

GEORGE LUXTON SAYS:

Arrival of '56 Catalogs Means It's Time to Start Garden Plans

Within a few weeks we will be receiving intriguing 1956 seed and plant catalogs and then home gardeners will feel spring can't be so far away, and start making plans for their new gardens.

However, if you are not on the nurseries mailing list, get a dozen or more postcards and mail your request for catalogs to the seed and plant companies. Don't forget your own local nurseries. They handle the varieties that are best suited to the Upper Midwest.

Do this at once, because, owing to the increased cost of paper and printing, some companies are curtailing on their catalogs unless they receive a written request. Others who published the more elaborately colored catalogs of perhaps 150 or more pages make a charge for the book, for which you are usually given credit on your first order.

THE BEAUTIFUL big catalogs are really works of art with their magnificent reproductions from color photographs of the best in new varieties, in addition to the old proved standby.

Catalogs published by reliable concerns are excellent sources of cultural information about shrubs, flowers and vegetables. Many have valuable data on the quantity of seed required for special areas and rows, also varieties best suited for your zone.

The rose catalogs are especially beautiful and interesting. Every spring brings forth many new outstanding roses that are reasonably hardy in your area, and these are sold by your local dealers.

IN MANY PARTS of the state the heavy snow is crushing and destroying our evergreens, especially the wide, lower branches. This snow should be carefully removed or it may permanently distort or break the limbs.

Do not attempt to knock or brush off the snow. You may snap the almost frozen branches. With a broom on the under side of the branches, gently raise and lower them until the snow slides off. Heavy snow, if left on, may crack, or permanently bend the branches.

If the snow is frozen and does not slide off, do not force it. Place boxes or notched boards under the branches to hold the weight.

To protect shrubbery and vines close to the house that are being crushed in a mound

of ice from water dripping from the roof, improvise a temporary eave trough, or a lean-to over the shrubs. A few wide boards may do the trick.

Many deciduous shrubs and trees can be pruned and trimmed now, but not spring bloomers. If you prune them now you will destroy most of next spring's blossoms. They should be trimmed after blooming in the spring and early summer.

THE ENTIRE maple family should not be pruned until summer, when their sap is not running so freely.

If you don't have a warm winter rain when the next mild day comes, get out the garden hose and treat your evergreens to a shower bath. You will be surprised at the amount of soot and dirt that washes off them, and it brightens their color. Also they do absorb considerable, much needed moisture.

Now is a good time to examine your stored bulbs and roots. Try to keep the temperature dry and cool—between 40 and 50 degrees. If too warm, they may sprout. If dahlias seem to be shrinking, you may try sprinkling them with water. Packing them in damp sand or moss helps too.

Examine them in a week or two, and if mildew is evident try for a cooler temperature, and dust with sulphur. Do not

lay them on earth or cement floor. Store them in clean flats.

THE MINNESOTA Garden Flower society will hold its January meeting Thursday at 1:30 p.m. in Dayton's assembly room. The feature of the program will be "Hemerocallis, the Glamour Flowers of the Garden," illustrated by photographs in color and discussed by E. C. Lehman of Faribault, Minn.

Do you know that many of our winter birds are starving because their normal food supply is covered with deep snow? The kitchen scraps you garbage or burn every day could save many birds.

The Minnetonka Garden club has made a generous contribution to the Friends of the Wild Flower Garden to establish a new fern garden. As a result, an interesting fern garden is being added to the Wild Flower gardens in Theodore Wirth park.

This garden will be adjacent to the Upland garden. Actually it will be on a gentle east-facing slope leading down to the lowland. Trails are planned among the ferns so they can be enjoyed at close range. It is ideally situated for the over two dozen varieties of ferns that grow and prosper in Minnesota.

Mrs. Martha Crone, curator of the Wild Flower garden, enthusiastically said, "This hill, when covered with the feathery green of ferns, will be a lovely sight. There will be ferns for shade and sun, for dry and moist locations. Evergreen, wood ferns and Christmas ferns, and the large, graceful ostrich fern sometimes called the Palm of the North, the dainty Maiden-hair and a score of others."

The preparation of the area was started this fall, but the early arrival of winter has delayed completion until spring.

Kitchens Feature 'Built-in' Items

NEW YORK—4NS—The trend in kitchens is toward increased use of "built-ins" in new homes.

Even refrigerators were built into the wall in 1955. Another trend is toward separation of the oven from the range, which saves the housewife from stooping.

Cabinets showed a trend toward warm wood tones, but the metal items were still popular.

Colors were a veritable rainbow, with turquoise, pink, yellow and copper tones outstanding.



Luxton

George Luxton's GRANDMA

Enough flower pots was Grandma's problem. She needed them for her indoor winter garden, and for the gift plants she gave away by the score to sick folks and friends.

Metal cans were scarce in Grandma's day, and when she obtained a few they were heated, and while still warm, heavily coated with beeswax to prevent rusting. In the bottom was an inch of mixed gravel and charcoal for drainage and sanitation.

Uncle Jerry covered the outside with a thin layer of birch bark, stuck on with clean shellac. These containers were really quite attractive and would last for several years.

Plants in them required much less watering than containers with a drainage hole; in fact, you had to be careful not to over-water.

