

## What's Coming Up:

Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila answer your growing concerns  
Issue 125, December 29, 2010

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CDs, pages 16 - 18

Left: Odd ornament, funny  
story, see page 9.

Right: A century ago, the  
skilled gardener and how-to writer Louise Beebe  
Wilder noticed the enchantment of alpine plants and  
wrote, "While working among the little plants of the  
far places of the world we forget the narrowness of  
our own orbit." When we looked at this *Sedum*  
'Angelina' and *Dianthus* earlier this month -- the  
winter cold bringing out their off-season hues even  
as it kept their profile low -- we did indeed find our  
minds ranging to new ground. So we chose them to  
open this issue, which features our combined  
thoughts about, "Where to, next?"



### Gardeners' wishes spark New Year's resolutions

What I'd really like is 12 months of just fall &  
spring.....with a couple of weeks of summer and winter on  
either end for good measure. Do you think we can figure  
that out? - Jude -

We'd go for that, too. In a minute! Wish we could arrange it.

What we can do is plan to increase a garden's crispness and color where we can. It's great to do that now, while the season just passed is clear in mind. The same goes for our newsletter plans. We've just reviewed two years of our reports and your comments (see "Index", above), then melded them with a third year. Along the way, we made these **News Letter Resolutions**.

Your 196-page, 3-year  
newsletter index will be  
emailed soon. More about it  
on page 7. Let us know if  
you do *not* want a copy.

**1** No more monopolization by mophead- and lacecap *Hydrangeas* (the blue and pink-flowering species) or *Japanese maples*. Over the past three years they've figured in about every third newsletter! Although every appearance was generated by your questions and we covered various angles to conform to our no-repeat-info rule, we don't see any new ground to cover this year. Instead, we'll connect those who have questions to past issues and we'll...

**2** ...feature **more alternatives** to problem plants.

Below: Most plants, Japanese maples included, are not hard to grow if they're planted where Nature works *with* them. Yet gardeners love some plants too much and put them where the odds are against them. It's fun to come up with creative solutions to protect that plant, such as here where we've turned Mom's Japanese maple into a falsecypress as we shaded its trunk from the wind and winter

We hope you see your suggestion reflected here, or will email about what else we can do for you.

sun it cannot tolerate. (We did try to sell Mom on a Trost's dwarf birch instead, but no sale!) This year we're going to work harder to offer such options to you -- plants to accomplish your objective without so much fuss.



**3** Cover more **vegetable garden problems** from the *prevention* side.

**4** Continue with **pruning** articles and *Garden By Janet* sessions, aimed **especially to evergreens**.

**5** Keep **showcasing design** challenges, with even more planting diagrams and lists.

Left:

Hi Janet & Steven, Happy holidays. And guess what, we had a change in our yard that's caused a design challenge. I'll be sending you more about it... - C -

Bring it on, C! Include more photos. We love design challenges and others in this network say the same. We can't get to every one we receive but we'll do what we can, especially if it's something we know other people face, as well.



6 Include **more humor** and quoted advice.

7 **Keep and increase illustrations'** quality and quantity.

Below: Is this clear? If you worry someone will water improperly when you're away, tell them they probably *won't have to water* and leave a single measured amount for each plant in case you're proved wrong. See page 6.



9 Begin to **update and republish "Lost Issues" here** in the current newsletters, starting with the never-collected "F" edition. As we call past Q&A back to service we'll fit them with the illustrations they always deserved but couldn't have in their original venue. Eventually we'll have our whole two-decade library on a website. This plan to combine new writing and newly-illustrated older work means those who were reading us in 1999 may recognize some old favorites among our new 2011 material.

If you would not be forgotten  
as soon as you are dead  
and rotten,  
Either write things worth  
reading,  
or do things worth the  
writing.  
- Ben Franklin -  
Poor Richard's Almanack, 1738

8 **Expand our web page** to a website that can have a real-time forum for Q&A.

Perhaps you missed our notices in the past two issues, but we do have a web page now. [www.gardenatoz.com](http://www.gardenatoz.com) So far it's only for giving you a way to download an issue if you notice it missing within 2 weeks. Go there if that's convenient. Or tell people they can check us out there rather than signing on right away for weekly email delivery.

[Gardenatoz.com](http://Gardenatoz.com)



Do you have a plant, a garden, or a gardener that deserves exclamation or begs answers? We can help.

We're Steven Nikkila: Horticulturist, photographer, humorist, and

Janet Macunovich: Professional gardener, author, teacher

We grow gardens, grow curious, and over the past 25 years have grown a network of people and answers. [Click here](#) for more about us and what we do for other gardeners.)

In our weekly e-magazine, *What's Coming Up*, we share what we've learned of why, when, how-to and how much, along with ideas, inspiration, incentive, consolation and the joy in this field.

*What's Coming Up* is fun, practical, timely, free... and it can contain your questions and ideas, answered and celebrated.

Download [the current issue](#) of *What's Coming Up*.

Download [last week's issue](#) of *What's Coming Up*.

Download [NEXT week's issue](#) of *What's Coming Up*!

To sign up for our free weekly newsletter or to send your questions and comments, just email us at [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com)

And watch for this site to grow!

## 10 Spend more time in our own

**garden**, where many very worthwhile experiments have been cooking -- and decaying! -- for decades. Many of you have mentioned wanting to see more of our own yard. We've replied to you who asked that there hasn't been much to show after many years of neglect. (We've favored clients...) We waited for time to appear; it didn't. Now we'll just create it.

## 11 Introduce Emily Compost and the

**Neighborly Negotiator** (who may have snazzier names by the time you meet them). They've agreed to take on questions of back yard etiquette and diplomacy -- topics that cause serious writer's block for this Mrs. "Just Do It" and Mr. "I'll Just Stay Here Behind My Camera." Stay tuned!

Gardening transcends  
everything that  
otherwise divides us.

- Allen Lacy -  
*The Inviting Garden*

## 12 Aim to do all this **without**

**increasing** and striving to decrease **newsletter size**. "Overwhelming" is a word that's come up in your email and we also know that feeling.

## Taper off on bird feed before *you* fly south

We leave Michigan for four months during winter. The remaining eight months, we feed the birds. Should we begin to feed lesser amounts during the last few weeks we are here, or just stop feeding the day we leave? - B.H. -

We hope this doesn't come too late, B.H. We know snowbirds are beginning to fly now!

## Lost issues? "F" edition? Say again?!

We began writing for this community in 1993 and over the first 6 years produced five collections of what we published weekly plus off-the-record Q&A. (First offered in paperback, we recreated those collections as A - E digital books on our first CD, which we named for the A volume: *Asking About Asters*.)

Then, for nine years while busy with our school we kept writing weekly and answering Q&A on our school's on-line forum, but didn't compile and publish collections. We resumed collecting the work when we started coming to you by email. We've released the 2008 compilation -- our "O" volume, *Outlooks on Oaks* -- and the 2009-2010 *Potting Up Perennials*.

Our intention has been to collect the intervening F thru N years. Since we didn't yet find the time to do that and also keep this weekly newsletter going, we'll combine the work this year.

Our collected works:

- *Asking About Asters*,
- *Bunches of Bushes*,
- *Clipping a Crabapple*,
- *Dividing the Daisies*,
- *Evergreen Entries* and
- *Outlooks on Oaks* were all included on our first CD collection. That gap between "E" and "O" holds 9 years of work we want you to have.



Scarlet tanagers winter in places like Columbia, so they aren't dependent on your winter seed. Chickadees, now...

Checked around with quite a few people and a number of print sources, and found that it's probably better to taper off at a feeder that has been filled in early winter but won't be tended for the rest of the cold season. The consensus is that the birds will have to find other food in any case but the critical point is that for some birds in some places, one day may be all they have. For those on the edge, having a bite to eat in the morning and realizing they've run out while there's still daylight, is better than waking to nothing at all. With breakfast to fuel them they can look to other sources, sooner. That may save their lives.

The situation's different for those in thickly settled areas with lots of bird feeders, versus those in more isolated areas. It may be the underlying difference in what's below from University of Maine and from Alaska Fish and Wildlife. Our take: If you're out in the country, your feeder may be "it" and that much more critical.

From Alaska State Department of Fish and Game: Once you begin feeding birds in the fall, you have made a commitment. A feeder often attracts more birds to an area than natural food sources can support. ...if you stop feeding them, the birds might not be able to find enough food to survive. So, if you plan a vacation, be sure to have someone restock your feeder regularly while you are gone

From Colorado State Division of Wildlife: ...food supply is a major factor in winter survival among songbirds. When the mercury drops, songbirds must stoke up their furnaces. Survival is a day-to-day battle. A study in the 1940s found that at 5°F, house sparrows could survive about 15 hours without eating—the length of a winter night. To make up for the night's deficit, and store up for the coming night, small birds must feed every day. Any difficulty finding food can be critical. Supplemental food from feeders may make the difference between surviving the winter or perishing. If someone chooses to stop feeding, it's best to taper off gradually instead of stopping abruptly so the birds have time to find new sources to make up for the lost feeder.

From University of Maine  
Many folks don't feed birds because they are concerned that the birds will become dependent on the feeders for survival and if they stop, for whatever reason, the birds will starve to death. To a large extent this is not so. Feeders serve as supplements to natural food sources, not replacements. Birds that visit feeders develop a routine or pattern of visiting feeders. If yours is empty on a particular

day, they simply go on to the next. If your feeder remains empty for a long period of time, they may quit coming at all or just stop by once in a while to check it out.



*I Heard a Bird Sing*

*I heard a bird sing  
In the dark of December  
A magical thing...*



- from Oliver Herford's poem in  
*Welcome Christmas! A Garland of Poems* -

Join Janet, author Catherine Connelly and illustrator Sue Kempinski-Hennessey on January 23 in Royal Oak for more on feeding and enjoying the birds. Bring a poem about birds or gardens. See page 14.

*What's Up* #125 Page 5

## Scrabbling in the garden, word play

We gardeners earn admiring murmurs when we display our garden's produce in vases and on plates. Stir up a bit of that admiration by tossing a nifty horticultural term or two on the table during the next Scrabble game. For instance:

**guttate**: verb; GUHD ayt; to exude drops of water from an uninjured plant surface, usually from the tip or margins of a leaf; *Some plants that evolved in rainforests and other frequently-soaked places can get rid of extra water by drawing it up and letting it **guttate** from the leaves.*

**potbound**: adjective; PAHT bownd; used to describe a pot-grown plant whose roots have entirely filled its container; *That **potbound** plant does need watering more often than the others because there's less total soil to hold water, but it's better to wait until spring to re-pot it.*

## This week in our garden

### Grow with us! This week:

We'll **teach plant watering 101** to a young friend. It's perhaps the most important task in gardening and often in commercial operations trusted only to the most experienced staff.\*

\*This is news to most people. We've often heard people say, "She wants a job and might like plants so we told her to go apply at that greenhouse. They probably need entry level people to do things like water."

We'll teach our young friend 5 things:

1) When a potted plant needs water, aim to **moisten its entire root zone** and quickly remove any excess.

2) **Test the pot for water need.** Heft the pot regularly. Water when it becomes a lightweight. Or stick a finger an inch down into the potting soil. Soil feels cool if it's moist, warm if it's dry. Water only when the plant has used all the water it was last given.\*

\*There are exceptions. Some plants like to be constantly moist, others prefer to dry all the way down between waterings. However, for a few weeks or a month they can all get by with this average treatment.

3) Then, **add water until it begins to run out the drain holes.** Wait 15 to 20 minutes for that excess to be reabsorbed. Pour off any that remains or if it was all reabsorbed, add a bit more to see if it runs out. (Sometimes the first of the water slips through the gap between pot and soil in a very dry plant. Once the soil is a bit moist it usually will absorb more.) Keep track of how much water you used, and plan to add that much water whenever that plant runs dry.

### Too little? Too much? Better not water *at all* ...

To be tentative and water a potted plant only a little causes problems. Almost all of the primary water-gathering root tips are at the bottom of a pot. Wetting only the top means the important roots get nothing while pests such as fungus gnats will thrive in moisture at the surface.

To overwater is very common and probably worse. Water sits in the catch pot making the lowest layer of root tips go without air. (Pot sans drain holes? Even worse because you can't see and pour off the excess.) Those root tips die and become susceptible to rot. That rot often becomes chronic throughout the root system.

4) Get used to the idea that some plants may go weeks between watering in winter. Water use is directly related to how many leaves there are to draw it up and how much light reaches each of those leaves. More light means more photosynthesis, more water taken up, and the reserves in the soil running dry more quickly.

5) Every time a plant needs water, it should need the same amount. The jade's pot uses a half pitcher, the young rosemary, a pop bottle's worth. So we'll measure out water for each pot "in case" but teach our young friend to feel the soil and be unafraid of letting the plant go without if the soil feels even a bit cool.

If you'll only be gone a week or two, it may be better to let plants go without watering. Gather plants in one place, in bright light away from windows. A dry bathtub with shower curtain pulled across the opening is often a good spot. There, out of direct sun, the plants' water needs will be lower and they will benefit from community humidity.



Amaryllis: Perhaps better if it's dry in a room out of direct light for a couple of weeks rather than being overwatered by an inexperienced helper.

*Flowers are words which even a babe may understand.*  
- Arthur Cleveland Case -

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**Begin sending out our new index.** It covers all our e-newsletters from April 2008 through December 2010. With it you can find a concept, plant name, a key word you recall from a quote, or even a memorable picture. It works in the traditional way -- flip to the heading you need ("Design", "Maple", "Planting" etc.) and scan the subtopics to find what newsletter issue and page to read. What we think is more exciting is that it can also be searched electronically. This can be faster and reveal more cross-references. The index package contains a complete, illustrated "how to use" on pages 188-194.

194! Yes, it has a lot of pages. We indexed *everything*. **If you do not need the index, please let us know** with a "No index" email.

If you're eager for it, bear with us. The sending will take a few weeks since we will also be sending regular newsletters and have to keep our total number of emails below Spam limits.

**Index to What's Coming Up\* 2008 - 2010 page 2**

Entries in violet text:  
Refer to files on the CD Asking About Asters

Scroll through pages/alphabetical listings to your chosen field for conventional use. Or go to pages 188-194 where *How To Use This Index* will help you to do an e-search which jumps faster and catches more related items.

**Abelia**  
cut back hard WU65 Pg 4

**Abies, fir**  
balsam GC766 Pg 2  
Abies balsamea, balsam fir WU26 Pg 4  
Abies concolor GC765 Pg 3  
pruning WU55 Pg 6-7  
winter interest WU72 Pg 1  
don't prune to bare wood WU56 Pg 6  
dwarf conifers WU122 Pg 7  
holiday foldiere WU72 Pg 2  
identification notes WU72 Pg 3-9  
multiple leaders / tops not desirable WU43 Pg 7  
pruning GC760 Pg 4  
salt damage GC753 Pg 3  
stress WU16 Pg 5

**abscisic acid, affects hardiness WU16 Pg 1**

**Abutilon, flowering maple**  
overwintering WU113 Pg 3

**Acacia seed longevity WU13 Pg 2**

**Acalypha hispida, indoor bloom GC753 Pg 5**

**Acanthus spinosissimus, bear's breeches WU46 Pg 11, WU52 Pg 8**

**Acer, maple**  
Acer buergerianum, trident maple WU26 Pg 2  
A. griseum, paperbark maple WU21 Pg 3  
bark WU124 Pg 7  
Acer negundo, box elder  
as weed in hedge WU13 Pg 8  
not all bad WU115 Pg 10-11  
determining age WU115 Pg 10  
Acer palmatum Japanese maple WU121 Pg 9  
beautiful habii GC764 Pg 6  
Crimson Queen WU111 Pg 1, 5  
dwarf purple leaf WU99 Pg 2  
fall color WU64 Pg 9  
fertilizer WU66 Pg 1-2  
green laceleaf GC771 Pg 1-2  
leaves fall to drop in fall WU67 Pg 7  
mature size WU66 Pg 2  
midsummer collapse WU101 Pg 6



Page number examples:  
WU19 Pg 2, violet  
Go to the file What's Coming Up issue 10, page 2 on CD Asking About Asters.  
GC771 Pg 3, violet  
Go to the file Growing Concerns 771, page 3 on CD Asking About Asters



WU89 Pg 4, green  
Go to the file What's Coming Up issue 89, page 4 on CD Putting Up Perennials

\*What's Coming Up is the free e-newsletter published weekly by Janet Macunovich & Steven Nikkila info or to subscribe: JMaxGarden@aol.com 248-681-7850

Entries in green text: What'sUp #22 - 122  
Compiled on CD Potting Up Perennials

I have my own index, Janet and Steven, and it works well enough. I just copy from your cover email each week that list of topics you give us, and paste it into an ongoing text document. Then when I want to find something I can search that one file. - P.N. -

Great idea, P.N.! And thanks for saving us the time to send what you don't need!

**Green thumbs up** to leaving the holiday greenery on display. We do love to see it, especially those made of such different things they announce "Here lives a gardener!"

**Green thumbs down** to **pushing your non-gardening kin over the edge** during the holidays. **Rule number four:** Do not lecture about compost during the work of making and cleaning up feasts. Yes, those carrot peelings could go on a compost pile or into a worm bin. So just quietly intercept them, bag and freeze them, then use them yourself. Let the others enjoy the holiday company without hearing about compost dynamics. You can make a note to enlighten people later when they are *outdoors*.



**You think these Thumbs up/Thumbs down are just jest? Just listen:**

Thanks for the laugh about Green Thumbs down (to leaving other people's plants alone). We just can't help it when something needs a bit of TLC. When I am at my chiropractor I clean up his plants or make the staff aware that some pots need watering or ask for a container to get water.

How do you like this: When a busload of gardeners went touring this summer we had a rest stop and were appalled about the bed of day lilies that was in need of deadheading. Before you knew it a bunch of us took care of that task and we were all laughing about our compulsion for neatness. What can you say -- but it looked a lot better after we were done - in no time. - M -

**If you ever miss an issue**

**Send us an email and we'll re-send.**

**Download the current or last week's issue** at our web page, [www.gardenatoz.com](http://www.gardenatoz.com). (Don't look for much else there as it's not a site yet, only a page. We'll work on expanding it this winter, and maybe be able to get a real-time forum put into place.)

**For collected issues** purchase our CD. The newest has 101 issues, completely indexed. All regular weekly issues include a description and ordering information.

## Who's Janet? Who's Steven?

A professional gardener and educator since 1984, Janet Macunovich designs, plants and tends gardens through her business, Perennial Favorites. She teaches and writes about gardening at schools, conferences, in her books, this weekly newsletter, the monthly Michigan Gardener and other publications.



**Horticultural photographer** Steven Nikkila was a hobbyist with a great eye who went back to college for a photography degree once he ushered his own children into grade school. Needing an elective one semester and thinking to bring home good information for his wife's gardening business, he took a class in ornamental horticulture and found himself hooked. Soon the leaps and bounds he'd been recording as his children grew had rivals in files of leaf and ground. He went on to earn a degree in horticulture, while illustrating his wife's books and lending a hand digging gardens. He calls it, "A great combination," and says, "I love this job almost as much as the best one I ever had -- raising my kids."



Email questions to Janet or Steven at [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) or call 248-681-7850.

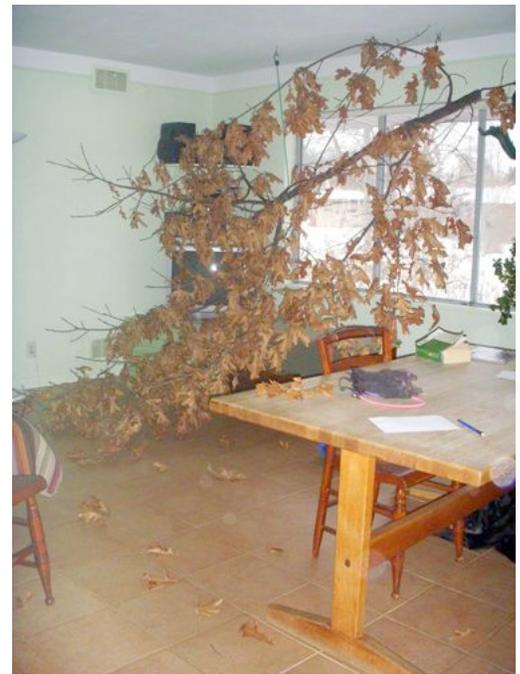
## Oak-kay with an alternate tree for the holiday

Last winter we decided to save floor space and try out the ancient tradition of bringing in a Christmas *branch* rather than a whole tree, and we loved it. We figure we'll try a different species each year. This year we used an oak,



perhaps the most sacred of trees all over the world. Here's the story.

Christmas Eve is our day for decorating, a nod to Janet's parents who would put the tree up and decorate it after the kids were in bed, telling them Christmas morning it was a gift from Santa. So while Steven does Santa duty on Christmas eve, Janet sets up for the decorating.



Janet caused quite a disruption coming into the house with a 15' branch that could reach 6' to either side. It cleared the counter of lunch dishes, the wall of pictures. She says it didn't look so big when it was on the tree.

Once in, and with its butt end bungee'd to one of our big ceiling hooks, Janet realized she probably need a third hand, or more.



Liz and Gerrit Hyde from across the street were home and helped get it to this point...

...then stayed to prune out the shaggy bits.

As Liz worked in thinning a dense section (left limbs, below), we suddenly saw it was a perfect place for a squirrel's nest.



Liz and Gerrit built a nest, then ran home for a stuffed squirrel while Janet giggled about raking the living room into a yard waste bag...



Gerrit didn't find the squirrel but "something better."



Liz had come with a ready-coiled snake.

We loved them both!



Now we look up into oak branches, bearing ornaments older than we are, and the faces of friends and family on holiday greeting cards.

And we've started studying oak anatomy and damage traces!



Friends Don and Celia Ryker and our son Cory declared it "cool," while the dogs and cat gave it the once over and accepted it as normal doings.

We figure we'll take the decorations down on 12th Night, per tradition, but leave the branch until spring.

Janet here, with a word in respect of Steven's reputation. He was busy with 300+ children while all this went on, and worked late as Santa often does on that big day. I took these photos so he could share in the day and he encouraged me to share them with you.



**Where to catch Janet & Steven in-person:**

**Saturday mornings, January 22, January 29 and February 5.** Join Janet, Suzan Campbell, and Cheryl English as the Detroit Garden Center presents the Center's **20th Winter Seminar series.**

I know of no common interest that exceeds gardening as a source of lifelong friendships, nor as a means of making new friends almost constantly.  
*Allen Lacy The Inviting Garden*

20! How 'bout that! And with so many good friends coming each year. It's a great learning time but also a great get-together.

This year we'll spend those three Saturday mornings growing into some new Gardening Perspectives:

January 22: *Gardening in Small Spaces*. Janet shows you how to grow and enjoy more in a courtyard, tiny bed or other small area.

January 29: *The Big Picture: Overhead, underfoot and long ago in SE Michigan gardens*.

Suzan Campbell, Conservation Educator at the Michigan Natural Features Inventory and Cheryl English, professional gardener and educator, take you back to glaciers and forward to today to show you to what your garden's really made of, why you should care, and how to get the very best four-season effect in your garden with native plants.

February 5: *All the Best Sense in a Garden*. Janet gives you a fresh look at your garden as a place of wonder for ears, skin, nose and taste bud. It's how to design and tend your garden to have more dimension and fun, even with your eyes shut.

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. each date, at **Historic Trinity Church**, 1345 Gratiot in Detroit, around the corner from Eastern Market. \$30 per class or \$75 for the series. For more information or to register, call the Detroit Garden Center at 313-259-6363 or download a registration form at [www.detroitgardencenter.org](http://www.detroitgardencenter.org).



Have a tiny, tough spot to garden? A courtyard? A miniscule strip along the driveway? a planter box? Join us January 22, 29 and February 5 for ways to make that spot a great garden. You won't believe how much dimension it can have and fun it will be, all from starting with its "small" aspect then working down to its bedrock and out into all five senses.



Gardeners are definitely the best kind of people. Used to grappling with terrible weather, soil, etc. and happy when something actually goes right, putting aside everything that didn't. - Barb Hayes, Manager of the volunteer organization The Detroit Garden Center -

**Sunday, January 23, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.** Janet and her good friends Catherine Connelly and Sue Kempinski-Hennessey (right) present *Birds, Gardens and Poetry* a celebration of things we love in the garden and book signing by Catherine of her new book *The Nature of Poetry*. Janet will speak at 3:00 about planting for the birds. From 4:00 to 5:00 Catherine will read and lead poetry readings by any and all who wish to celebrate their garden and the life in it. In **Royal Oak, Michigan at Wild Birds Unlimited, 28588 Woodward between 11- and 12 Mile Roads.** Free, but reserve a spot by calling 248-548-2424. *The Nature of Poetry* will be available for sale, and Catherine and illustrator Sue Kempinski Hennessey will autograph books. All proceeds go to support breast cancer research.



Grow with Janet at **Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, Wisconsin:**

**Tuesday, January 25, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.,** *Simple, Successful Garden and Landscape Design*. Janet presents steps suitable for anyone developing a bed or a property, for themselves or others. Topics include how to match the design to your needs, set a budget, arrange plants and other elements beautifully and even predict needed care.

**Wednesday, January 26, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.** it's *Garden and Landscape Renovation*. Janet leads you through practical, in-depth how-to for making changes while maintaining unity between old and new facets of a property.

Take one or both classes At **Olbrich Botanical Gardens 3330 Atwood Avenue in Madison, Wisconsin.** For more information, contact the gardens' office at 608-246-4550 or copy this URL to your browser bar to read about classes and download a registration form:  
<http://www.olbrich.org/education/classes.cfm>

**Friday, January 28, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m.,** Janet presents *Renovating the Older Landscape, Part 1* for those deciding where to start and what they can accomplish in changing what's already well established on a property, and

**Friday, February 25, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m.,** *Renovating the Older Landscape, Part 2:* more of the nitty gritty how-to for making your landscape dreams come true. Attend one or both sessions. Presented by the Meadow Brook Hall Garden Club in **Rochester, Michigan at Meadow Brook Hall.** (Take Meadow Brook Rd. west from Adams south of Walton rd., and follow signs). \$5 per session to non-members. No advance registration required.

**Tool Cleaning party.** Bring your tools, learn how to clean and sharpen them, then set a spell among good company and put those tools in order!

**Sunday, February 6, 1 - 3 p.m.** in Ortonville, Michigan

**Sunday, February 13, 1 - 3 p.m.** in Milford, Michigan

**Sunday, February 20, 1 - 3 p.m.** in Troy, Michigan

**Sunday, February 27, 1 - 3 p.m.** on lovely Belle Isle in Detroit

We're co-hosting parties this year with friends and fellow educators Celia Ryker, Sue Shuttleworth, Deb Hall and the Detroit Garden Center. Details are still being finalized but expect to chip in about \$5 toward supplies. Email or call ahead to reserve a spot and receive all the location details. You can email Janet and Steven now to reserve a spot, but if you're reading this notice after New Year's 2011, check a newer issue because reservation arrangements may evolve.

## Invite Janet or Steven or their expert friends to your club or community.

We go where we're invited! That's taken us all over the country and then some over the past 20 years. We address many topics, drawing from our list of **100+ talks**. We also continue **to meet groups' needs** and expand our horizons by developing new material or "hybridizing" from what we already have.

So, whether it's...

- a **how-to lesson for a garden club** meeting,
  - a **hands-on workshop** at a site of your choosing or
  - a **multi-part class** for a small group,
- ...we're game!

We can also connect you to one or a whole line-up of other experts who know how to explain how-to. So give us a **call or send an email** to make a date, request our list of classes and talks or get a referral.

**JMaxGarden@aol.com** or **248-681-7850**. Our calendars fill about a year in advance for spring weekends, and six months ahead for most other weekends and evenings. So give us some lead time. Then we can meet you in *your* garden.



Steven Nikkila and Janet Macunovich have been digging, shooting and teaching how-to for 22 years. They began producing conferences in the early '90s and then ran a gardening school for 12 years, featuring expert instructors who knew their stuff in the garden as well as knowing how to get their messages across in front of a group. Janet and Steven are glad to help you themselves or refer you to these others to meet your group's need. Contact them at [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) or 248-681-7850 when you want to set up a talk, workshop or class.



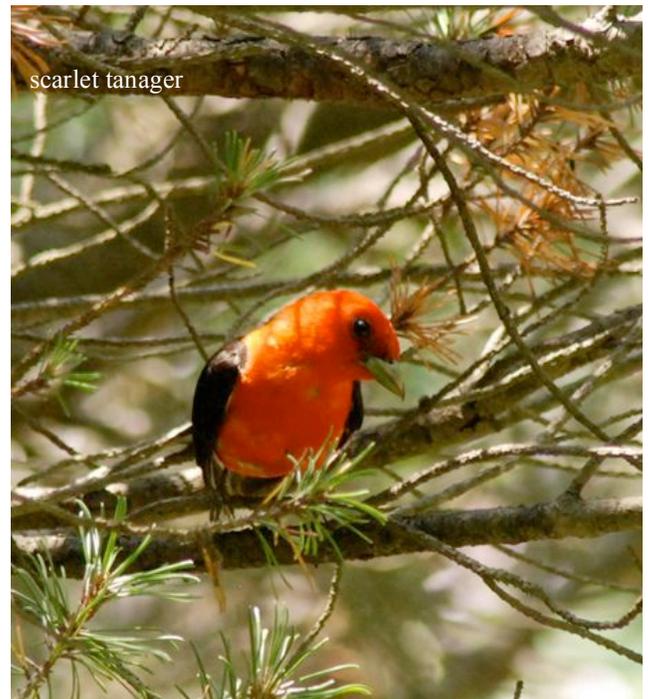
## Time to garden your walls...

Steven's decorated many walls with great garden and Nature images. He can help you do the same with photos that capture the garden beauty you love, framed or on canvas to your specifications.

You can own any of Steven's images from *What's Coming Up*.<sup>\*</sup> Or if you have a flower, type of scene or hue in mind, request your dream. His library includes tens of thousands of plants and natural images, so Steven can assemble a customized photo sampler and price list for you.



dragonfly



scarlet tanager

Email us at [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) for details, to request a sampler or to place an order.

Prices for **Steven's garden art** vary with your wishes in format and size. Examples:

**Matted, framed**, overall 11 x 15", \$48

36 x 48' no-fade **cloth tapestry**, \$215



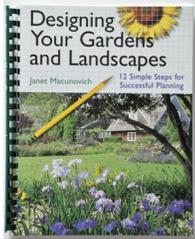
staghorn sumac



morning glory

<sup>\*</sup>Images in our newsletter are depicted in low- resolution to facilitate e-mail transmission. Steven's originals and art created from them are full resolution, with so much clear detail they are sharp even as wall-size cloth banners.

**You asked for our advice "on paper". We wrote and sell these books plus CDs:**



***Designing Your Gardens and Landscapes***

First published in 1990 as *Easy Garden Design*, a 150-page step-by-step recipe that's become a design classic. Janet developed, uses and has trained thousands of others to use this process. People say: "This is exactly the simple, clear approach I need!" This design process is applicable world-wide.

Soft cover, spiral bound. B&W illustrations by Janet. \$19.00

***Caring for Perennials***

Janet's unique approach to perennial care how-to, the real-time story of one bed from early spring to season's end. The 180 engaging and fact-filled pages make you part of all Janet does and you might ever need to do in each task's appropriate season and sequence. Includes a chart of what to do, when for 70 top perennials. Advice in this book is applicable in all of temperate U.S. and Canada. The perennial chart includes a key to adapt its timing for far southern or northern edges of that range.

Soft cover book. Text by Janet Macunovich. Color illustrations by Steven Nikkila. \$20.00



***Asking About Asters CD.***

A digital library of six years of Janet's work: weekly columns, newsletters and over 200 extra Q&A letters to individual gardeners. 1,681 questions answered about soil preparation, fertilizing, pruning, design, choosing plants, foiling bugs and much more. No repeated topics. Fully indexed; the entire collection can be searched from one index.

1 CD in jewel case, Windows- and Mac compatible. \$20.00



***Potting Up Perennials CD. New for 2010***

Practical, beautiful answers about perennials and all kinds of flowers, trees, shrubs, design, pruning and much more is in this collection of 2009 & 2010's *What's Coming Up*. Includes 101 issues with over 1,700 pages, 1,600 articles and 2,400 images. Has a comprehensive index with how-to guide so you can search for any topic or detail in any of the 101 issues. Bonus on this CD: Steven Nikkila's Daydream Screen Saver, 74 of his most vivid works from gardens and nature.

1 CD in jewel case, Windows- and Mac compatible. \$20.00

***Janet & Steven's complete digital library New for 2010***

Set of two CDs: *Asking About Asters* and *Potting Up Perennials*. \$30.00



***Janet and Steven give you: Trees\****

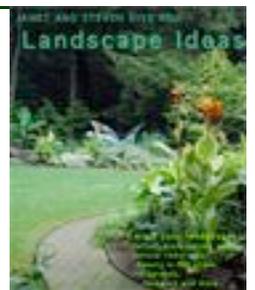
A choice collection of Janet and Steven's advice for tree selection, planting and care. Each article made its debut in *Michigan Gardener* magazine and has been on hold since, awaiting completion of its fellows until this comprehensive compilation became possible. Topics include: Selecting trees; fall color; what's happening to ash trees; replacing a big tree; descriptions, lists and photos of great trees; why starting small is a good idea when planting; planting how-to, why's and why not's; staking, watering and fertilizing; mulching; rescuing a tree from the lawn; preventing construction damage; pruning to keep trees and shrubs small; removing suckers; detecting girdling roots; and dealing with maple tar spot and lecanium scale.

10" x 13" magazine, 48 pages. Color illustrations. \$12.00

***Janet and Steven give you: Landscape Ideas\****

Janet and Steven's favorite articles on landscape design and renovation: Designing with foliage color; covering up after the bulb season; doubling up perennials for 3-season color; shady solutions; using usual plants in unusual ways; designing hypo-allergenic gardens; Murphy's Laws applied to gardens; renovation how-to; fragrant plants and designs; attracting wildlife; rockwork; invasive plants; discovering a site's hidden assets; using herbs in a landscape; and how to cheat to improve a garden quickly. These articles appeared first in *Michigan Gardener* magazine individually between 1999 and 2010. Now they're collected in this set for your design library.

10" x 13" magazine, 48 pp. Color Ill.'s. \$12.00



***Janet and Steven give you: Garden Care\****

Vital how-to for tending a garden, from Janet and Steven's favorite articles on: bed preparation; soil testing; making a weed-free bed; spring start-up; improving hard-packed soil; fertilizing; watering; cutting back and deadheading; repairing irrigation; drought-tolerant plants; sharpening tools; tweaking in summer; staking; and the art of fall garden clean up. Items in this collection were selected from among Janet and Steven's ten years of *Michigan Gardener* articles. Each made its debut in that magazine, waited for its companion pieces and now they all join your library in this more durable and comprehensive form.

10" x 13" magazine, 48 pages. Color illustrations. \$12.00

***Janet and Steven give you: Trees, Landscape Ideas and Garden Care \****

Set of three 10" x 13" magazines, 48 pages each. \$30.00



**\*For a look inside, email [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) with the subject line "Magazine peek."**

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**Still FREE:**

Our *What's Coming Up* e-newsletter.

Pages and pages of timely garden how-to every week!



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