Moss is pretty growing on a winter wall.



Yew berries are excellent for holiday decorating.

- **CARE** for the birds by keeping feeders clean and filled. Make sure to provide a water source and shelter.

- **HOLIDAY FAVOR:** Help local charity Be the Star You Are!® without spending a penny. If you purchased a TV or computer screen between 1999 and 2006, you are due a refund and can donate it directly to Be the Star You Are. You will receive a tax receipt once the donations have been dispersed. Please do this today. It costs you nothing. Thanks from Be the Star You Are. <http://www.donatedirect.net/be-the-star-you-are-crt/> Read more: <http://www.btsya.com/>

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TARGET ZONE

If a tree fails in a field, damages would be minor. But if it fails and strikes a person or property the consequences would be severe. The risk of an ISA certified arborist from Advance Tree Service assess and considers both the likelihood of failure and the likelihood of impacting, the identified targets. The target zone for dead trees is larger than those with live, flexible branches, because dead and brittle branches are more likely to shatter on impact spreading debris.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local ISA certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you be safe.

Advance Tree Service

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925-376-6528

advancetree@sbcglobal.net www.advancetree.com

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