

# Gardening

## Fresh flowers brighten winter

By Pat Leuchtman  
leisure Columnist

One of the loveliest Christmas gifts you can give yourself, or someone you care for very much, is a pot of narcissi that will bloom in January or February. There is something very extravagant about fresh flowers in the house in the dead of winter and they are so cheering after the post holiday letdown.

Although fresh flowers make one feel extravagant, you can prepare this gift for very little money if you start now. Bulbs for forcing can be purchased through mail order garden catalogs or bought at garden centers. Some of the most usual types of narcissi used for forcing are the standard paper whites with their delicate, pale flowers and delightful fragrance, Soleil D'Or which are bright and golden, or Chinese Sacred Lily with its golden trumpet set in a creamy white perianth.

If you don't have an outdoor garden it's best to throw the bulbs out after they are done blooming. They cannot be saved and used for forcing another year.

A bulb contains a whole flower.

Garden Calendar



Once that flower blooms the bulb is spent unless it is allowed to live and gather nourishment from sun and soil to make a new bulb with a new

The following information is provided by the Franklin County Extension Service:

### Now is the time to:

- Are your trees getting old? Maybe it is time to plan a replacement.
- Store pesticides properly and respect them.
- Cut down perennial foliage and compost it.
- Take time to enjoy the beautiful fall colors.
- Store dried products such as rice and flour in tight containers to prevent infestations of pantry pests.

### Note:

- Don't get impatient and mulch too early.
- Do not store imperfect vegetables or fruit.

flower. This is why it is so important to leave the foliage on your spring bulbs after they have bloomed. Without its leaves the bulb cannot

be renewed and flower again.

If you do have a garden, snip off the spent blossom heads after the bulbs have bloomed, but leave the leaves and stems. While you may want to remove them from center stage, give them room in a sunny window and when spring arrives prepare a planting hole for them. Knock the bulbs out of the bowl or pot and without disturbing them too much, plant them. You will not get any spring bloom, but the following year they should reward your patience with another flowering.

While you are thinking of bulbs to force indoors, remember it is not too late to plant any of the spring flowering bulbs outdoors. With a little planning your earliest spring bulbs like crocus and aconite will begin to bloom just as your forced flowers are fading indoors.

## Books

### Menagerie of tales

By Ron Berthe  
Associated Press

Zoologist Desmond Morris, author of such best sellers as "The Naked Ape" and "The Human Zoo," scores again with "Animal Days," an account of his long career as curator of mammals at the London Zoo and of the many turns of events in his life that led him there.

Although Morris' devotion to his field is a serious one, he approaches his tale with such an easy style that the narrative almost never drags. This is evident from the very first page, in which he credits Napoleon and a well-aimed cannonball for making his career possible.

Morris shows how the animal world and the people in it can pro-

vide many amusing moments. His vignette on what happened to a colleague who was taking a raven for a "walk" in the woods is painfully funny, and another colleague gets laughs when he claims he was spared from having a near tragedy with a frightened zebra because he was "wearing striped pajamas at the time."

Although the many funny bits help keep the pace in high gear, there is much to learn from Morris about the incredible and sometimes inexplicable ways of animals. Outlined is an amazing study of "divorcing" finches and the astounding (and still unexplained) sense of direction exhibited by toads.

Although a trip to Russia in the name of panda-mating turned out to be a frustrating disappointment for

the author, the tale is not without intrigue (he returned from dinner to his Moscow hotel room only to discover that his electric shaver had been dismantled) and humor (he tried on women's hats in a Russian shop and settled on one that was several sizes smaller than his head).

In all, "Animal Days" is an enjoyable experience, one for which an interest in animals is not a prerequisite.

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