



## DECEMBER

### TO-DO LIST

- Plant paperwhite bulbs in pots for a fragrant indoor display. Simply press the bulbs into a bed of pebbles or gravel and add water until it just touches the bottom of the bulbs. Green shoots will quickly appear, followed by white flowers with a pungent aroma.
- Grow pre-chilled hyacinth bulbs in soil in pots, or in water in elegant forcing jars (available at garden centres). These “prepared hyacinths” have already been through a chilling process to reduce the time it takes for the bulb to bloom from 14 to 8 weeks.
- Water plants sparingly to prevent them becoming waterlogged and succumbing to root rot.
- Keep an eye out for whitefly and red spider mite on plants being overwintered in the greenhouse or a frost-free inside location.
- Lime your lawn if you forgot to do this in November, and also spread some lime around the base of lilacs and over the vegetable garden. This will reduce acidity and improve soil. Lime actually acts as a fertilizer by allowing plants to better access micronutrients. You can also do this in spring.
- Lightly prune hollies, cotoneaster and pyracantha; gather branches and berries for use in wreaths and seasonal decorations.
- Finish garden cleanup: rake leaves, bag the mushy yellow leaves of hostas and cut down the tall leaves of crocosmia to make way for new growth in spring.
- Order seed catalogues. New varieties are often in short supply, so it pays to get your order in early.
- Put your feet up and take a rest. You deserve it!