

Timely Turf Tips

February 2013

February is a perfect time to sit down next to the fireplace with a good garden book and sharpen our gardening skills. There are so many great books written by Minnesota authors to choose from: **Trees and Shrubs of MN** by Welby R. Smith, **Beautiful no-mow yards** by Evelyln Hadden, **Best Garden Plants for MN and WI** by Don Engebretson and Don Williamson, **Butterfly Gardening** by Vera Krischik, **Guide to Minnesota Vegetable Gardening** by James A. Fizzell, **Landscaping for Wildlife and Water Quality** by Carrol L Henderson, just to name a few!

February Tips

- Why not give a blooming plant, rather than cut flowers for Valentine's Day this year? Choices can range from inexpensive African violets, chrysanthemums, or miniature roses to large azaleas and exotic orchids. Their flowers will last much longer than bouquets and many can be grown as houseplants. Wrap the plant well, then place it in a good-sized plastic bag to trap warm air before putting it in a pre-warmed car to bring to your valentine. Thoroughly water newly purchased plants to leach excess fertilizer and salt build-up from the soil mix. Greenhouses and nurseries do this on a regular basis; however, your plant may not have been drenched just before being shipped to your garden center.
- Assemble equipment you'll need to start seeds indoors: pots, trays, fluorescent lights that can be raised or lowered, a timer, and, for best results, a heating device to put under containers of germinating seeds. help avoid diseases by using fresh potting soil that drains readily, along with tools and containers that are clean or disinfected.
- Steve is getting ready to plant peppers for sale in May. Make sure he plants enough of your favorites by giving him a call. In the mean time, come in and check out our certified organic seed packets from Seeds of Change: <http://www.seedsofchange.com/> and bring in the coupon below!
- Give your garden year round interest. Spruce, pines, and fir trees are obvious choices, but consider ornamental grasses and other tall perennials that can stand up to the snow. Shrubs such as redbtwig and flowering dogwoods add color, as do many flowering crabapples that hold their fruit all winter. Visit local gardens and observe the winter habits of trees, shrubs and perennials, noting your favorites for future planting projects.



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