

... continued from Page D14

They secrete calcium carbonate which creates an adhesive pad that allows them to attach to walls. If you wander the creeks or hillsides, beware of poison oak as it is one of the most gloriously colored vines of autumn melding crimson, sienna and scarlet. As the days grow shorter and the nights linger longer, the biochemical process paints nature's landscape with a sunset palette. Cut a few branches from your favorite specimens to create indoor autumn displays. I also dry Japanese maple and liquid amber leaves and add them to my fall potpourri mixes.

As leaves fall to the ground, rake them into your compost pile. The decomposition replenishes the nutrients in your soil. Dispose of diseased or bug-infested leaves, such as those that have peach leaf curl, rust or aphids.

As the growing season comes to an end, collect the seedpods from companion flowers to attract beneficial insects for next season's plantings including dill, caraway, anise, alyssum, marigolds, calendulas, sunflowers, zinnias, hollyhock and nasturtium. Dry them on cookie sheets or in plain brown paper bags providing plenty of air circulation. Store in paper bags, labeling with name and date. You'll be ready to plant the seeds next spring. The goal is to attract beneficial insects, bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds and keep them alive and healthy.

To crank up the curb appeal to your home, include colorful containers of mums or design an autumn arrangement of gourds and pumpkins at your front entrance. Thanksgiving is fast approaching and even if we won't be hosting our normal festivities, our neighbors will enjoy the picture-perfect personality.

Discover your nature friends and applaud them as masterpieces.



This home oozes curbside appeal with a walkway flanked by containers of yellow mums and neatly clipped shrubs.



Cynthia Brian

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com.

Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD.

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