December 2018

**Helleborus Niger**

Denise brought an unknown hellebore that was in full bloom in her December garden. Most probably it was Helleborus Niger (Christmas Rose), a very early blooming variety that is evergreen with white blooms. The most common hellebores in our gardens are Helleborus Foetidus(Bear’s Foot) and Orientalis (Lenten Rose). Foetidus self sows and is pale green with a maroon rim. Orientalis comes in many pink shades and is easily grown.

Of importance to gardeners, all Hellebores are deer resistant, probably because all parts of the plants are poisonous. They bloom most often in April and May, but there are many cultivars available that may lengthen the season. They are a mainstay of the woodland garden.