

Haddam Garden Club

December 2017 Garden Blog Article

by Cindy Tillson



Wreathmaking

December is the month that the Garden Club creates holiday decorations for town buildings, inside and out. I did say I would talk about making wreaths in this article but the following tutorial does a much better job than I could in this limited space. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnG4b1eC5Ck>

A few tips not covered: Be sure you are cutting greens on your own property or have permission from the landowner. There are many evergreens you can choose from. Look around your yard! Cut your greens and berries from the mother plant as you would to prune. Make your cut just above a node or branch that is headed in the direction that you would like the branch to grow. Ugly branches are fine too. You only need to use the green tips. Christmas tree trimmings are also good. Pieris is pretty, cypress too. Balsam is great. Fraser Fir is easy. Blue Spruce is prickly as is Holly. I take the opportunity to prune my boxwoods when it's time to make my wreaths. If it will be a few days before you get to the project, put the greens and berries in water. You can also purchase fresh greens and berries from our local garden centers but foraging is fun. Wear your bright orange in the woods.

Your frame can be a purchased one, a grapevine wreath, a wire coat hanger or similar armature. I prefer the "3 wire" models. Don't forget the paddle wire. Craft stores carry these as do most garden centers at this time of year. It needs to be sturdy enough to carry the weight of the finished wreath. They can become pretty heavy. You will also need to buy or make a hanger.

Wreathmaking is a messy job so don't do it on the rug. Outside is best but sometimes it's just too cold! You will need a large work surface, at least card table size and height. Truck tailgates work well as does plywood over a couple of saw horses. My dining room table has proven to be a good surface.

When you are finished with the fresh greens portion of the wreath, you might choose to spray it with Wilt-Pruf®, an organic natural pine oil emulsion made right here in CT. It will keep it fresher longer. When it's dry, you can add the other bobbles with floral wire. I don't spray Wiltpruf on mine and they hold until mid January anyway.

The bobbles might be pinecones or seedpods from your summer garden. I know someone who sprays milkweed pods with gold paint. You can wire in just about anything you want, natural or artificial.

Every now and then while you are making it, hang your wreath on something or have someone hold it up for you. You will see if and where you need to add things. You can also decide where the top is. You'll know. This is where to put the hanger.

You've put a lot of time and energy in this wreath so if you are going to add a bow, make it. This is an excellent tutorial on how to make a wreath bow. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XD-X0W8M1mo>. The tutorial is easy to follow and not too long. I'm going to refer to it myself!

Remember, this is your creation. It could be simple in nature, elaborate or whimsical. Play. Have fun. It might become a new holiday tradition.

We wish you a marvelous holiday and a joyous new year!