

Winter Time Blues

By

Scott Hininger

University of Wyoming Extension

Sheridan County

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A landscape does not have to look bleak and desolate during the winter months. When we look, out the window or go outside, is all we see is snow or just a non-interesting landscape picture? Let us explore how to add interest and beauty to the landscape this coming year. Most homeowners generally have several of these concepts already in their landscape, and with a little tweaking or a few additions they can go from ok to great.

First, take note of the forms and shapes of the plants themselves this can lend interest to the landscape in winter, whether it is the carefully pruned shrubs, which add horizontal interest, or form boarders or the natural pyramidal shapes of many evergreens.

In addition to providing winter interest, many seed heads, seedpods, and berries, are also an excellent way to attract wildlife to the garden. Bark is also a major consideration when selecting shrubs or trees into the landscape. Many dogwoods have a reddish colored bark, which adds color in the wintertime. In addition, the texture of the bark is often more noticeable in the wintertime. Pines such as Ponderosa have very distinctive looking bark, and there are some trees and shrubs that have exfoliating bark such as the Korean Lilac tree, which adds a very nice and different look.

Of course, when we are thinking of color the first thought is evergreens. They come in different hues of green to blue, and they come in many shapes and sizes. By adding different heights such as tall evergreens in the back then the light colored deciduous trees such as aspens will show up better. The addition of a few small evergreens whether they are ground covers or ornamental types of evergreens certainly will add color and texture to the winter landscape. Do not forget the ornamental grasses. These can add some structure and variety to the landscape. Not only do these move in the wind to add interest, however like all of the landscape plants when there is a heavy frost or light snow this also adds interest. Some grasses do add color, such as the native Little Blue stem adds a nice reddish color.

Then we can add those hard structures to the garden, such as sculptures, statuaries, benches, rocks, old equipment. In the summer, these tend to be covered up or somewhat hidden by the foliage around them. In the wintertime, the foliage is mostly gone and these structures stand out more. In addition, the sun heats these up and melts the snow, and they can add color during the wintertime.

The other feature some homeowners have is a water feature, whether it is a small pond, or waterfall. Depending on the design, if these are frozen they can add another interest to a landscape view. With a little creativity, a frozen water feature can add quite an interesting and changing feature to the winter landscape view.

So as you are driving around this winter, take note of things that catch your eye and see if you can add one or two of these to your landscape this year.

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