

A Call to Arms

MARCH 1996

I haven't been outside for a month, but my internal horticultural clock is ticking. I know if that temperamental vine, *Cobea scandens*, is to bloom before frost, the seeds must go sideways into their peat pots now.

Two sweet peas from Thompson & Morgan could get started, a mysterious mauve with "enthraling fragrance" discovered in 1770 by monks--- how could I resist? And a pale yellow-- how could that be?

The *Hamamelis* (Witch Hazel) and *Viburnum Bodnantense* have been in bloom inside for 2 weeks. Now it's also time to force *Forsythia*, *Chaenomeles* (Flowering Quince) and *Malus floribunda* (Flowering Crabapple). Perhaps *Mahonia bealei* will have its lemon-yellow fragrant cluster of flowers this year to bring inside. *Hellebore foetidus* are ready to pick and a few warm days will bring forth Snowdrops, Aconites, and species *Crocus*.

The Cardinals are pairing up, bird song is back and I'm ready for spring!

Joan Sargent, a longtime member and master gardener who passed away in August 2012; wrote about 24 gardening columns for NCBL through the years for our newsletter. We are reprinting them again.



Cobea scandens, Cup and Saucer vine/ Cathedral Bells...is a fast growing vine



The Sweet Peas, might be like the ones she described; above middle is pink Sweet Pea 'Frangant Ripples', and below is a creamy yellow of 'Juliet, both from Thompson Morgan. Left top are Witch Hazel and *Virurnam Bodnantense*. Under that is *Chaenomeles*, Flowering Quince.

