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## LIGHT IN WINTER

Faulkner wrote of "Light in August", but IS there any light in winter? With winter darkness arriving in mid - afternoon (5 PM), it can be a challenge to enjoy the garden at the end of the day. However, the winter may be the best season of all for lighting in the landscape.

In the winter, ornamental trees are bare, allowing a full study of their complex limb structure via up lighting. When designing up lighting on trees, it is important to consider all vie ing angles. While up lighting with one fixture can be appealing, additional fixtures can create a dramatic three - dimensional effect, truly bringing the tree to life. Conversely, a single up light can offer a "silhouette" effect from alternative angles.

In the winter, the skies are clearer. With a dormant tree canopy, moonlight creates a mysterious, yet in many cases effective illumination. But what do you do when the moon is not full? Consider another format of "moonlighting" - down lighting from the canopies of large trees. Where possible, fixtures should be at least 30 feet up in the tree in order to generate subtle, broad pools of light. As with up lighting, multiple fixtures create a more uniform and subtle effect. Seek to cast light through lower limbs, creating mottled shadows that replicate moonlight. However, be careful that the shadowed limbs are not too large as overly large shadows will create a somewhat disturbing effect. Most importantly, be careful of glare in high traffic areas. The glare of one misplaced fixture can greatly diminish the subtle effect of moonlighting. It is preferable to mount the fixtures on limbs rather than the main leader. This allows you to point the fixtures nearly straight down, minimizing glare and reducing the chance of a "hot spot" on the trunk of the tree.

Looking for the moonlight effect, but "short on tall trees"? You may be surprised by the effect of down lighting from selected mature ornamental trees - make certain that beam spread is as wide as possible and be careful that the fixture is not overly visible in the small tree during the daytime. Or consider down lighting from an arbor or pergola, even from the eaves of a building.

Views from inside are a very important consideration. Walk around inside during the day - is there an ornamental tree visible from inside? How about a statue or other garden ornament? What about a bench or a stone wall? These can become visual destinations, offering depth and whimsy as we look out from within. Be aware that outside light competes with inside light. If the indoors is strongly lit, that light will reflect off the windows, muting the effect of the outdoor lighting. Down lighting by nature is more subtle

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Branches of an up lit American beech tree offer an arresting sight when viewed at night

## MAINTENANCE CONTRACT CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

- Slow release fertilizer for regular and organic lawn treatments
- Annual and perennial flower care
- Leaf removal continues
- Gutter cleaning (first round)
- Lawn mowing Thanksgiving week only
- Rose care continues as necessary (pruning)

### DECEMBER

- Mulch beds
- Prune & trim bushes
- Clean, weed & edge beds
- Leaf removal concludes at the end of the month
- Hollytone and groundcover fertilizer application
- Gutter cleaning (second round)
- Lawn mowing as necessary

*With this issue, we welcome our first guest columnist, Mark Oxley, President of Outdoor Illumination. Look for additional features in future issues by professionals in our industry to give you a fresh perspective on the part they play in making your landscape beautiful.*





All photos © Melissa Clark unless otherwise noted

## What's in Bloom

*“Let no one think that real gardening is a bucolic and meditative occupation.*

*It is an insatiable passion, like everything else to which a man gives his heart.”*

*Karel Capek,  
The Gardener's Year*

and tends to lose impact when viewed from within. Furthermore, up lighting on trees lacking in intricate canopies or trees that are more than 20 feet from the window can also be significantly muted. With some careful consideration, you can bring the garden indoors - throughout the year!

In the winter, sun light is more striking, creating more shadows and texture. The same applies to landscape lighting. Just remember one fundamental rule - less is often more! And enjoy the winterscape at night!

*Mark Oxley, President, Outdoor Illumination, Inc.*

### WHAT'S IN BLOOM IN OUR LANDSCAPE

Summer's haze and drought have faded. The striking flowers of summer have made way for a new interest and splendor. The days are cool and crisp, and the leaves are changing into a myriad of colors. I feel renewed when I see gardens blazing with fiery foliage and fruit, the latter often in colorful hanging clusters.

This issue's featured plant also undergoes a change this time of year. *Viburnum trilobum*, or American Cranberry Viburnum, is a native plant that provides summer charm with its beautiful, white lace-cap flowers, and soft, dark green maple-like leaves. In the fall, however, its leaves turn a stunning burgundy and red, and bright red berries cover the plant.



American Cranberry Viburnum (©Horticopia)

The cranberry viburnum's berries are good for more than decorating your garden. Their fruit is very juicy, but fairly acidic, and better used for jellies and jams than for tasting right off the bush. Mixed with spices and sugars, the berries provide a delicious treat rich in vitamin C. American Cranberries are best picked after the frost; the longer they have time to ripen on the bush, the sweeter they become. For this reason, birds usually leave the berries alone until later in the season. With the birds munching on other berries, you get a longer season to enjoy the cranberry viburnum's decoration in your winter garden.

*Alison Woodrow*

*Congratulations to Mark Mostrom, our Project Manager, and his wife Vicky, on their new son Cutter Woods Mostrom. Cutter arrived on October 6th, weighing 9 pounds 2 ounces. Best wishes to the new arrival, his parents, and his sister Ashley from all of us at LPI.*







Ask LPI

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST IN THE AREA

*During November & December 2005*

### GREEN SPRING GARDENS

(4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria VA)

**Workshop: Constructing a Stone Wall**  
*Saturday, November 12, 9-11am.*

This workshop covers the basics of wall building, including planning and layout, learning how to look at stone, cutting and fitting techniques and the tools necessary for building a wall. Session begins indoors, and then moves outdoors to see examples of different types of stone walls, talk about the differences in materials and construction techniques, and observe an expert construct a section of a dry stack stone wall. Fee: \$38; call 703-642-5173 for more information.

### BROOKSIDE GARDENS

**"The Versatile Viburnum"**

*Slide Lecture, Friday Nov. 18th, 10-11:30 a.m.*

### Visitor's Center Auditorium

Join Curator Phil Normandy to learn more about the wide range of viburnums and what they have to offer the residential garden in this illustrated lecture at Brookside. Fee: \$5 for non-members; registration required.

*Chrysanthemum Display in the Conservatories, Oct. 8- 27*

*Holiday Display in the Conservatories, Dec. 8-31*

(Poinsettias and cyclamen, paired with begonias, coleus and eucalyptus)

### Conifer Collection Tour

*Thursday, November 10th, 1:30-2:30 p.m.*

### Outside the Conservatories

Phil Normandy, Curator at Brookside, offers a guided tour of the conifers around the conservatories, in a landscape designed to showcase the subtleties of form and seasonal change in these dwarf and slow-growing specimens of evergreen beauty. Fee: \$11; registration required.

## ASK LPI

**Dear LPI: I know it's bulb-planting season and I'd like to know what types of bulbs I can plant that will come up year after year. I love tulips - are they a good choice?**

ANSWER: It depends on the kind of tulip you plant. The large tulips like Darwin hybrids or lily-flowered tulips look great the first year; after that, they dwindle in size and number so they are best treated as annuals. Hyacinths and fritillaries have the same problem.

For tulip aficionados, there is hope, however! Your best bet for repeat performers will come from the species tulips like *Tulipa kaufmanniana*, *T. saxatilis*, *T. greigii*, and the like. They flower earlier than the larger Darwin tulips and aren't as useful for cutting, but they often have striped foliage and under the right conditions will return for many years of enjoyment.

If you have a sunny, well-drained site, there are also many other spring-flowering bulbs that will return year after year to grace your garden. Tops on the list are narcissus (daffodils), especially the jonquil and old-fashioned trumpet groups. Under ideal conditions, they will naturalize and spread over time. If you notice reduced flowering after several years, try splitting up any clumps that have formed and re-plant them with a little bulb fertilizer. Species crocuses are reliable colonizers, and large-flowered crocuses do almost as well. Other options include scilla and glory-of-the-snow (*Chionodoxa*). So plant away, using some or all of these selections, and wait for a breathtaking show in spring.

*Melissa Clark, APLD*



*Tulipa 'Stresa' is an award-winning species tulip that will return for many years, blooming in early spring and naturalizing when left undisturbed in a good location.*



*Daffodils such as 'Tahiti' will return year after year in a sunny well-drained site*

### Brookside Gardens

1800 Glenallen Avenue, Wheaton, MD  
Website: [www.brooksidegardens.org](http://www.brooksidegardens.org)

### Green Springs Garden Park

4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA  
703-642-5173

### U.S. National Arboretum

3501 New York Avenue NE,  
Washington DC  
202-245-5898





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## EMPLOYEE PROFILE - MISAEEL VALESQUEZ

Like many Latinos, Misael Valesquez was not satisfied with the opportunities El Salvador had to offer. So, eleven years ago, he ventured to the United States seeking a better quality of life. In 1994, he joined LPI, where his brother Carlos was already an employee .

At Landscape Projects, Misael started as a laborer and was promoted to a maintenance foreman six years ago. He likes the regular maintenance work he performs every week but wants to learn different aspects of the landscaping business. He acknowledges that having a command of the English language is what he needs to progress further at LPI. Although finding time to learn English after work has proved a big challenge, he has not given up hope. Misael likes working at LPI because the company not only helps its employees in work related issues but also in their personal affairs. Such assistance is valuable to many Latino employees as they are not always familiar with how things work in America.

Along with his wife Rina Marleni Cruz and their two sons Jason Misael and Alexi Julian, Misael lives in Brentwood, Maryland. Playing soccer and going for walks in the park with his family are his favorite free time activities.

*Kripa Rayamajhi*

