

Winter 2013

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**Unique Garden Centre**

# From the Ground Up

## THE MEANING & SYMBOLISM OF THE POINSETTIA

Also known as the Christmas Star and Christmas Flower, it's said that this winter flower's association with Christmas comes from a Mexican legend. The story goes that a child, with no means for a grander gift, gathered humble weeds from the side of the road to place at the church altar on Christmas Eve. As the congregation witnessed a Christmas miracle, the weeds turned into brilliant red and green flowers.

Named after Joel Roberts Poinsett, first United States ambassador to Mexico and the amateur botanist who introduced the plant to the U.S. in 1825, the poinsettia is also known as Mexican Flame Leaf, Winter Rose, Noche Buena and, in Turkey, Atakurk's Flower, because it was the favorite flower of Atakurk, the founder of modern Turkey.

While considered by the ancient Aztecs to be symbols of purity, in today's language of flowers, red, white or pink poinsettias, the December birth flower, symbolize good cheer and success and are said to bring wishes of mirth and celebration.



*Taken from Teleflora.com Flowers and their Meanings*

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*The color of springtime is in  
the flowers; the color of  
winter is in the imagination.*



*~Terri Guillemets*

## *Unique Garden Centre gift certificates make great Gifts!!*

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## Spotlight on:

Information on a different tree, shrub and perennial in each edition of “From the Ground Up”

*This time in our Spotlight on section, we thought we would share information about five of our favourite houseplants.*



### Diffenbachia

This plant, with its large leaves up to a foot long, provides a tropical looking accent to the home. It can grow up to 6' tall. Diffenbachia thrives in temperatures about 18-20°C. It likes medium to low light conditions and soil should be kept evenly moist.



### Fiddle-Leaf Fig

This plant is a species of ficus with large dark green leaves reminiscent of a fiddle—and so it gets its name. It likes bright to medium light like most ficus and room temperatures between 18-24°C are preferable. Soil should be allowed to dry out between watering.

### Snake Plant

This super-easy to grow plant is sometimes called mother-in-law's tongue. Its strong upright form makes a great vertical accent. Some leaves have white or yellow leaf edges. This plant prefers low humidity, somewhat dry soil and normal room temperature.



### Peace Lily

Large dark green pointy leaves and pretty, curving white blooms make this a very popular houseplant. It is very easy to grow, favouring low light and low humidity. It prefers evenly moist soil and temperatures around the 25-30°C range.

### Ficus

This tree can easily grow to 7' tall. Its shiny leaves can be solid green or variegated and its stems can be braided to create a tidy topiary effect. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. Room temperatures between 18-24°C are preferable.



## Protecting Your Evergreens for the Winter

Winter weather can be difficult for the evergreens in your garden. Unlike deciduous plants that lose their leaves when they go into hibernation, evergreens maintain their foliage. Because of this they continue to lose moisture, and even more quickly if they are exposed to winds. Losing too much moisture may lead to plant damage which will become apparent in the spring. One way to help prevent moisture loss is to use a good quality anti-desiccant on your evergreens.

### What is an anti-desiccant?

This is a product sold in liquid form that is applied to evergreens by spraying. It works by protecting the needles of these plants with a waxy coating. This helps reduce moisture loss. Over the season this protective layer may disappear. It is a good idea to reapply the anti-desiccant if the weather turns mild.

### How is it applied?

An anti-desiccant is applied to the tree by spraying on the outermost leaves of the tree using a hand held garden sprayer or a commercial sprayer. There is no need to apply it to the trunk or the branches as moisture loss takes place through the foliage.

### When should it be applied?

Anti-desiccants should be applied when the colder months arrive and temperature is just above freezing. It may be applied again in mid to late winter if mild weather occurs and temperatures rise above 5°C. Pick a dry day to spray so the product won't wash off before it sets.

**Make sure you help your evergreen by watering them well before the ground freezes so the roots are properly hydrated. Adding a little extra protection with an anti-desiccant product will help your trees make it through the winter season healthy and ready for spring.**



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for the  
Season**

*Season's Greetings from the  
Management and Staff of*

