

## **'Make Your Gardens Grow' - Fall Garden Day- 2023 Rutgers Master Gardener Interns of Ocean County**

### **Tips for Overwintering Annual and Tropical Plants**

<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/overwintering-tropical-plants>

#### **Treat them as indoor plants...**

- Before moving plants indoors, treat them with a houseplant insecticide such as a horticultural oil labeled for houseplants or insecticidal soap to reduce the chance of pests. Outdoors, pests are kept in check by natural parasites and predators.
- Lessen watering and do not fertilize until you see new growth in later winter or early spring.
- If necessary, supplement lighting with artificial lights.
- Monitor for pests when you water.
- Pests to look for - scale, mealybugs, aphids, whitefly, and spider mites. Begin treatment immediately if you see insect pests or signs of pests like webbing, honeydew (a sticky substance found on leaves), stippling (tiny yellow spots), or a white, waxy substance on the leaves or on stems.

#### **Or maintain them in a dormant state...**

- Prune if needed to reduce the size of the plant if it is too large for the overwintering space.
- Before moving plants indoors, treat them with a houseplant insecticide such as a horticultural oil labeled for houseplants or insecticidal soap to reduce the chance of pests. Outdoors, pests are kept in check by natural parasites and predators.
- Move containers to a frost-free space.
- With little or no light all of the leaves will drop but this is not a concern.
- Check the containers periodically and water sparingly to keep the roots alive. But do not let plants sit in wet soil.
- In April, move the plants to a sunny location indoors, increase watering, and fertilize with a water-soluble houseplant fertilizer.
- Prune again if needed to shape the plants.
- Move plants back outdoors after the danger of frost has passed.

#### **Resources for more information on overwintering plants:**

- Keeping Geraniums Over the Winter FS 1156:  
<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.php?pid=FS1156>
- Overwintering Plants in Containers: <https://extension.psu.edu/overwintering-plants-in-containers>
- Overwintering Geraniums: <https://sam.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/44/2018/09/Sept-8-2018-Overwintering-geraniums.pdf>
- How to Overwinter Plants: <https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/how-overwinter-plants>
- Urban Gardening: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/home-lawn-garden/urban-gardening.php>