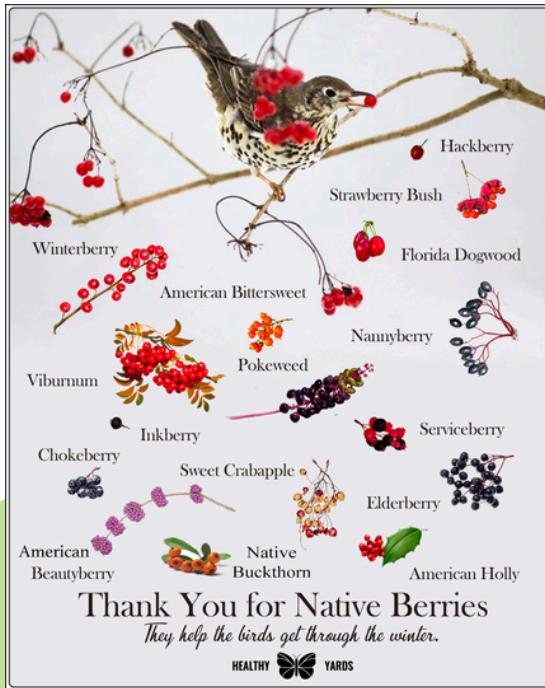


## DECEMBER GARDEN 'TO DO' LIST

By Claudette Sims, Halton Master Gardener

- Final Garden Check** – Last chance to put away watering cans, garden equipment, hoses and anything that might freeze!
- Trees** – Make sure young trees and shrubs are protected from rabbits. Use tree wraps or wire baskets placed over smaller plants. Plan major tree or shrub pruning now while branches are bare and it's not too cold.
- Houseplants** – Check weekly for disease or pests. Remove dead or dying foliage. Always check the soil before watering.
- Amaryllis** – Pot up your amaryllis. Choose a pot 1-2 inches larger in diameter than the bulb, and at least 5 inches deep with good drainage holes. Add a light indoor potting mix and then place the bulb (roots down & pointy side up) in the pot. Add soil to within an inch of the top so that about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the bulb is showing. Water well, avoiding water on the neck of the bulb.
- Stems, Seedheads, Berries** – Leave seedheads and stalks intact over the winter. Consider adding some native berry shrubs to help birds get through the winter!



## Plant Dormancy

Plants go dormant to help them face adversity. Trees lose their leaves to conserve water and energy, and houseplants go dormant when the humidity and light levels inside plummet.



This winter I'm learning a survival strategy from my plants.

Joseph T.

- Lawn** – If you still have leaves on your lawn, rake them into the garden (or bag/compost to store for spring mulching), when the weather permits. Avoid walking on your lawn if the soil is soft and leaves footprints.
- Food Crops** – Cover carrots, parsnips and newly planted garlic with straw to harvest in the spring. Collect rose hips and hawthorns for jelly or tea.
- Bulbs** – Get those bulbs in the ground before it freezes solid!
- Live Christmas Trees** – [Pre-register](#) to donate your tree to the RBG or cut it up and return branches and logs to your garden to start your new brush pile! Remember to remove all decorations and tinsel.
- Winter Sowing** – Need more native plants? Learn how to [winter sow](#). Need native plant seeds? Check your local library or [Green Venture](#) for free seeds.
- Happy New Year!** A reminder that there is NO Cross Pollination Newsletter in January.