

What's Coming Up:

Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila answer your growing concerns
Issue #164, November 23, 2011

In this issue:

Such gall in a leaf! Pages 1 - 2
Rose covers, peony cuts, page 3
Wintering a potted Japanese maple, pages 4 - 5
Resin-able for winter, pp. 4 -5
When cutbacks don't comeback, pages 6 - 8
Recover from a dig-up, pp. 8-9
Adriatic gardens, pages 9 - 10
We disturb, apologize, scoop, seek & admire, pp. 10-12
Berry fine at 45 mph, pp. 12 - 14
Leafy joy, sans fertilizer, pg. 15
Who are Janet and Steven?
Where to see us, pp. 15 - 17
Photos, books, & CDs, pp 18 - 20



Few things add so much excitement to a gray, cold day as a winterberry. Page 14



The galls shown here are probably linden nail gall (*Eriophyes lateannulatus*). The mite involved can feed only on linden and its feeding always causes galls of this look and location: vertical, round tipped, on the upper leaf surface. Photo ©2011 Pam Giroux

No worries: Bumpy leaf is simply galling

For the past three years, my Linden tree has had these weird growths on the leaves. The tree seems to be growing fine, but I am concerned about what is happening with the leaves and will it affect my tree negatively in the future. Do you happen to know what this is and if I should treat it with something?

Many thanks for all of your hard work! - P.G. -

The growths are leaf galls, bizarre to look at, but not really troubling to the tree. The creature within the gall, one of the eriophyid mites (perhaps *Eriophyes lateannulatus*) began feeding on the leaf when it was forming. Something about the injury -- the most common bet is that pest-produced chemicals are the cause -- stimulated the leaf to make the growth, kind of like an irritating grain can make an oyster form a pearl. The tree loses very, very little leaf surface to the galls. Control is almost certainly not required.*

Eriophyid mites pass winter in (varies by species, see right, *A Mite's Life*) a shed leaf, under bark, or in the soil. They emerge in spring to lay eggs on newly-forming leaves. To break that cycle, one would remove and destroy any galled leaf as the galls develop, and/or apply a miticide (not the same as an insecticide) to coat all the emerging leaves in early spring as *that type of mite* begins feeding.



However, as explained in* Extension bulletins and Forestry guides: "...these annoyances usually do not cause long-term damage to the tree. ...controls are not usually necessary ...usually not practical. The appropriate time to treat will vary considerably from year to year and from place to place, making good control more a matter of luck than skill.

**Insect Galls on Trees and Shrubs* <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/IC417.pdf>

Galls on Trees <http://www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/ipm.asp?code=54>

Most Leaf Galls Don't Hurt Trees <http://lancaster.unl.edu/hort/nebline/Galls.shtml>

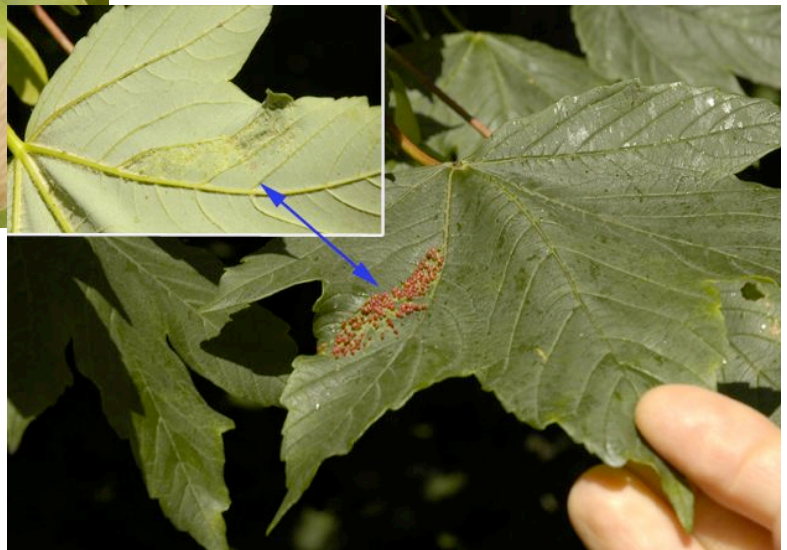
A mite's life

The linden nail gall mite spends winter as an adult under the tree's bark. It comes out in spring to feed on the leaf underside as the leaves form, causing the leaf to create a hollow gall. It enters the gall, keeps feeding, and lays eggs. There may eventually be 200 mites inside one gall, yet the leaf is not seriously hampered. It continues to produce plenty of sugar and starch to fuel the tree's life processes. By the end of the season, the mites leave the gall and take up residence under the bark to wait out winter.



Galls are strange, and anyone who sees them can probably understand why people in the past thought they were supernatural and had future-telling powers.

They are named for their look and the host plant. There are spindly, warty, felty, balled and other galls. A nifty site where you can look up the host plant and view gall photos is <http://www.bladmineerders.nl/gallen/gallenlijst.htm>



Helpful books include *Plant Galls*, by Margaret Redfern, from the Naturalist Library published by HarperCollins, and *Insects that Feed on Trees and Shrubs* by Warren T. Johnson and Howard H. Lyon, from the Cornell University Press.

At the heart of gardening there is a belief in the miraculous.

- Mirabel Osler -

Roses prefer an airy comforter, peonies tough it out in the open

Is it best to use mulch or compost when putting roses down for the winter? Should peony be cut back for the winter and some burlap put around it?? – A.H. –

A deep, fluffy mulch is good for roses. If the compost is airy, compost works. Soil's okay, too.

Choose an insulation that doesn't trap too much moisture. Wet stuff against rose canes can do more harm than good. So avoid anything dense that tends to get soggy.

It's wise to wait to winterize roses until there has been a season-ending cold snap -- a killing frost, one that blackens even the hardiest foliage. In our neighborhood, we're enjoying a bit of Indian Summer right now. We may dump the necessary materials near the roses but we won't heap them on, yet.

How far to cut a peony? It depends! The common herbaceous peonies should be cut back as far down as you can cut. Its buds are *below* ground level. Tree peonies shouldn't be cut in fall except to thin the canopy or remove weak and poorly positioned branches. Better to prune them right after bloom, so all new growth could bloom the next year.

Above, right: To sort a tree peony from its herbaceous cousin or their new intersectional hybrids, look at bud position. Herbaceous peonies set their buds just at and below ground level (pink bump, A). Tree peonies are woody shrubs with next year's flower buds borne on the branches, even right out to the tips (C). The intersectional hybrids set buds from below ground to a little way up the stem (B). A and B can be cut to the ground and still bloom without pause. C must keep its above-ground tip buds or it won't bloom the following spring.

Cut herbaceous peonies and intersectional hybrids right to the ground. That curtails the bud-killing fungus called peony botrytis, removing infected stems and leaves (arrow) that carry the fungal spores.

No peony needs special protection in winter unless you're in zone 4 bordering on zone 3 -- as in Gaylord, Michigan, the center of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, northern Minnesota or North Dakota. In those very cold places you may want to add several inches of new mulch over the roots in fall for a bit of extra insulation.



What's the winter shelf life of a canned Japanese maple

What a beautiful issue, #163. Thanks for sharing. Is that *Acer palmatum dissectum* growing in a pot? Is this something I should try in my Southern Oakland county, Michigan back yard facing South? What is your suggestion? - B.H. -

You certainly can grow a Japanese maple in a large container on a permanent basis. We do that. However, since it can be a killer to leave it where its roots are exposed above ground during the coldest part of winter, we pull the pot into a sheltered place near a building in fall, then bank bags of leaves all around it. We wait until Thanksgiving or later to do that, so we won't encourage mice-looking-for-winter-homes to set up shop in the pot's insulating leaves.*

We also directed your query to the gardeners who maintain that tree you saw in issue #163. Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, in Madison, Wisconsin, replied:

"We have planted Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) in pots for years with very good success. They seem to be quite happy growing in our light-weight potting mix (Fafard 3B) and terracotta containers. We often grow them for several years and then when they get too large to move, we plant them out into the garden. To protect them from winter injury we house them in one of our unheated garages (the largest specimens) or in a minimally heated (32-38°F) quonsets from October until April.



*Waiting until late fall to apply deep mulch: It's an oft-cited theory. The idea is that mice have selected their winter homes by that time. However, we have never seen any studies that prove mice adhere to this rationale.

At home I over-winter boxwood and Japanese maples, among other woodies that I grow in pots during the season, by "planting" them in the ground on the north side of my house for the winter. I pop them in at this time of year and dig them out and re-pot them again come spring and all is good. The northern exposure assures that they stay frozen solid all winter and the more tender root systems are protected from the cold."

What this country needs is dirtier fingernails and cleaner minds.

- Will Rogers -

Thick resin pot the reason for plant survival

Thank you for a great newsletter! I particularly liked the article on muffling pots against cold. Usually, I take my plants out of the pots in the Fall, and plant them in the ground. But I have noted that some of my plants (such as boxwood) have survived our snowy winters with no problem. Now I know why! It is because of the resin pots that they are planted in. They are large and thick (and near the front entrance of our home).

I have two hanging pots (with coconut liners) that have succulents planted in each one. They come back year after year without any problem. I am not sure why. My guess is that succulents are hard to kill.

I would like to try muffling our other pots to see if they get through the winter....they all have perennials planted in them, which also helps with survival. I like the idea of putting them on top of the soil, in addition to the wrapping. We shall give it a go and find out. I like to experiment with new ideas.

I sure wish you lived closer to our state of Nevada... I would enjoy attending your classes.
- D.B. -

You're right about those succulents. We have some that live in a shallow concrete birdbath, almost zero soil under them, then 24" of frigid air between their roots and the ground. The darned things just keep on going. We think that sometimes their roots do die, but the plants re-root from their leaf bases once the soil warms.



Resin pots are very lightweight and their thick walls offer good insulation against cold. They can be made to look like anything from concrete

to fine ceramic and even metal. This one has occupied this porch in zone 5 for almost ten years, and some of the plants in it have been there most of that time. ('Color Guard' yucca, 'Dragon's Blood' sedum, wooly thyme and evergreen *Dianthus*).

Bonus points!

When gardeners talk, a lot of bonus information is often exchanged. For instance, we asked about overwintering potted Japanese maples and also learned:

Verticillium wilt claims more Japanese maples than cold in winter, at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in cold zone 5, Madison, Wisconsin. In the past, some plants there have contracted the fatal fungal disease, verticillium wilt. Its spores remain in the soil and can infect new plantings. So the gardeners watch **European smoke bush** (*Cotinus coggygria*) as a **verticillium wilt indicator**, since it's a plant that is very susceptible to that disease.

American smoke bush (*Cotinus obovatus*) is verticillium-resistant.

Some **attractive, small-scale maples** that are more dependably hardy in cold zone 5 than the common Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) are:

- fullmoon maple (*A. shirashawanum*, aka. *A. japonicum*)
- Korean maple (*A. pseudosieboldianum*)
- Manchurian maple (*A. mandshuricum*)
- three-flower maple (*A. triflorum*)
- striped maple (*A. pensylvanicum*)
- snakebark maple (*A. tegmentosum*)
- the hybrid (*A. x tegmentosum* 'White Tigress')
- paperbark maple (*A. griseum*)

Your job as gardener is to keep things running smoothly for the plants and animals that live in or visit your yard, whatever the weather decides to do.

- Ruth Shaw Ernst -

Yew dogs! What to do with cutbacks that made no comeback

I was in one of your garden classes last winter and I asked about trimming back my yews. I was so unsure about pruning aggressively even after you said I could, that I came to another of your classes and asked again after class. I understood that I should trim them back in March. I tried to leave the main branches and cut back to a foot less than the full growth I wanted. I thought I followed your advice but two yews have no growth and the other two minimal amounts. The middle yews have been planted there for at least 5 years. The yew closest to the porch was here when we bought the house 25 years ago and the yew to the right has been there about 18 years. I can't wait for another year as this is the front of my house. What should I do now? Comments from family and friends include: What grade did you get in the pruning class?... Was this bonsai? What's with the front? Where will we hang our Christmas lights?



The advice you gave on my hemlock, dogwoods and hydrangea pruning worked out very well. Alas...the yews are a disappointment. HELP. - B.B. -

Cut back in spring, still bare in fall, yet still no reason to despair.

***If a tree dies,
plant another in
its place.***
- Linnaeus -

Unfortunately, that does happen sometimes. Sometimes it's because the plant had some inherent weakness. This year it happened to us, too. We think the weather interfered with the yews' regrowth, stopping them from pushing out from old wood as they normally would.

The weather we fault was quite unusual -- very cold and rainy right up until summer's long days arrived, and then very suddenly hot and dry. Plants depend on environmental cues, with various growth hormones developing in response to occurrence and sequence of temperature changes, daylength, soil moisture, etc. So we can't say it's all that surprising when they "act wrong" in such a year.

If we didn't say at either of the classes you attended, that sometimes it does happen that a cut back plant doesn't come back, then shame on us, twice over, for we usually do. We also usually say that this risk does not stop us from cutting back, because -- well, here's from issue #87, regarding a yew's comeback after cutback:

"If a plant that you cut back, dies, you haven't lost anything except a plant that did not and could not fit into your garden scheme. Don't cry over hard cuts that fail to come back. Consider the now-bare spot as an opportunity to try something new, and go looking for something that will not overgrow as the original tenant did."

If a bush is too big, don't ask "should I?" Go ahead and cut it. If it lives, great. If it dies, replace it with something better suited! - Janet -

What we've done with yews we cut back this year that have not resprouted from bare wood, is cut them back farther -- to stubs just barely above the ground. Their next chance to push out is next spring, and we'll know which are alive when they do that. The strongest new growth will come from the *top* of live wood, so our second cut means we'll see less brown and the new leaves will have less bare wood to support.

Some of those shrubs, or some of their wood, may be dead now, exhausted from staying alive without needles for a whole growing season. We'll be able to identify those plants and branches right away in April because they will not sprout. We'll put new plants there.

If we have to dig out the dead stumps we will, but if we can plant to one side or the other, we'll just leave those very short stubs in place.

We're sorry your plants and ours couldn't have filled in *this* year, but we have still saved the considerable expense of removal and replacement. In addition, in the case we're showing you here, we were also reluctant to do such extensive excavation and planting because it could have undermined the walk's foundation. So we and the shrubs' owners remain content to let them fill in at their own speed.



If in fall you are still waiting for shrubs to come back from a hard cut-back, there's no rush to cut them -- you can wait until spring. Visually, the

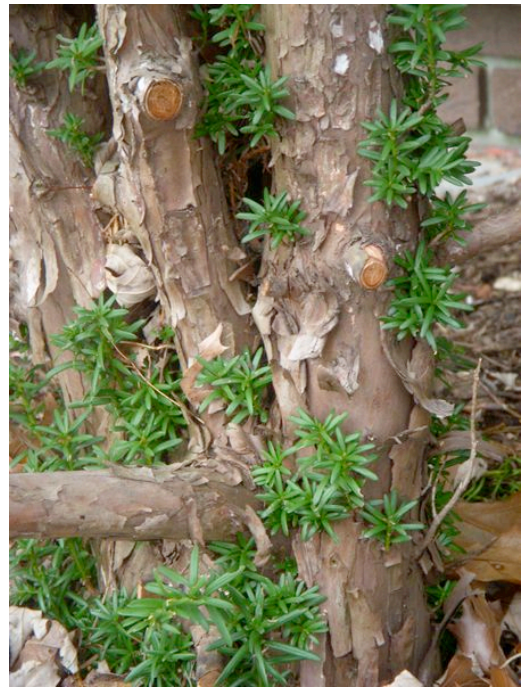
worst is past. After apologizing for the plants all summer, when their bare twigs made them stand-outs in the landscape, you can now sit back, because they're indistinguishable from all the other leafless shrubs. They will also support Christmas lights just fine.

Top, right: Some of our own yew hold-outs. They were 12" taller than you see here, hiding part of the window and filling the bed right to the edge of the walk. A once-attractive edging of hostas had been squeezed thin like the fringe on a balding head. We cut them in April.

Above, right: By August we knew they weren't going to be doing any more sprouting this year. In fall we cut them back. We expect to see sprouts appear on the lower parts of the bare branches next spring.

Right: Sprout new is what the pyramidal yews in the row already did. They're a different species but also capable of comeback from bare wood. They didn't push out new growth in May as expected, but did get around to doing it in August. So now there are new shoots coming from what was a totally woody main trunk (right). Those brand new shoots will grow like sixty next spring, maybe as much as 18".

See the branch stubs? They are from are cuts we made just now, to remove branches that were mostly bare, with needles only at the tips. They were not pretty and would serve only to block sun from these new shoots. So we removed them.



Big dig in the yard: Fortunately, it's not too late to transplant

We had to dig all along the foundation and trench through the yard because of a water problem. Now there's sand heaped all over the lawn where they trenched, and all the bushes from near the house were kind of scooped out by the excavator machine and they're sitting in a sand pile. Is it too late to transplant them, or if we leave them there will they still be salvageable in spring? There's a rose of sharon, a burning bush, a dwarf lilac and some others.

Also, the lawn has sand spread all over it. Does that have to be removed? Do I re-seed? Do I need to bring in soil when we re-seed? Sorry to bother you with all this and if you can't tell me anything I'm sure it'll work out, but it's all just so much more wreckage than I thought there would be. - L.D. -

Why are wells and pipes most likely to fail in winter? Fortunately, even when we can't replant we can drop frozen clumps of perennials into plastic bags or bag shrubs' root balls, then drag them into the garage or the shade of a building until spring.

- Janet -

It's always a big upheaval to excavate utilities, but the landscape will grow back.

If you can work outdoors now, then level the planting beds and put the shrubs back. Sometimes an excavator operator can scrape up a shrub with more roots intact than even the most careful gardener could have saved, because the machine can handle more weight and mass. However, the machinery usually breaks more branches and snaps roots. Trim any breaks and tears -- clean cuts take less energy to repair.

If you can't replant right now, and that's often the case because there is so much leveling and shaping of beds to do first, then make sure any displaced plants have their roots covered and leave them there until spring.

If there is only an inch or so of airy soil on the lawn, the grass will abide until spring. Deeper or soggy cover may kill it and then you would re-seed.

It's unlikely you need new soil. After a dig it will appear you have too much soil, because what's there has been loosened. (Which is a good thing!) So dig and rake to level the disturbed areas. Leave beds and plants level but a bit high since the fill will settle. If you must add material to level very lumpy soil or to improve pale subsoil that's come to the surface, add compost rather than soil.

Whenever you buy soil, you also add weeds from the imported soil's own seed bank, and maybe even live weed roots. It's always better to work with the soil that's on site. Add seed-free builder's sand or compost if you need volume. - Steven -

Gardener Afield: Report from the Eastern Adriatic

The world is full of great gardens and even the widest ranging traveler can't see them all. Here's a chance to **peek at gardens in distant places**.

Our first visit to Europe made us very aware that in the U.S. and Canada we have the luxury of space. Every time we see friends' Old World travel photos we're reminded that cities there ran out of space long ago. Yet, as you see here in Croatia and Slovenia, people garden every available spot, including tight places we might never even consider.



Dear Janet & Steven,

You asked for some photos of what gardeners grow in different countries. I toured the eastern edge of the Adriatic Sea and saw



these windowboxes in Croatia and Slovenia (what magnificent vining geraniums!)

...also these pots on steps in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

I'm also including a shot of cypress trees in the cemetery because it's interesting and different. I was told they plant cypress trees there because their deep straight roots fit among the graves and tolerate



the digging, but also because the roots emit an odor that repels rats.

Until my next trip!
Sue Purcell

Sue Purcell is a gardener who has a goal of visiting 100 countries. She's about halfway there.

This week in our garden

Grow with us! This week:

Disturb the heck out of weeds and pests in the vegetable garden. Winter weeds have germinated where the ground was bare. Creeping speedwell, cuckoo plant, tall rocket and other annual troublemakers that love the cool weather have sprouted. They've already fit in a good bit of growing time this fall. Left alone, they will grow a bit more during every thaw this winter and be ready to flower, set seed and become a hundred-fold problem by early next spring, long before we get out to tend that bed.

So we hoe them now. And while we're at it, no harm done to cut a few shallow trenches through the bed to give the helpful birds more chances to forage there. Cutworms, squash vine

borers, flea beetles and so many others that hide in the soil and leaf litter over winter could become a lifesaving meal for a bird rather than next year's pest.

Right: A cutworm is the larva of a moth that lives in the top layer of soil. It coils around a plant stem and chews it off. If you've ever found a seedling lettuce or impatiens cut off of its roots and lying on its side the morning after you planted it, chances are this critter's to blame. As we watch starlings and robins poke around in the garden in fall, we hope they're nabbing cutworms.

Pray for a good harvest, but continue to hoe.

Apologize when we disturb good guys' winter rest. It's hard to dig this time of year in a garden with a full complement of beneficial creatures, without coming upon toads where they have burrowed into the soil and salamanders snuggled into crevices beneath rocks and boards. We hate to disturb them. These bug- and slug killers need heat to function, and this late in fall they often can't regroup after being evicted from their chosen resting spot.



Below: D.M. picked up the board-mounted boot cleaner and found that one toad and several salamanders were calling that space home for the winter.



Scoop up free mulch, in the form of leaves from along the curb in communities that push leaves there for vacuum truck pick-up. Car tires rolling over the piles reduce them to crumbles. We love it when people accumulate and crush leaves for us!

Keep an eye out for the missing leaves. Quite a number of people have told us, "We were getting ready to rake leaves, and had the usual thick mat of them. Then there was a windstorm and overnight they were all just *gone!*" We keep waiting to hear from people who were on the receiving end of the wind's raking fit, but so far no reports of extra-deep leaves anywhere. Did they all just blow off into the Great Lakes and the ocean?



Admire neat edges we've made recently. At no other time can we cut a crisp outline for a bed or clip back creeping plants and enjoy that crisp outline for months without additional effort.



Thyme-filled flagstone path: Pretty but a bit fuzzy all summer. Clipped and neat all winter!

The 45mph garden

You can put a gardener behind the wheel but you can't take the flowers out of his eyes. Look at what's catching driver's eyes and raising questions this week: colorful fruit. Designers, take note, that it's a late fall "plus" to include shrubs and trees with bright, persistent berries.

This small tree ...because of its lovely pink color. The tree is located in a wild area along the road near our home but we have never noticed it until this year. It is covered with the interesting berries in the enclosed picture and we included a budded branch and a couple of leaves with the hope that you could identify the tree for us. - T.H. -

The mystery plant is probably winterberry euonymus (*Euonymus bungeanus*) an Asian relative of burning bush. Generally classed as a shrub, it can be 20' tall and so is also called Manchurian spindle tree. They do get noticed in years



What's Up 164 Page 12

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when they set lots of their colorful seed. Perhaps T.H. never noticed this plant before because it only recently matured. Or some change in the local environment could have favored seed development or individual plant visibility -- such as when nearby trees have been cut or cleared, so more light reaches the understory. (Has your area recently lost its ash trees to emerald ash borer? That can radically change a woodland plant community!)

We shared the photo with people then involved in email discussions, which elicited:

It's bittersweet, isn't it? I just love those orange berries in late fall! - B.C. -

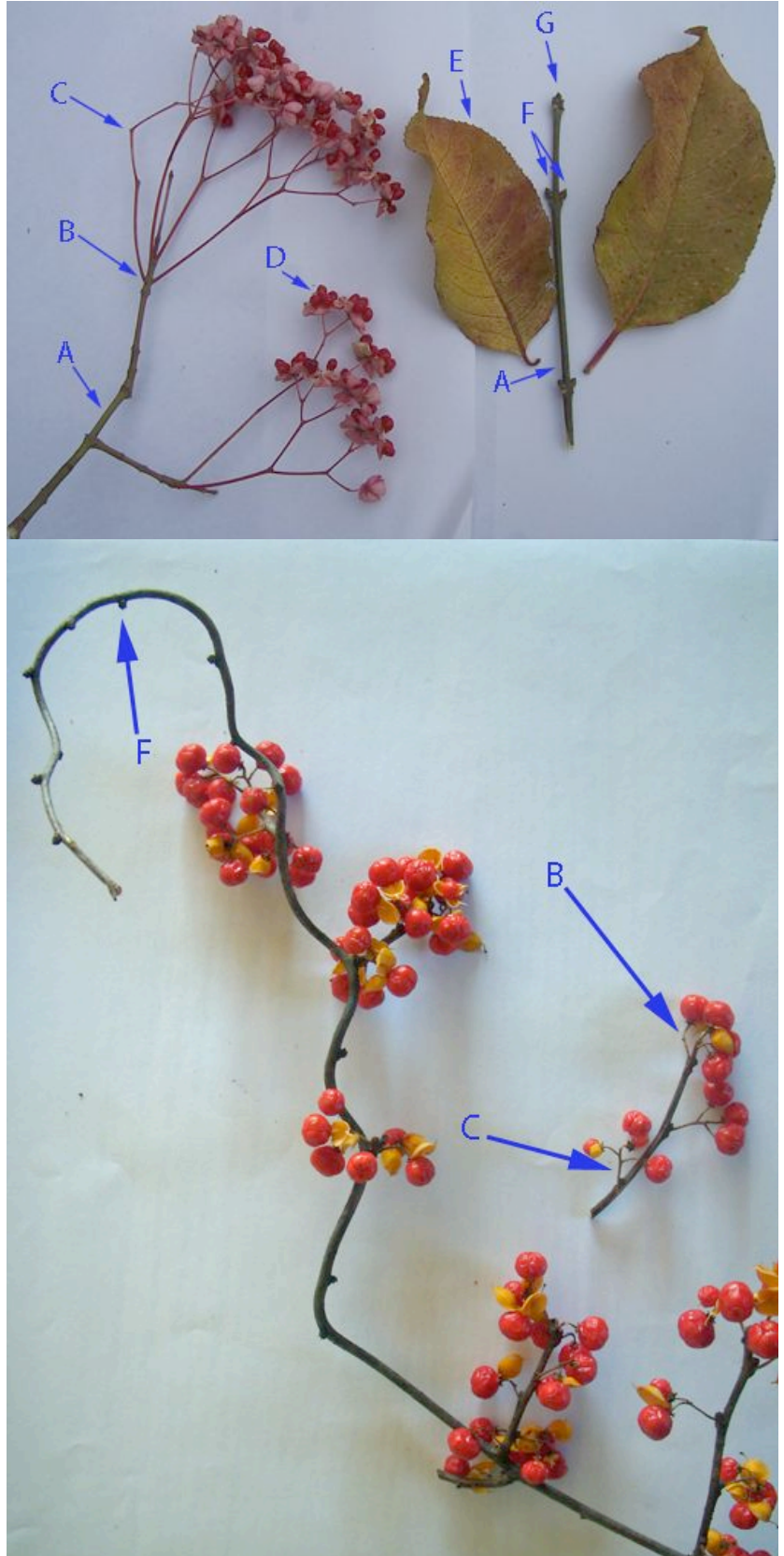
Right, top: Not surprising, that *Euonymus* seed clusters make people think of...

Right, below: bittersweet. Both *Euonymus bungeanus* and the bittersweet vines (*Celastrus* species) are in the bittersweet family. We group plants in families by the anatomy of their flowers, and seed structure follows directly from flower structure.

Distinguishing one family member from another is often a matter of comparing anatomical details, such as

- A - color of twig;
- B - position of fruit; in winterberry *Euonymus* and oriental bittersweet, fruit forms in the leaf axils; in the North American native bittersweet, the fruit would be concentrated in clusters at the tips of branches;
- C - length of peduncle (fruit/seed stalk; see *Scrabbling* on page 14) -- much longer in winterberry *Euonymus* than in bittersweet;
- D - number of segments in the fruit, and whether these separate as they ripen;
- E - leaf margin -- serrated in winterberry *Euonymus*;
- F - the arrangement of leaves and leaf buds. In *Euonymus* the leaves are opposite -- wherever one is on a twig, another leaf occurs right across the twig. The arrangement of bittersweet leaves and leaf buds is alternate -- a bud or leaf occurs on one side of the twig, and the next occurs at a remove on the other side of that twig;
- G. whether the plant forms a *terminal bud* at the branch tip.

After winterberry *Euonymus* and bittersweet, another traffic stopper made its mark:



Did you see the Michigan holly along the road near Kalkaska, Michigan?! Wow! – D.R. –

Right, and below: In fruit in late fall and early winter, Michigan holly or winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) is a stand-out throughout its native range -- the entire eastern half of North America, Atlantic coast to Mississippi River, Florida to northern Ontario.

One of the most important things a gardener does is look. The rewards are immeasurable.
- Elsa Bakalar -



Scrabbling in the garden, word play

We gardeners earn admiring murmurs when we display our garden's produce in vases. Let's get a bit more mileage using horticultural terms in a word game. For instance:

Peduncle; noun; pee DUHN cuhl; stalk that connects a flower, seed or fruit to the plant; *On a graystem dogwood or pagoda dogwood the bright red peduncles are attractive even after the berries have fallen or been eaten.*

Green thumbs up to the gardener's family for their tolerance at this time of year. Thank you for continuing to smile even as your living spaces shrink to accommodate collections of tender plants, roots, pots, and statuary.



Thank goodness our wonderful families put up with us and all our stuff coming indoors for winter!



Green thumbs down to indoor plant fertilizers now, and for the next couple of months. Unless the plants are under lights for at least 12 hours a day, they are not growing enough to use those nutrients, which can build up and damage roots or flush wastefully out the drain holes.



Even plants in sunrooms (left) don't receive enough light to make use of extra nutrients in winter. The days are too short. As for plants that have come into bloom, such as this Christmas cactus (far left), they are *opening* their flowers, not creating them. They do not need fertilizer now.

Who's Janet? Who's Steven?

A gardener who got carried away. Janet Macunovich has been known to two generations of neighborhood children as "the lady at the flower house, the one with no lawn." Her lifelong

interest in plants grew to a passion after she spent the summer of 1973 working in England, where she had the privilege of apprenticing to tenth-generation gardeners in a 300 year old garden. By 1981 the last of the lawn disappeared from her yard just as her hobby -- helping others in their gardens -- grew beyond its bounds into a gardening business. Eventually her talent as a writer and speaker crossed with



her experience in the garden to grow on as books (such as "Designing Your Gardens and Landscape" and "Caring for Perennials"), a weekly newspaper column, a radio talk show and a gardening school.

A garden- and nature photographer who likes his job so much that a waterproof camera case hangs right alongside his fishing tackle box and waders. Of this arrangement he says, "I used to think that if I somehow knew a day was going to be my last day on Earth, I would simply take my pole and waders and go fishing, preferably up Schlotz Creek where Dad and Poppa and I fished. Now, I know I'd have to have my camera, too!" His love of the natural landscape shows in some of the plantings he and his wife do for clients of their gardening business. There, he might customize a rocky channel made to lead water away from downspouts to add "eddies" of small stone and an occasional larger rock "where a big

trout could lurk." In the rain garden that receives that runoff water he favors plants he's admired along the edges of "his" fishing streams: turtlehead, cardinal flower, Joe Pye and marsh marigold.



Email questions to Janet or Steven at JMaxGarden@aol.com or call 248-681-7850.

Yes, that's Santa's helper Steven. He relays wish lists to Santa from The Village mall of Rochester Hills, Michigan. He also distributes gifts and reads stories to children of all ages at private parties. He loves this important work as much as gardening. If you would like to engage him for your holiday event, call or email 248-681-7850 JMaxGarden@aol.com



Where to catch Janet and Steven in-person:

Tuesday, January 10, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., Janet helps you plan, tend or improve a **Mixed Border**, that garden type which includes all types of flowering plants from bulbs to shrubs. In **Dexter, Michigan**, sponsored by the Dexter Garden Club at the Dexter Senior Center, 7720 Dexter-Ann Arbor Road. Limited seating. Contact jnnwestman@yahoo.com to reserve a seat.

Saturday mornings, January 21 and February 4, 2012, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., it's the 21st annual **Winter Seminar Series** offered by **The Detroit Garden Center**, at Historic Trinity Church near Detroit's famous Eastern Market. This winter's topics are *8 Months of Color* and a *Propagation Workshop*, both led by Janet, with a third session by popular garden educator Cheryl English focusing on *Trees, Shrubs and Vines for Your Garden* on January 28. You pay a pittance for a great deal of fun and learning, thanks to the generous educational outreach of all the good volunteers at the DGC. For more information or to reserve your seat now, contact the Detroit Garden Center at 313-259-6363 or detroitgardenctr@yahoo.com

Saturday, January 28, 2012, Janet & Steven give you design help in **Continuous Color in the Landscape** and share ideas in **50 Favorite Gardens, Before-After** at **A Winter Day in the Garden**. This is a conference sponsored for all gardeners by the Crawford County, Illinois Master Gardeners, in **Robinson, Illinois** at Lincoln Trail College. For registration information, contact hdennis@illinois.edu or 618-546-1549.

Opportunities to **Garden by Janet & Steven:**

We're **pruning!** **Wednesday, December 7, Thursday December 8 and Saturday December 10, at 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. each day,** in **Pleasant Ridge and Auburn Hills, Michigan**. Come to observe or to pitch in and learn by hands-on. These are free, limited-size workshops. Call or email Janet & Steven to register, and to learn the address. Provide a telephone number in your email or when you call. Include the meeting date in your subject line of your email, please. JMaxGarden@aol.com, 248-681-7850.

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 with new material and "hybrids" from our basic 100.

So, we're prepared for just about anything...

- **how-to lessons,**
- **hands-on workshops** or
- **a multi-part class** for your group!

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 times.



*Steven Nikkila and Janet Macunovich have been digging, shooting and teaching how-to for 22 years. They began producing conferences in the '90s and ran a gardening school for 12 years, featuring expert instructors who knew their stuff in a garden as well as knowing how to get their messages across in front of a group. They continue to support that speaker network.

Website's coming...

We're still working on it and wish we were faster!

It's so good to know you're geeked to have it up and running, too. Stay tuned!

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*.^{*} Or if you have a flower, type of scene or hue in mind you can request your dream. His library includes tens of thousands of plants and natural images, so Steven can assemble a customized photo sampler for you. Email us at JMaxGarden@aol.com for details, to request a sampler or to place an order.

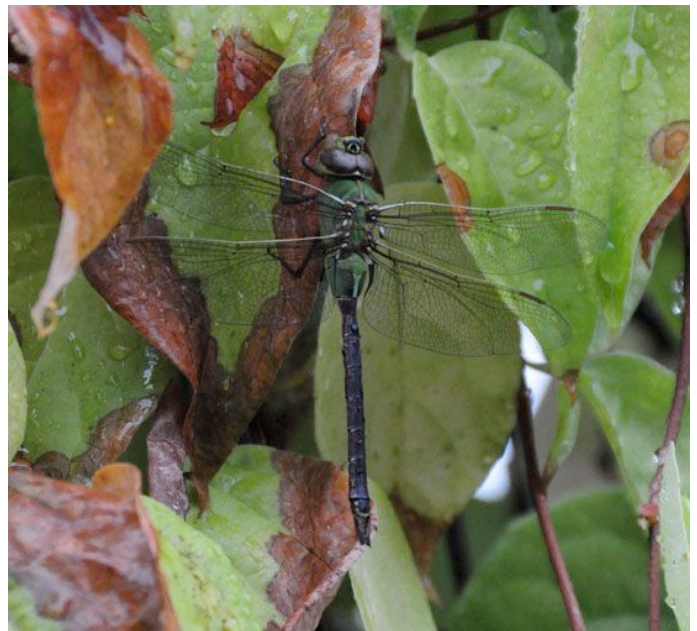
Prices for **Steven's garden art** vary with your wishes in format and size. Examples:

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

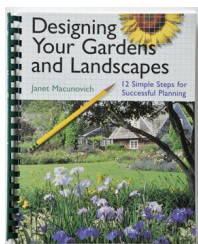
36 x 48' no-fade **cloth tapestry**, \$215

Describe your dream image or color to Steven at JMaxGarden@aol.com. He'll send you a photo sampler and price list.

^{*}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.



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

Janet & Steven's complete digital library New for 2011

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 2011. Now they're collected in this set for your design library.

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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.

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

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