

## January is for a Jewel in the Winter Landscape, the Big January Bird Count, and Japanese Hop



### A Jewel in the Winter Landscape

There are many landscaping plants that shine during the bleak months of winter. Winterberry, with its bright red berries that cling to the plant well into early months of the year, provides both beautiful color and food for birds. Also known as *Ilex verticillata*, winterberry is a species of holly and as such requires both a male and a female plant in order for pollination to occur. Unlike many holly species, winterberry is deciduous but it is the lack of leaves that really make its glossy red berries stand out against a snowy backdrop.

### Big January Bird Count

The Connecticut Audubon Society's Deer Pond Farm location has many events of interest to birders and outdoor enthusiasts throughout the month of January. Among them are four dates for Winter Bird Walks with Miley Bull that would be of interest to anyone participating in the Connecticut Ornithological Association Big January competition in which 90 different species must be seen or heard.

[Big January Bird Count info](#)

### Japanese Hop

Japanese hop, *Humulus japonica*, also known as wild hop, is an invasive trailing and climbing annual that was introduced to North America in the mid-to-late 1800s from Asia. Originally brought here as an ornamental annual and for use in ingredient in an Asian herbal medicine. Japanese hop is found in 6 of the 8 counties in Connecticut and to a lesser extent in every state in New England. A relative to *Humulus lupulus*, the common hop, it is not used in beer production. It is also in the same family, Cannabaceae, as cannabis, it shares a similar palmate shape although Japanese hop has a much broader leaf. Still sold as an ornamental vine that can grow up to 30', Japanese hop can out-compete native plants, especially in riparian areas. For additional information on this and other invasive species please visit the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group site.

[CIPWG Invasive Plant List](#)



Image by Pamm Cooper

## Ten Tips for the January Gardener

Click on highlighted links for additional information.

- To control [bagworm](#) on shrubs and trees, look for the small stick-covered 'bags' and remove by hand.
- Feed the birds regularly and see that they have a supply of clean water. Birds like suet, fruit, nuts, and bread crumbs as well as bird seed.
- Bring pruning tools inside and clean them for the upcoming season. Disassemble hand pruners, and loppers. Sharpen the blades, oil the levers, and remove any rust.
- Houseplants with large leaves and smooth foliage such as [philodendrons](#), dracaena and rubber plant benefit if their leaves are washed at intervals to remove dust and grime, helping keep the leaf pores open.
- Give houseplants a quarter turn each time you water so they will not lean toward the light.
- Remove and destroy infested foliage on arborvitae and juniper to control leaf miner. Look for browned foliage that is hollowed out to detect the problem.
- When using salt to melt ice on walks and driveways, spread it carefully to avoid damage to nearby shrubs. Consider using sand or sawdust instead.
- Check out [Advanced Garden Master classes](#) that are open to the public.
- When placing your seed and plant orders keep in mind that many seeds have improved insect and/or disease resistance. Watch also for drought-tolerant types. Our fact sheet [Vegetable Garden: Basics and Plant Selection](#) has some useful suggestions.
- [Start seeds](#) of pansies, dusty miller, browallia, begonias, snapdragons, and delphiniums indoors under lights.

[For a more extensive list of tips visit Gardening Tips for January](#)

## Have Your Soil Tested for Macro- & Micro Nutrients

If your ground is still clear of snow then beat the spring rush and send your soil sample in for testing now. Our standard nutrient analysis includes pH, macro- and micro nutrients, a lead scan and as long as we know what you are growing, the results will contain limestone and fertilizer recommendations. The cost is \$12/sample. You are welcome to come to the lab with your 'one cup of soil' but most people are content to simply place their sample in a zippered bag and mail it in. For details on submitting a sample, go to [UConn Soil and Nutrient Laboratory](#).

Visit us at the Connecticut Flower and Garden Show, Thursday to Sunday, February 21st through the 24th, 2019. The staff from the UConn Home & Garden Education Center will be there to test your soil's pH (no cost, please bring 1 cup of soil), answer your plant and insect questions, and to present talks on a variety of horticultural topics.

[CT Flower & Garden Show](#)

**Click on these Links to Visit Any of Our Sites:**

[UConn Extension](#)

[UConn Food Safety](#)

[UConn Home & Garden Education Center](#)

[UConn Plant Diagnostic Laboratory](#)

[UConn Science of GMOs](#)

[UConn Soil & Nutrient Analysis Laboratory](#)



## Take a Seal Spotting & Birding Cruise

Cruise out for the chance to see some of the seals and waterfowl that spend their winters in Long Island Sound with the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk. R/V *Spirit of the Sound* has a climate controlled cabin but, because the best viewing is outside on the deck, participants should bring plenty of warm clothes. Advance reservations recommended. Seal image by Patty Doyle, Maritime Aquarium.

[Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk](#)

## Events/Programs/Save the Date

### [Connecticut College](#)

[Visit the Plant Collections](#) The Connecticut College Arboretum manages four major plant collections containing 6,195 individual, accessioned living plants.

**New London Urban Forestry Talk** Wednesday, January 30th, 2019 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Public Library of New London, 63 Huntington Street, Community Room (ground floor) Free, no registration required.  
Inst: Isabelle Smith, Conn Coll '19

**Winter Waterfowl Walk** Saturday, February 2, 2019 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Meet and park at the east end of Benham Avenue (Waterford) just before the railroad tracks. \$10 (free members + CT Audubon)  
Inst: Robert Askins, Professor Emeritus of Biology

### [CT DEEP Programs](#)

**Long Distance Guided Hike** January 5th & 12th, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT

**Winter Birds** Saturday, January 5th, 2019 from 10:00 to 12:00 noon James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT

**Snowshoe Hike** Saturday, January 26th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT

## UConn Equestrian, Western, and Dressage Teams

### Spring 2019 Shows

Equestrian Team Show Schedule: Zone 1 Region 5

- January 26-Tournament of Champions-Mary Washington University
- February 9-Connecticut College,-Mystic Valley Hunt Club, Gales Ferry, CT
- February 16-Fairfield University, Fairview Farm, CT
- February 23-UConn, Storrs, CT
- March 3-Sacred Heart University, Rolling Meadows Farm, Southbury, CT
- March 30-Regionals, Mystic Valley Hunt Club, Gales Ferry, CT
- April 6-Zones, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA
- May 2-5 Nationals, Syracuse, NY

CT Western Team Show Schedule: Zone 1

- January 27-Melissa Demattio Western Clinic, Storrs, CT
- February 3-UConn, Storrs, CT
- February 10-Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA
- February 16-Regionals, Sacred Heart University, Southbury, CT
- March 16 & 17 Western Semi Finals, Ocala, FL
- May 2 - 5 Nationals, Syracuse, NY

Dressage Team Show Schedule: Region B

- March 9-Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA
- March 10-UConn, Storrs, CT
- March 24-Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA
- March 31-UConn, Storrs, CT
- April 26-28 Nationals, Lake Erie College

[Contact Coach Alena Meacham](#)

## UConn Extension



Early registration is \$40 and includes the Trade Show, continental breakfast, coffee, and lunch. 3 pesticide re-certification credits available.

[Conference Agenda and Registration](#)



[Agenda and Registration Form](#)

**JOIN US FOR A FREE DAY OF LEARNING:**

At the  
**Agricultural Re\$ource Fair**  
 {9am-12pm}

and

**The Farm Financials & Accounting Class\***  
 {12:30pm-4:30pm}

**Feb 2, 2019**

**Auerfarm**  
 158 Auer Farm Road  
 Bloomfield, CT

RESOURCE FAIR TOPICS:  
 FSA Loans | Organic Certification  
 CT Farm Transition Grants | EQIP  
 Farmland Restoration Grants

**CT GROWN**  
 Local and Organic Since 1982

**ctnofa**

**UConn**  
 COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,  
 HEALTH AND NATURAL  
 RESOURCES  
 EXTENSION

\*For both advanced and beginner levels

[Visit the UConn Animal Barns](#)



Everyone is welcome to explore our animal barns that are open to the public and to learn more about the animals that are used in the Department of Animal Science program. Visitors can see dairy and beef cows, sheep, and horses. The poultry units are closed to the public. Young animals can be found in the barns at the following times of year at barns that are opened to the public: baby foals in the summer in outside paddocks at Horse Unit II, lambs during February and March outside only at Livestock Unit 1, dairy calves year-round at the Cattle Resource Unit and beef calves beginning in mid -March outside at Livestock Unit 1. Every day visitors can view the UConn dairy cows being milked from 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. at the Kellogg Dairy Center.

## ...and then the UConn Dairy Bar



Enjoy a visit to the UConn Dairy Bar where more than 24 flavors of freshly made ice cream are available every day! There are also seasonal favorites and holiday specials. Hot cocoa sundae, anyone? There is a reason that the Dairy Bar is called the sweetest course on campus!

[UConn Dairy Bar](#)

## [UConn Garden Master Classes](#)

Garden Master Classes such as the following items are offered through the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program. These classes provide continuing education for Certified Master Gardeners as part of the Advanced Master Gardener certification process. These classes are also open to the General Public. Anyone with an interest in gardening and horticulture is welcome.

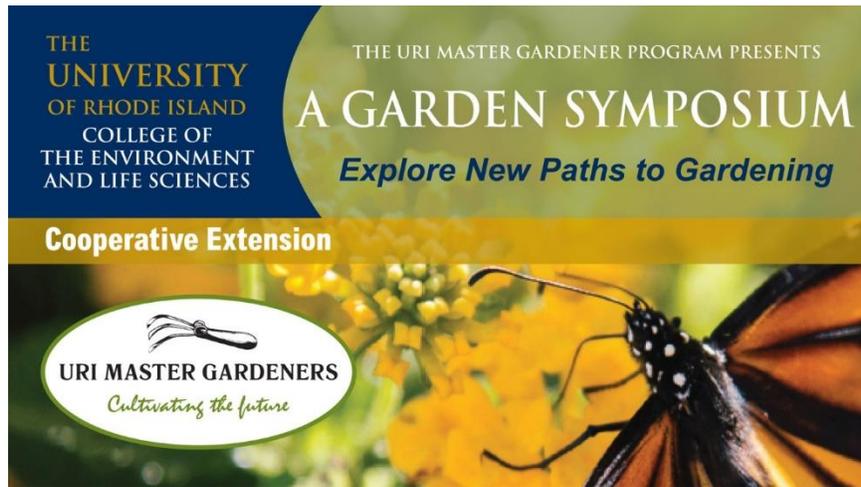
**Botanical Latin** Tuesday, January 15th, 2019 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Middlesex County Extension Center, Haddam, CT Inst: Jude Hsiang

**Botanical Pencil Drawing** Thursday, January 24th, 2019 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Silver Education Building, Bartlett Arboretum, Stamford, CT Inst: Elizabeth Hundt Scott

**Introduction to Horticultural Therapy** Wednesday, January 26th, 2019 from 10: a.m. to 12:00 noon Windham County Extension Center, Brooklyn, CT Inst: Kate Desjardins

**Exotic Pests in Connecticut** Monday, January 31, 2019 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Fairfield County Extension Center, Bethel, CT Inst: Jude Hsiang

[Additional Master Gardener Classes](#)



The University of Rhode Island Master Gardener program presents their annual **Gardening Symposium** on March 2, 2019 at the Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences, URI, Kingston, RI

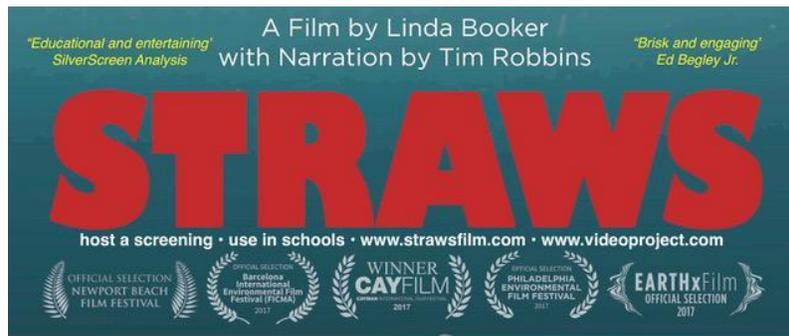
[URI Garden Symposium Info](#)



The **CT Recyclers Conference** is the singular event each year where municipalities, state officials, the business community, and non-profit organizations in Connecticut come together in one setting to have a dialogue about the best ways to achieve our mutual goal of a 60% recycling rate statewide.

[CT Recycling Conference info](#)

**Connecticut Daylily Society presents Marlene Harmon: Garden Photography** Saturday, January 19th, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at the Avon Senior Center, Avon, CT Marlene Harmon and her husband Carl operate the [Harmon Hill Farm](#) in Hudson, NH, where they have over 4,100 daylily cultivars on display.



**STRAWS** is an award-winning documentary that illuminates the problems related to straws and other single-use plastic pollution that inundate our waterways and oceans. The film inspires a new path forward.

A screening and panel Q&A will be held at the Wilton Library, 137 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, CT on Wednesday, January 9th, 2019 from 7:00-9:00 pm. Doors open at 6:30 and screening begins promptly at 7:00 p.m. Registration is recommended. After the screening will be a short panel discussion and Q&A session with Charlie Taney of the Norwalk River Valley Trail and members of the North American Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA) as well as Bridget Cervero and David Hudson of The Maritime Aquarium.

A family-friendly screening will be held on Saturday, January 12th, 2019 from 2:00-3:00 pm Doors open at 1:30 pm and screening begins promptly at 2:00 pm. Registration is recommended. A brief panel discussion and Q&A session follows with Charlie Taney of the Norwalk River Valley Trail, members of the NAMEPA and Louise Washer, President of the Norwalk River Watershed Association.

Students in grades 2-6 can register separately for an educational program led by NAMEPA and Wilton Go Green following the film in the Children's Story Room; children under 8 years old must be accompanied by an adult. The children's educational program starts at 2:30 while the panel discussion continues in the Brubeck Room. Registration is required for children's program.

## KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON!

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

[Why do we call them berries?](#)

[The secret to the best seasonal hot chocolate? It's all in the chemistry!](#)

[Do you know the carbon footprint of your food?](#)

### CLIMATE CORNER

[You and your family have the power to keep Long Island Sound clean and its inhabitants safe. Join in protecting our natural resources. Be a Sound Steward!](#)

[Brace yourself for a polar vortex jolt! Forecaster says the signs are aligning for a beastly blast of winter.](#)

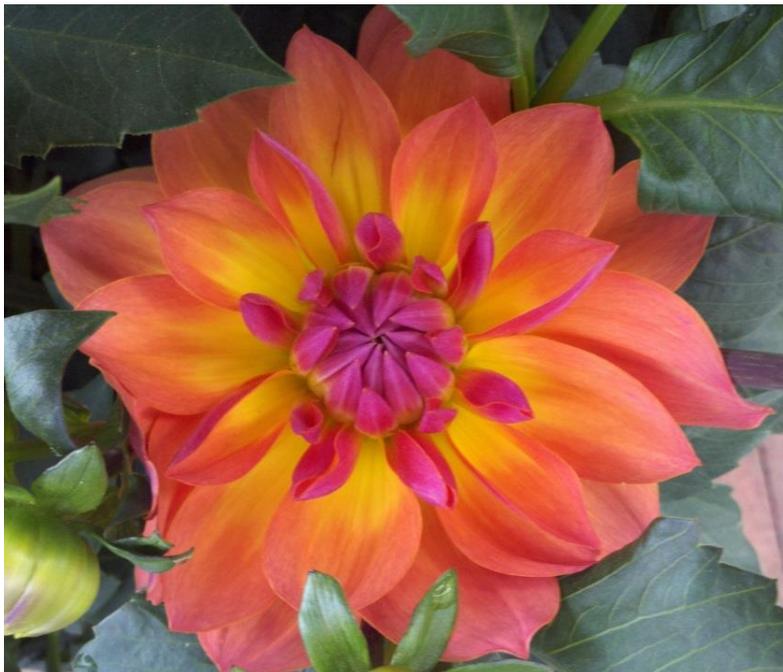
[Scientists create a bee vaccine to ward off the 'insect apocalypse'.](#)

### WHO KNEW?

[The social network of flowers suggests that they may bloom more when surrounded by related species.](#)

[Unpredictable food sources drive some bats to cooperatively search for food.](#)

[Babies laugh like chimps!](#)



## 2019 is the Year of the Dahlia

The National Garden Bureau has chosen the dahlia as the 2019 Flower of the Year. Dahlias are members of the Asteraceae family, a group that also includes sunflowers, daisies, chrysanthemums, and zinnia. Dahlias are native to Mexico and Guatemala and come in a large range of colors and sizes, from 2" across up to 15"! Dahlia tubers should not be planted in the ground until the danger of frost has passed, usually the end of May in Connecticut. To get a head start on your dahlia blooms you can start the tubers indoors at the end of April and then transplant them into a sunny spot that has good drainage.

[Dahlia Care info](#)

## UConn Extension Home & Garden Education Center

The UConn Home & Garden Education Center (**HGEC**) is a horticultural informational resource for the citizens of Connecticut and beyond. The staff at the Center reach nearly 400,000 citizens in outreach efforts each year. We're ready to assist you.

You are receiving this email because you have provided us with your email address either when having your soil analyzed or testing the horticultural prowess and investigative abilities of our incredibly well-versed staff at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center! If you do not wish to receive our monthly email updates on gardening tips, pest problems, events and other information, please email us at [ladybug@uconn.edu](mailto:ladybug@uconn.edu) and ask to be removed from this list.

## We Need Your Support!

If you enjoy our efforts to keep you informed about horticultural and UConn-related items, please show your support by liking us on Facebook, following us on Pinterest or Instagram, checking out our weekly Ladybug blog, or visiting our the Home & Garden Education center website.



[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

*UConn Extension Home & Garden Education Center: We are on a collaborative journey.*

*How. We co-create knowledge with farmers, families, communities, and businesses. We educate. We convene groups to help solve problems.*

*What. Food, Health, and Sustainability.*

*Join us.*

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