Shrubs for Winter Interest

Over the past several years we have worked hard to increase the beauty of our garden in the winter months. We have added many winter shrubs with attractive flowers, alluring fragrance, colorful berries or structural beauty. I asked the horticultural staff for their top three shrubs for winter interest, and here are their picks:

- Camellia sp.
- Harry Lauder’s Walking Stick
  - Corylus ‘Contorta’
- Winterberries
  - Ilex verticillata
- Ricepaper bush
  - Edgeworthia chrysantha
- Early stachyurus
  - Stachyurus praecox
- Fragrant Daphne
  - Daphne odora
- American witch hazel
  - Hamamelis virginiana
- Titi
  - Cyrilla racemiflora
- Darrow blueberry
  - Vaccinium darrowii
- Red twig dogwood
  - Cornus sericea
- Oakleaf hydrangea
  - Hydrangea quercifolia
- Rosebay rhododendron
  - Rhododendron maximum

cont’d p.4
Director’s Note

The end of a year serves as a logical time for reflection on annual accomplishments and goals for the coming year. This year has taken a much different trajectory than we could have imagined at the end of 2019, but our vision of being a space that provides a sanctuary for diversity of all life remains the same. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us to consider how to manage our goals safely, and despite our temporary closure in early spring, we have worked toward keeping this Garden as a sanctuary for all who visit.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the closing of an inspiring era at the Garden. In September our esteemed Director of the last decade, Patrick McMillan, accepted the position of director at Heronswood Garden in Kingsport, Washington. Although he is far away, his presence will always be felt within our 300 acres. Patrick has left a tangible, physical legacy with the establishment of the Natural Heritage Garden, Chihuahuan Desert Garden, the re-visioning of our Children’s Garden, and countless other improvements. His true legacy though is the inspiration and education that he provided to our staff and community. He has instilled in all of us a lifetime goal of sustaining and furthering this Garden for Life.

While we continue to react and adjust to the myriad changes caused by COVID-19, we can thank Patrick for the focus that he has given us all that helps us maneuver with clarity. The Garden will exist through these times as a place of beauty, tranquility, and fresh air that nourishes us and connects us to the natural world. We hope that you will visit frequently to relax, reflect, and recharge.

To Patrick, we would rather not say goodbye, but instead show our gratitude by moving forward with his vision of this place as a Garden for Life. And thank you, our Friends, for sharing and supporting that vision that serves us well through all times. I look forward to working with you all in the year to come.

~ Shannon Barrett, Interim Director
In a typical year, the Spring and Fall Plant sales at the South Carolina Botanical Garden (SCBG) account for over 50% of our annual revenue. Our Spring Sale is the most anticipated event that we offer to our Friends of the Garden members and the public. Just as we were finalizing preparations for the Spring Sale in March, everything ground to a disappointing halt. Although we had to give up on the Spring Sale, we didn’t give up!

Instead, we began planning a safe way to offer our wonderful plants to our Friends and the public for our Fall Sale. With the help and expertise of the CU Cash and Treasury department, we converted our sales catalog into an online store to replace in-person shopping and sales transactions. Our partners in CU Development and PSA Communications quickly helped us get the word out and added FAQ information to our website to help people understand what would be different about this sale. It was so rewarding to see the excitement of Friends and customers picking up new plants to perk up their landscapes. With the tremendous efforts of our staff and student workers, the support from our University partners, and the patience and understanding of our shoppers, we were able to generate revenues comparable to our typical Fall Sale earnings! We have already begun planning for our online 2021 Spring Sale and we hope our community will support us again for our biggest annual fundraiser.

~ Shannon Barrett, Interim Director

Tips for shopping the sale online

- Become a Friend of the Garden for early access to the sale! Visit clemson.edu/public/scbg/support/membership.html for more information about how to join, membership levels and benefits.

- If you're already a Friend, make sure your membership information is current. Communications to members are sent in emails. If you are not currently receiving the monthly newsletter email as all members should, please contact Beth Schneider, Friends Membership Coordinator, 703-869-4844 or bschne4@clemson.edu to update your information.

- Visit the Plant Sale webpage, clemson.edu/public/scbg/plant-sale. The catalog, announcements, helpful links – so much information is located in this spot!

- Read over the FAQs on the Plant Sale webpage. As the online format is new to us all, we have tried to guide you through the process with these questions so that you will know what to expect.

- Like our Facebook page! Want to know when the catalog is ready? Need a reminder of when the sale starts? It is a great way to keep up with garden events!
I would like to thank all of the Garden staff who have really stepped up in this strange time we’re living in. With minimal student help and without volunteers, the staff has really joined together to maintain the Garden and keep it presentable and thriving for our visitors. To the volunteers, I am hopeful that we will be able to invite you back soon. We miss you!

We had a very successful virtual Fall Plant Sale. There were a few bumps and bruises, but these were quickly resolved. For a first time virtual event it went very well. It was good practice for the Spring Sale, which will also be virtual. Now is a great time to stay warm inside and think about what changes or additions you’d like to make to your home landscape. Gardening is a perfect hobby in this time of social distancing.

Storms have really impacted us this year. Multiple hurricanes and strong winds took a toll on our tree population, and we lost at least 70 large trees. Needless to say we have been very busy cutting up and removing debris, reworking pathways, and replanting in areas which are suddenly full sun. We’re taking it as an opportunity to expand the collection and plant trees which we haven’t had before. Students from campus will also benefit from these additions when they study tree identification.

Our visitation has been very good throughout the crisis. We are glad to provide this outlet for families to get outside and have a safe, beautiful place to forget about worries for a while. If you haven’t been out lately, come visit. Winter bulbs are popping out, and there’s always something to see.

~ Kathy Bridges, Garden Manager

Ilex vomitoria. Clear, bright red berries.

**Shrubs for Winter Interest**

*Cont’d from p. 1*

With around 2300 named cultivars it’s possible to have camellia flowers from September through April.

The dramatic twisting branches of Corylus ‘Contorta’ make it an intriguing addition to the winter landscape.

Winterberry enlivens the garden with a vibrant display of berries in shades of yellow, orange or red.

The sweetly fragrant, delicate flowers and architectural stems of *Edgeworthia*, make this a beautiful addition to the winter plant palette.

*Stachyurus praecox* a Japanese native whose elegant chestnut-brown twigs hold delicate racemes of bell-like flowers.

*Daphne odora* has intensely fragrant blooms.

Witch hazel has unusual, delicate, fragrant yellow flowers.

*Cyrilla racemiflora* or Titi has gorgeous orange-red winter foliage.

Darrow blueberry ‘Rosa’s Blush’ exhibits attractive deep purple foliage in the winter.

*Cornus sericea* has dramatic red bark in winter. *Cornus sericea* ‘Flaviramea’ is known for its yellow stems.

The exfoliating bark of *Hydrangea quercifolia* or oakleaf hydrangea is an attractive winter feature. The persistent dried flower heads add extra interest.

*Rhododendron maximum*'s glossy evergreen leaves have an interesting winter property: they act as a thermometer, curling tight when temperatures reach 20°F.

Above, *Ilex vomitoria*. Clear, bright red berries.
BCGM REMAINS TEMPORARILY CLOSED OWING TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Although we look forward to reopening our doors and welcoming everyone back to the Geology Museum in the coming year, unfortunately the BCGM remains temporarily closed owing to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Numerous research projects involving Clemson University students and volunteers remain on hold. Plans to continue developing new exhibits focused on ‘Theropod Dinosaurs’ and ‘Turtle Evolution’ are currently delayed indefinitely. Please read more below if you would like to financially assist the Museum during these unprecedented and difficult times and please check our Facebook page for updates on when we will be reopening.

TREMENDOUS TORTOISE COMING TO THE BCGM!

Given that so many of us have had to shelter inside our homes for much of this unprecedented year, it only seems fitting that soon after the BCGM reopens, one of our newest exhibits will be the truly massive shell of an animal that essentially never leaves it home… because they carry them on their backs everywhere they go. Thanks to a generous donation by the Bení family of Florida, the BCGM will soon be able to display the super-sized shell of an adult Galápagos Tortoise! These gentle giants can weigh up to ~ 900 pounds, live more than 100 years, and grow to lengths exceeding 5 feet! As part of our planned “Turtle Evolution” exhibit, the Galápagos Tortoise will be joined by fossils of turtles from millions of years ago, as well as examples of some of the turtles and tortoises that inhabit South Carolina today. Be sure to visit the Museum when we reopen and learn the difference between a turtle, a tortoise and a terrapin.

IN REMEMBRANCE

I am sad to report that one of our small family of Museum staff and volunteers was taken from us in September. Tom Garner and his wife Penny began volunteering in the BCGM fossil preparation laboratory after moving to Clemson in 2017. Tom began his adventures in paleontology volunteering at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in 1997, where he completed certification in both field collection and laboratory preparation of fossils. He participated in fossil digs in Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Nebraska. Tom’s specialty was making thin-sections of dinosaur bones (microscope slides used to study the cellular anatomy of bones), and Tom presented his work at an international meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Tom was delighted to be able to continue his love of paleontology here in Clemson and several of the exhibits in the Benson Gallery feature fossils that Tom and Penny painstakingly removed and reassembled from the rock that encased them. Tom’s intellect, humor, and talent will be sorely missed at the BCGM and by those who had the pleasure to work with him.

~ Curator, Dr. Adam Smith

PLEASE HELP US TO MAINTAIN YOUR GEOLOGY MUSEUM

The Museum is experiencing a financial shortfall owing to our COVID-19 related closure (since March 16th) and we would be most grateful for the support of our community. If you would like to make a donation of any size or type to the BCGM to assist us with our ambitious research and educational efforts, please contact Curator Dr. Adam Smith via email at bcgm@clemson.edu. Alternatively, contribute directly by choosing “Geology Museum” from the drop-down menu at https://cualumni.clemson.edu/give/scbg or email us discuss the projects we have planned and how you can contribute. Also see our Facebook page and our website (www.clemson.edu/geomuseum) for details regarding upcoming special exhibits and events.
Education Programs

Lunch and Learn With Clemson Extension by Zoom Program link sent upon registration.
Please register the Sunday before each class.
Time: noon - 1 p.m.
Fee: $8 per session

Tuesday, January 26
A Fantastic Veggie Garden From Seed
Join Jackie Jordan to get a jump on spring by starting vegetables and herbs from seed. Learn how to interpret the seed catalog and select the best varieties for S. C. gardens. We'll cover equipment, seed starting schedules, and fertilizer. Jackie is the commercial horticulture agent for Fairfield, Kershaw, and Richland Counties.

Tuesday, February 9
Orchid Care
Join Jackie Jordan to learn how delicate orchids can brighten your ho. Your orchids will thrive if you know the basics. The class covers orchids for the home environment, their cultural requirements, and how to repot them.

Tuesday, February 23
Attract Beneficial Insects
Join Drew Jeffers to learn to attract beneficial insects to your garden. These insects control pest insects by feeding on them or laying eggs within them. Many native perennials and annuals provide excellent habitat to attract and increase the numbers of beneficial insects in your garden. Drew is the Spartanburg horticultural extension agent.

Tuesday, March 23
Warm Season Lawn Care Basics
Join agent Jackie Jordan to learn how to have the best lawn this summer.

Tuesday, April 20
Terrific tomatoes
Want to grow great tomatoes this summer? Jackie Jordan will cover growing tips to grow the best tomatoes.

Tuesday, May 4
Home Grown Bouquet
Jackie Jordan will cover the basics of keeping a cutting garden: flower selection, planting schedule and harvesting tips.

Tuesday, May 11
Beginner Birding
Do you like birds but feel unsure about how to best observe and identify them? Move from bird watcher to birder in this class with Allison Jones.

Visit Clemson’s Home and Garden Information Center for up-to-date research-based information for gardeners and more: https://hgic.clemson.edu/
Friday, February 12

Garden Creativity at Home: Paper Blooms

Late winter days have many of us longing for spring’s arrival! In this virtual class, you’ll learn how to sculpt paper into stunning flowers that can be enjoyed year-round. Participants will receive a materials kit and step-by-step instructions for creating a beautiful “camellia” swag that can be used as table, door, or wall adornment. Please register by Monday, February 1. Fee: $25

Materials Pick-up: February 12, 4-5:30 pm at the Garden
Pick-up details emailed the week of class. A pre-recorded tutorial will be emailed for viewing flexibility. Participants will need to provide a glue gun and scissors.

Friday, April 23

Garden Creativity at Home: Bird Nest Necklaces

Back by popular demand! Be inspired by nature’s avian artists in this fun class. Participants will receive a materials kit and step-by-step instructions for crafting and customizing graceful bird nest pendant necklaces. The final product or a ticket to the class makes a great gift, especially for Mother’s Day!

Please register by Thursday, April 15.
Fee: $25

Materials Pick-up: April 23, 4-5:30 pm at the Garden
Pick-up details will be emailed the week of class. A pre-recorded tutorial will be emailed for viewing flexibility. Participants will need to provide a pencil/pen and scissors

Fee: $20

Thursday, April 8

Spring Wildflower Ecology

Join educator Sue Watts on a virtual spring wildflower walk to explore the ecology of the forest floor. Meet the pollinators and other animals who rely on our spring ephemerals. Register by April 1

Time: 10 am – noon
Fee: $20

Tuesday, March 16

Planning a productive spring garden

Do you want to enjoy fresh produce from the spring well into the summer months? Do you want to have a battle plan against insects, diseases, and weeds? If you answered yes to these questions, then you should join Beaufort County Extension agent, Zack Snipes, who will give you the knowledge you need to grow a fantastic and productive garden.

Please register by Sunday, March 14
Time: 10 a.m. - noon
Fee: $20

Children’s Programs

Thursday, Feb. 4, 18, Mar. 4, 18, Apr. 1, 15, 29, May 13, 27

Junior Naturalists

This Spring, Junior Naturalists will travel through time and space to explore the natural and cultural history of our great state. Each month we’ll visit a different part of South Carolina and learn about its soils and climate, plants and animals, and the people who made that place home. We’ll learn from experts from across the state through virtual presentations and online activities. Each week we’ll share activities to get kids outside and exploring the natural world. For children 6-12 years old.

Register by January 27
Time: 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Fee: $90 for the series

Garden Adventures

Get outside and grow! In this innovative new series, join us to get your own garden growing. We’ll use veggie seeds to explore history, science, geography, cooking and more. You’ll receive a collection of activities by email, and videos to support each activity every month. Post your progress and successes to our SCBG Garden Club Facebook Page. For children 6-12 years old.

Register by February 1, seeds will be mailed.
$50 for the series.

- February, The Great Pea Race
- March, Wartime Carrot Secrets
- April, Meet the Three Sisters
- May, The Pizza Puzzle
Have you spent much time thinking about where wildlife retreats during the winter months while we humans have a tendency to huddle in our houses during the cold season? Sure, it’s easy to put up a bird feeder and call it a day, but consider all living creatures: bees, butterflies, ladybugs, birds, predatory insects, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals. What do they require for survival? Does your yard provide the necessary resources for their winter staycation? And perhaps most importantly, why do you want to keep these creatures around your yard anyway?

Although many gardeners spend countless hours attempting to keep wildlife out of their yards (think deer, rodents, spiders, and snakes just to name a few), the fact of the matter is that a diversity of creatures are necessary for a balanced ecosystem. An ecological system, or ecosystem for short, consists of many different organisms such as plants, animals, water, and soil micro-organisms that live together and rely upon one another for existence. Some people also refer to this system as the web of life. When the balance is disrupted, by elimination of insects for example, the entire ecosystem is thrown out of whack and can potentially collapse. Inevitably, this leads to a sterile garden or yard lacking the sounds and signs of life. As homeowners, we have the ability to transform our yards into balanced ecosystems by providing several components.

First and foremost, healthy soil is critical to a strong ecosystem. Micro-organisms and earthworms break down decaying matter and provide the nutrients necessary for healthy plants. Rather than burning or bagging leaves, use a mulching mower or run over them several times, then return them to garden beds where they will create a rich compost. Creating your own compost through other methods will also provide the nutrients essential to plant health.

Second, refrain from cutting down and clearing out every plant in preparation of winter. Most insects, including butterflies, rely upon places such as hollow plant stems, leaf litter, and tree bark to survive the winter months. The majority of insects are beneficial and essential to a healthy ecosystem, acting as natural pest controls. Not only are insects important in the pollination process, but they also serve as a food source for birds, amphibians, reptiles, and other creatures. Provide winter habitats by leaving areas of taller grasses and dormant plants when possible and wait until Spring’s new growth starts to appear before cutting back. Small piles of limbs in a far corner or behind a shed provide additional shelter. When possible, safely allow decaying tree trucks to remain standing. Snags, as they are commonly called, are full of life. They not only provide shelter, but are also valuable sources of food for both wood eating insects and to a wide variety of wildlife.

Next, grow native plants whenever possible. They are beneficial for a multitude of reasons: 1) Native plants are adapted to local soil and climate, requiring fewer inputs such as fertilizer and insecticides. 2) Native plants require less water than lawns and help prevent erosion. 3) Native plants help reduce air pollution by capturing (sequestering) carbon emissions. 4) Native plants promote biodiversity and provide a sense of place, preserving the natural character of the region and 5) Native plants provide food and shelter for all wildlife. Imported plants rarely provide the necessary food or proper host requirements needed by insects, birds, and other creatures. A variety of fruit and nut-bearing shrubs are equally as important as the showy perennial flowers.

Try to mimic natural landscapes by planting trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses in a layered fashion. Urban neighborhoods may not always be suitable for large trees capable of growing upwards of 100 feet. However, there are often common areas in which such large-sized trees will benefit nearby wildlife visitors of all yards.
It is also important to provide water and shelter for reptiles and amphibians. Obscure placement of small rock piles within your garden or yard provide a safe, over-wintering habitat. In addition, it provides a safe place to bask in the sun on a warm day. Reptiles and amphibians keep insect and rodent populations in check while also serving as a food source for larger mammals or birds. If yard space allows, room for a mini-wetland provides a source of water for all wildlife.

Creating a healthy ecosystem in your yard does not require hundreds of dollars nor should it elicit visions of inherent messiness. These components, however, are necessary for a balanced ecosystem. Connect more in-depth with nature, create an inviting yard for all wildlife, and experience that childlike fascination with the natural world once again.

Resources:
Native Plant List for South Carolina
https://scnps.org/education/homeowners
http://www.scwf.org/native-plant-list

Building Healthy Soils
https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/soil-building-for-watershed-health/

Creating Habitats for Reptiles and Amphibians in Your Yard
https://separc.wordpress.com/products/yard-herping-landscaped-habitats-for-reptiles-amphibians/

The Importance of Stems
A quick walk outside this morning with a macro lens shows how important it is to leave native plants standing through the winter. The insects that we invite during the warm months to our plants are currently using the dead stems of natives for overwintering as adults, larvae, or in their egg stage. The holes that they make in the stem are usually inconspicuous at around 1-3 millimeters wide. Some insect species also overwinter in leaf litter, bark, or under the ground.

Images and post courtesy of Hummingbird Hill Native Plant Nursery, Charlottesville, Va. Published with permission.
Edibles in the Landscape

Wish you had room for some vegetables, but just don’t have the space or time for a traditional vegetable garden? Here’s an option to think about: incorporate vegetables into your landscape beds. We are used to carefully segregating our vegetables and fruits from our ornamentals, but using edibles alongside ornamentals is a perfect solution for those with small spaces.

Here are some suggestions of how to use edibles in your garden:

Lettuce and parsley make a great border planting, and will also help with weed control by shading out emerging weed seedlings. Chard, broccoli and cauliflower add colorful, interesting textures to annual beds, particularly through the winter months. Kale comes in many different leaf textures and colors, and mustard is a great deer resistant addition for winter color.

Through the summer months, incorporate dwarf cherry tomatoes, squash, and peppers into the landscape to add color and structural variety to the beds.

~ Kathy Bridges

Some books of interest about edible landscaping:

Brie Arthur, The Foodscape Revolution
Lisa Bennet and Stephanie Bittner, The Beautiful, Edible Garden
Rosalind Creasy, Edible Landscaping
Six years ago I learned about a native super pollinator, non-honey-producing bee, the spring mason bee. With the declining honeybee population, this native bee may be the answer to our spring pollination needs. North America has more than 4,000 native bees. Most are solitary, meaning they don’t live in colonies with one queen and a complex social structure as the non-native honeybees do. Mason bees are easy to raise and are an affordable investment in providing bountiful spring crops, plus they are just so darn cute, gentle, and hardworking; one mason bee does the pollination work of 100 honeybees. Imagine that!

To create a friendly mason bee environment you don’t need expensive gear, equipment, and acres of blooms. All that’s required is a few spring trees in bloom, a bee house of reeds/tubes or wood trays, clayey mud and a water source. You can provide for and enjoy mason bees in an average-sized back yard. A mason bee pollination gathering range is 300 feet, about the length of a football field; so it’s best to place a bee house close to those spring blooming fruit trees, blueberry bushes, or any blooms you’d like to be prolifically pollinated. Three female mason bees will completely pollinate a peach tree.

Mason bee houses can be as simple as clean empty tin cans filled with 5/16 inch opening reeds/tubes or wood trays, clayey mud and a water source. You can provide for and enjoy mason bees in an average-sized back yard. A mason bee pollination gathering range is 300 feet, about the length of a football field; so it’s best to place a bee house close to those spring blooming fruit trees, blueberry bushes, or any blooms you’d like to be prolifically pollinated. Three female mason bees will completely pollinate a peach tree.

Mason bees will gather pollen and lay their eggs for about a month or so, then when all bee activity has stopped, it’s best if you can, to remove the mason bee house or reeds/tubes/ blocks you have provided and store it/them in an outdoor shed with air circulation in a shady spot. This will help keep predators away from the precious larvae while they continue to grow through the winter. Another option is to harvest the larvae from the reeds/tubes/blocks. This is the best option but isn’t absolutely necessary. When spring daytime temperature are in the 55 degree range, and there is enough pollen, place the overwintered tubes with fully developed mason bees within six feet of the now newly restocked clean reeds/tubes/blocks bee house.

How easy is that? I hope you’ll consider inviting and providing for prolific pollinator mason bees into your garden!

**Free Downloadable Guide to Caring for Native Bees:**


---

Victoria Mayberry

I have always loved the outdoors, and was born into a family of gardeners. In retirement I have taken my love for art and nature and turned it into the BEST hobby of raising native bees. If I can do this, anyone can, and I highly recommend it!

---

Keeping Mason Bees

Guest Author

---

This cedar house is my first style. The drilled block separates into trays for cleaning and cocoon removal. The empty space is the “attic”, where I put cocoons for springtime emergence.

A “Bee Condo” built of polywood with removable blocks, tubes, and reeds for the spring mason bees. In the summer I replace them with blocks for leafcutter, carpenter, and other summer bees. The baffles on the posts are to keep out Carolina anoles. The branch “snake” keeps the birds away.

A 6” can of green beans with mason bee cardboard tubes—efficient and affordable! The cans can be decorated too.

---

The Garden’s Gate • 11
Garden Reflections

This year many of us have been forced to slow down and look at the world differently due to current and recent events. For me, this “new normal” that we are all so tired of hearing about has helped me look at the Garden and the natural world in a new way. Since I have been spending even more time outside than usual, I have begun appreciating things that normally I would overlook as mundane or unimpressive. We “plant people” have a tendency to discount the dormant season, using it to look forward to the next growing season or reflect on the previous one, but there is still so much life and activity to enjoy during the winter if we just stop a moment and look.

This time of year you can see the bare twigs of deciduous plants, and appreciate the rich hues that the frosty weather brings out. It isn’t only Japanese maples and red or yellow twig dogwoods that put on a display. Red maple, boxelder, sourwood and Virginia sweetspire all deserve a second look as their new bark reacts to the dropping temperatures. Similarly, the mature bark of various trees in a mixed forest creates a striking contrast that is much more difficult to appreciate in the warmer parts of the year. Look for the light grey trunks of tulip poplars and American beech to juxtapose the red-brown bark of pines. Or look for the peachy-white bark of young river birch and the trunks of the American sycamore, mottled with vibrant white, grey, olive, and tan to shine in the bottomlands and pond margins in the Garden and Clemson Experimental Forest.

One of my favorite things is to watch as our spring ephemerals like trillium, trout lily and spring beauty break dormancy to grow in the apricity of a brightened, dormant forest. Equally beautiful are the dried growth of asters and goldenrod in the prairies and open fields with their silvery fruits patiently waiting for the right breeze to plant them somewhere new. As we find ourselves at the end of a difficult and uncertain year and looking into the next, let us stop and realize that there is so much life and beauty around, even in winter when it may be less apparent.

~ Trent Miller