

What's Coming Up:

Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila
answer your growing concerns
Issue 103, July 21, 2010

In this issue:

Artistic skill nets more squash, pp. 1-2
No-mulch annuals?! Reprise, pp. 2-3
A composite season rushes in, page 3
Celebration of native bloom, pp. 4-9
Look ma, clean fingernails! Page 9
Hold your nose, pass the fish, page 9
Summer summary: Too-much! Pp. 9-13
Who are Janet and Steven? How can I
contact them? Page 14
Where to catch Janet & Steven in-person, pp. 14-15
Invite us or our expert friends to your town, page 16
Garden on the wall, page 17
Books, magazines and CDs, Pp. 18-19



What a pretty face! Early American explorers found *Gaillardia* and hundreds more dramatic flowers, each species new to the Old World. You can imagine yourself as one of those early viewers, by looking out over your own garden right now.

Squash artist gets more fruit

Question about summer squash. They are planted in containers, nice plants, lovely flowers but no squash. Thank you. - Martha -

There may be **too few pollinators** about, Martha. You can **fertilize the flowers yourself**.

Use an artist's paintbrush. Look for a male flower. You'll know it's male because it has pollen and does *not* have a swollen ovary just below where the petals join the stem. Dab at the pollen and then touch the brush to the stigma at the center of a female flower. Or snap off the ripe male blossom, remove its petals and use its naked, pollen-bearing stamen as your "brush."

Honeybees can pollinate squash, but squash bees are the insects that evolved just to do this and are the dominant pollinators if they're around.

The USDA just recently finished a survey and reported that squash bees can be found throughout North America and southeast Canada. Like the squash, they're not native outside southwestern U.S. and Central/South American. It's good they were able to adapt to the north and east to follow the spread of squash farming. However, they live strictly on squash family pollen, they're not social -- not hive bees, although they might sometimes live in groups -- and they live in the ground. That makes it tough for them to establish in urban areas where squash may be abundant one year but gone the next and people treat the lawn/soil to kill insects.

Squash bees fly earlier in the day than honeybees, so check for bees early in the morning. If you see bees there, look where they go after visiting your flowers. You might be able to make that

spot safer for bees. Certainly do not use insecticides unless really necessary, then don't use a systemic (one that is absorbed into the plant and makes all parts toxic) and apply whatever you use *after* morning yet early enough in the afternoon to be dry by morning.

If bees aren't doing the trick for a squash plant, other pollinators might. Honeybees can, and also crawlers such as rove beetles and ground beetles as they go in and out of flowers looking for insect prey. Squash beetles can carry pollen, too. (Yes, these dastardly eaters-of-squash-roots-as-larvae may also do a service as pollinators when they're adults). The ground-level dwellers of a garden may not make the transfer to pots that are filled annually with soilless mix. That's a good thing if you're looking to control some problem with soil-dwelling pests but not so good if you need the low life.

Getting it right: No mulch on annuals?!

Just thinking about something you wrote a while back and wondering if I understand. What you wrote was:

As a rule, we follow botanical gardens' lead and **don't mulch annual beds at all**. If we must mulch annual flowers or vegetables we use shredded paper, newspaper, leaves or clean straw.



So you just leave the ground bare when you plant annuals? – M. S. –

Above: We've conducted many mulch tests for our own edification. They can make a bed look a bit odd in spring as we mulch one half of a plant group with one mulch, one half with another...

You read that right, M.S. **Annuals grow bigger and faster when they have no mulch**, just bare soil. What we've seen ourselves has been confirmed for us by plenty of others who've taken the time to test and compare different mulch treatments. The theory is that the plants get all the available nitrogen to themselves, that way.

The same effect has been obvious in our tests of various mulches when a new perennial, shrub or tree is quite small at planting time, such as perennials in 4" pots. It seems that once perennial plants (herbaceous and woody) have been growing for a year or two, they get some of what they need this year from energy and nutrients they produced and stored in past years. So they don't gain as much by going mulch-free -- not enough, probably, to outweigh what they would lose to weed competition. Herbaceous (non-woody) perennials fare better in leafy/hull mulch

than in wood /bark, however. So we mulch all perennials and woody plants at planting time, but use non-woody mulch for the perennials.

These 11 perennials (leopardsbane, *Doronicum caucasicum*) were equal plants in 4" pots when we planted them in April. We mulched some of the plants with hardwood mulch, some with cocoa hulls, the rest with fall leaves, then treated all of them the same in all other ways. Here they are on the first of August. The four front row plants have woody mulch and are about half the size of those behind, which were mulched with cocoa hulls (four in the middle row) and fall leaves (three in the back row).



Early, heavy bloom...

Everything is blooming prolifically and early this year. - Fran -

Lots of plants *are* early this year. They're the perennial species that break dormancy once the soil temperature hits and holds at a certain level, then come into bloom once they have grown for a given number of days. Summer bloomers in this group can get ahead of schedule, given a warm, early spring. Most recently we've noted the *Hibiscus* gang coming into bloom about ten days sooner than usual -- rose of Sharon (*H. syriacus*) and hardy hibiscus or marsh mallow (*H. moscheutos* and its hybrids)

Yet **some plants are *not*** on fast forward.

There are plants that don't "wake up" until a certain amount of time has passed since they entered dormancy in fall. They might not be affected by an early spring. Still others begin flower production only after they sense changes in daylength, from long days of early summer to shorter days after the solstice. Both those groups are probably still right on schedule.



Liatris and Shasta daisies don't always overlap but this year the *Liatris* was ahead of schedule.

...in the kingdom of the sunflower

When we look out at this time of year and see the big faces of **sunflower family plants** in our garden, we wonder how early European explorers felt in seeing those plants. The Compositae -- a family of plants also called the sunflower-, aster- or daisy family -- is heavily represented in the New World and many of its members **come on strong in mid- and late summer**. A person accustomed to European flora would have seen the Midwest prairie or Southern plains as a

mass of exotic beauties.

Here are some of those plants, which rocked the horticultural world and took gardens by storm once sent back to the Old World. If you tend to tire of "yet another yellow daisy-like flower" in summer, remember that these are our **New World treasures**.

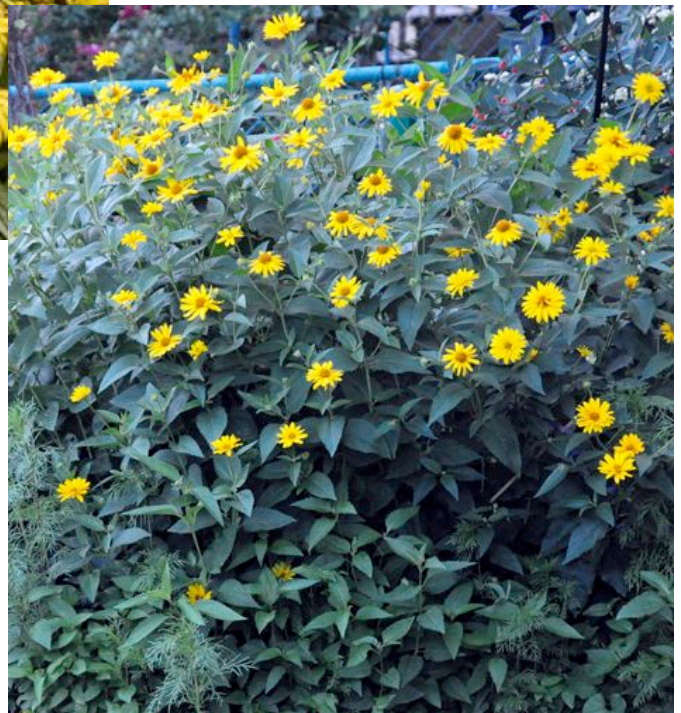
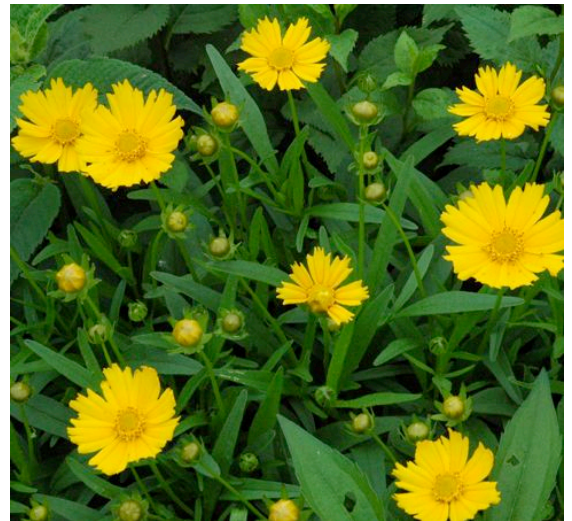


Composite flowers are those whose "real" flowers -- the structures that can produce pollen and seed -- are massed on one head. See them in the center of this sunflower head, each destined to become an oil-rich seed? All of the sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.) are New World natives, unknown in Europe before the Columbian exchange.

Europe and Asia had their own Compositae, such as blue globe thistle. See how each of the blue stars is a separate flower on this tall globe thistle? It's *Echinops exaltatus*, a Russian species, which is probably why it's among Janet's favorites. Yet to Europeans accustomed to this pretty plant, the beaming face of a sunflower or blackeye Susan was newer and more exciting.

Turn the page now for lots of American native high-summer bloomers.

Every one of the blackeye Susans or yellow cone-flowers (*Rudbeckia* species) are North American natives. Below, left: Tall green headed cone-flower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) and blackeye Susan (*R. fulgida*).



Right, top: Gloriosa daisies (*Rudbeckia fulgida* variants, sometimes listed as a separate species, *R. gloriosa*).

Right, center: *Coreopsis* species number 140+, all from the New World or Africa.

Right, bottom: False sunflowers (12 *Heliopsis* species) all come from the New World.

Right: Although yellows are big among the New World Compositae, there are plenty of pinks, blues, purples and whites, too. Mauve and white come from the Joe Pye "tribe" of this big family (*Eupatorium* and closely related species). That tribe has about 500 species, mostly native to the Americas.

Blazing stars (*Liatris* species) are composites in the Eupatorium tribe, and all 40 of them are native to North America. If you think of them as spike flowers, rather than sunflower relatives, take a closer look at the individual buttons of flowers along that spike -- each is a cluster.



Purple cone flowers (*Echinacea* spp.) are all North American natives. Most are pink..



...but at least one "purple coneflower" leans more toward its sunny cousins. *Echinacea paradox* (center below, backed by non-native *Lilium*) is being used in new hybridizing programs where its yellow flower genes are transforming "purple" coneflowers to salmons and orange.



The goldenrod gang* (*Solidago* spp.) is 140-species strong and almost every one is a North American native.

*Please humor us as we once again break our no-repeat-coverage rule in defense of goldenrods. They do not cause hay fever. Europeans, sold on what were to them exotic beauties when Americans still viewed them as "those wild weeds," dote on these flowers and use them widely as cut flowers. They know that this pollen is not airborne but bee-borne. However, Walt Disney's work has probably perpetuated this unjust reputation among Americans, with the movie *Snow White*. Watch in it for the very memorable scene in which Sneezzy curses this plant and ends the party at the dwarves' cottage.



Blanket flowers (14 *Gaillardia* spp.) all hail from North and South America.

Sunflowers caused an agricultural revolution in the Old World and are now grown for seed and oil all over the globe. If you've grown the enormously tall, heavy headed variety called "Russian Mammoth" you've seen what can happen to New World plants that attend finishing school in Europe.



Giant perennial cousins of the annual sunflower, the *Silphiums* are all native to North America. This one is cup plant, *S. perfoliatum*, named for its leaves that cup the stem and hold rainwater.



John Tradescant collected plants in the Virginia territory in 1637. One of the plants he introduced to Britain was an *Aster* dubbed Michaelmas daisy (below), for its fall bloom that coincided with St. Michael's day.



Asters were not unknown in the Old World -- of the 81 cultivated species listed in *Hortus III*, 5 are European, 23 Asian and 53 from the New World. Yet some Europeans were so taken by the newly arrived plants that they made space for them at the expense of old favorites, causing designers to lament the 'casting off of fragrant beauties such as *Dianthus* for scentless *Asters*, spiderworts (*Tradescantia*) and goldenrods!'

These North American composites in borders exterminate valuable plants, and give a coarse, ragged appearance to the garden. Yet they became widely planted...

- Victorian Irish designer William Robinson -

Green thumbs up to a sturdy, hard working bar of soap with a knuckle scrubber built in. It took us two months to wear it down, then we found the scrubber is still great sans soap! Thanks, Coleen French, for introducing us to this product. (French Garden Products, Portland, Michigan; inquiries at coleenfrench@power-net.net)



Proposing the soap-plus-scrubber for a thumbs up, Janet said, "What do you think, Steven? Have you ever seen such clean fingernails on a gardener?!" To which Steven said, "*That* soap?! That is awesome soap - look at me *knees!*" Ahem, lets reserve that for another day. Here Janet's clean fingers and thumb salute Coleen French's smiling face from our photo library.

Green thumbs down to using fish emulsion on hot days near windows. Pee-yoo! We use it, because liquid slow release fertilizers are great for plants that need a boost in the second half of summer. Yet even a fish emulsion labeled "deodorized" should be relegated to distant beds.

This week in Janet's garden

Grow with me! This week I will:

Bow to the tremendous onrush of life in the high summer garden and **give you an executive summary** of this week's issues. Here are things we're doing and also answering in email. It's the whole gamut in brief rather than any one thing in-depth.

Every plant is mixing it up and asking for attention at midsummer. (*Heliopsis* and *Monarda* duke it out at right.) No one can keep up! We've resorted to triage -- summarizing both our work and incoming questions to determine where we should focus our attention.



Look for **Magnolia scale insects**: Black sooty mold is now apparent on leaves and branches. Too late to kill existing scales with pesticide, too early to head off the next generation. Be prepared to kill tiny crawlers in early September. Adult scales are bumps now that can be physically rubbed off. Forceful spray of water every few days will help keep the leaves clean (better able to photosynthesize), knock some scales off, and help the tree by giving it extra water.

Enjoy vicariously having a lawn not treated for "weeds" so it can deliver up surprises. Frank the Poet Gardener reports **discovering alpine strawberries in his lawn**, has been harvesting the tiny, sweet fruit.



Birds planted these sunflowers and purple coneflowers in our gardens -- we didn't call those shots. Let the lawn get a bit thin, hold off on broad leaf weed killers and strawberries might move into your yard in the same way!

Play taps for some plants. Some **hydrangeas** have gone into **terminal wilt**. Some other types of trees and shrubs in place just a year have wilted suddenly and died, too. Hydrangeas in poor sites (sunny, dry, alkaline) and plants injured but not killed by a fall cold snap or winter temperature anomaly (the cambium or roots damaged) may limp along while it's cool then collapse once heat and drought really set in.

Dig it out. Go shopping for something different for that site.

Alternative scenario: It's *Verticillium* wilt. Would have expected it to hit sooner in the season. Much longer story. Refer to *What's Coming Up* #98 or search online and check Extension bulletins such as <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/3000/3053.html>

Recognize the result of a long wet, warm spring. **Mildew** is killing foliage this year even

where it's not usually a big problem. **Serviceberry, cherry, ninebark, dogwood**... Too late to save that foliage. Be glad it's not a disease that remains in the wood. Consider using a fungicide next year if the spring is again long, warm and wet as that's when the infection took place.

Avoid jumping unnecessarily into a war on fungus I probably can't win. Keep in mind that:

- Fungicides have side effects that may be worse than mildew,
- Weather conditions may not favor fungus next year and
- An established perennial or woody plant has energy in reserve and is also not mortally harmed by losing foliage that's been working for it for over 3 months.

Keep fertilizing annuals and heavy feeder perennials such as roses and *Clematis*. Use a **liquid** that includes **micronutrients** for plants growing in soilless potting mix. Ignore marketing- and label claims for more flower if you add more phosphorus -- preposterous!

Base fertilizer choices on what a soil test says that soil lacks, or use a balanced complete formula such as 5-5-5 or 20-20-20.

Commiserate. You say,
"We've done all that from your issue #101 and **still we are battling black vine weevils!**" We know, we know. They are **tough if not impossible to beat** and we, too, continue what are essentially holding actions after 10 years and more. Yet holding the line is worth something.

Be so glad for **fireflies**, which are outstanding **good guy insects** -- predators of other insects in their larval state, harmless and beautiful light show as mating adults.

Haven't looked close at a firefly lately? Let your hair down, go catch one, they don't bite!



Knock on wood that we remain unhurt. So many reports from the field of shoulder trouble, knees giving out, back strain...

A little work every day rather than a marathon every weekend is probably the ticket. When we can't be in a garden every day we emulate garden movements in exercise and other tasks.

Give no weight to unsigned, unsubstantiated advice on yard waste bags. As M.D. writes, "so glad you reported in #102 on **daily watering being better for grass**. We've been doing that for years now because our lawn just would not make it a week. But we felt guilty and like failures every time we opened up a yard waste bag. They have that once-a-week watering rule printed on them!"

Mourn the loss of **hawthorn** fruit to **rust fungus**. Those little orange growths erupting from the berries mean that fruit will be consumed by this fungus and birds will go hungry this winter. The tree will lose foliage and maybe twigs to the infection, too.

Next year, **prune more aggressively** -- a robin with spread wings should be able to fly through that tree's canopy, or air flow is not adequate there. **Take out any unnecessary junipers** nearby, since they are the plant the rust must have as a host during the season it is not living on the hawthorn.

Resist the thought of fungicide treatments as we've seen that give little to no relief even when done by the best per the best schedule (regularly from the time flower buds show color to two weeks after flower petals fall, as often as called for by the products being used, and using a rotation of products to keep the fungus from developing resistance).

Be amazed to hear **cicada song*** already. Crickets were early this year, too, by our reckoning.

*What fun! At <http://www.cicadamania.com/genera/>

Right: Which cicada is this that Steven photo'd last August 20, and which he's guessing is the one we're hearing now? We've only gotten as far in identification as "It's not a periodical cicada as it doesn't have red eyes."



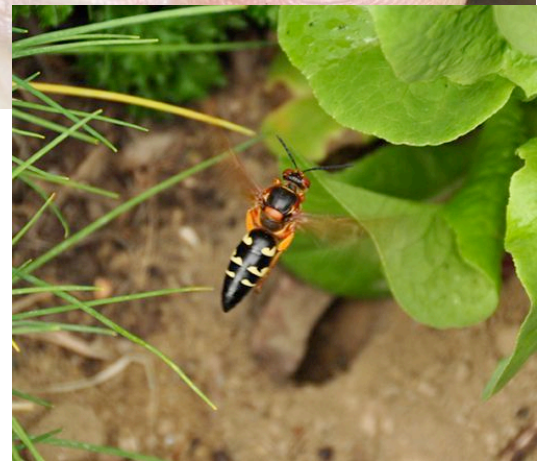
Left: Preying mantis, hanging upside down as it devours a cicada...

Right: A *cicada killer* wasp. Nasty looking, big (1 to 1-1/2 inches) but not aggressive and unlikely to bother you if left alone. They eat nectar as adults but hunt cicadas for the sake of the next generation.

The female cicada killer stings the cicada, immobilizing it, flies with it to a burrow she's dug, drags it deep underground and leaves it in a chamber where she will also leave an egg and perhaps more cicadas -- baby food.

Details at:

<http://ipmnews.msu.edu/landscape/Landscape/tabid/92/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/756/Cicada-killers-causing-wild-speculation.aspx>



If you're in a Great Lakes State and would like to try your hand at cicada ID, you can see detailed pictures and hear the different, very distinctive, calls of the various cicadas at this site:

http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/fauna/Michigan_Cicadas/Michigan/Index.html

Keep playing "**what plant is this?**" with those who email descriptions and photos. It's more fun than a game show and we often compete for who can figure it out first.

Remind those who mourn that **Clematis wilt** is a fact of life for large flowered *Clematis* yet there can be more *Clematis* in your future. If your vine has branches that suddenly wilt and die just as they are finishing a growth spurt, **prune off what died**, clipping to below the lowest wilt. Sterilize your clippers between cuts. **Water and fertilize** your vine better. Hill up soil around its base next spring so it will develop more roots and additional stems.

Then **start shopping for small flowered, later blooming Clematis** because wilt will come again. Look at *C. viticella*, *C. violacea*, *C. texensis*, etc. Put those names into a search engine's key word field then select "Images" for your search. You'll see -- they're gorgeous plants.

Cheer for my friend Gail who convinced clients to **stop spraying** just-in-case, symptom-or-no, whole-yard style. Instead they released thousands of **ladybugs** into that yard. Now she's seeing improvement in the **sooty mold** situation. We do know that sooty mold is a fall-out from sucking insects but we also know that using pesticide year after year creates its own imbalances, especially when applied to everything for everything.

Seeing the dirty look of sooty mold on a number of **yews** this week, and finding the dark bumps of **Fletcher scale** when I looked closer, I've recommended the same thing: Stop spraying because it's not working. Work with the plant to make it healthier and with the environment to supply more natural controls.

Dig up **transplanted lilies** (*Lilium*) that were always fine "over there" but **have not bloomed** and are **yellowing early** in their new spot. Inspect them for lily bulb rot. Throw out the bulbs if I find those unmistakable signs of rot. (We all know without training how to identify rot in the refrigerator crisper drawer. No different here, except a spade's needed to check this "produce.") Fix the drainage or pick a new lily site because it almost has to be wet during winter to foster bulb rot.

Hope against hope for friends who are growing **tomatoes and potatoes** again this year despite having lost last year's crop to the **late blight fungus*** (spots on the leaves, then **plants collapse** within a few weeks). Letting the bed lie fallow of potato family (nightshade family) crops was an option they wouldn't take. Now they will be wise to use a preventive fungicide on this year's plants, something with the active ingredient chlorothalonil.

*For more, copy this URL to your browser:

<http://ipmnews.msu.edu/fieldcrop/fieldcrop/tabid/56/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/442/Potato-late-blight-alert-for-the-Midwest.aspx>

Stick with a Wednesday issue date. Thanks for all the quick responses, which tallied overwhelmingly as "Any day is fine, just keep it coming." Of those with a preference, mid-week ran 2:1 over weekend so we'll keep our deadline set on Wednesday. Although sometimes we might miss the bell, you should hear from us *before* each weekend from now on.

Who's Janet? Who's Steven?

A professional gardener and educator since 1984, Janet Macunovich has been operating for twice that many years as "**Practical Patty**," a title bestowed by her Aunt Melrose. She's helped a great many people improve their gardens and their lives by sharing her experience and knowledge in understandable terms and practical tactics. When not writing this newsletter she's designing, planting and tending gardens through her business, Perennial Favorites.

That quiet garden guy who spreads calm like a comfy blanket. Steven Nikkila, horticultural photographer and joint chief of a professional gardening service, is a safe port in the midst of energy that can spawn headaches in those less well grounded. He rarely loses the clear vision that lets him frame the shot or cut to the chase, even when his wife or family are so charged up with new ideas that the work of the day is in jeopardy. With a steady hand that once "put the magic touch" on his own infant children and ran a house full of his own and others' kids, he directs, does and also captures garden work and play of all kinds. His photos lend beautiful grace to many books, magazines and catalog pages.

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

Where to catch Janet, Steven and friends in-person:

Thursday, July 22 , 7:00 p.m., Janet's at the Belleville District Library, 167 Fourth Street in **Bellville, Michigan** (that's south of Detroit and east of Ann Arbor) to give you suggestions and encouragement for your own garden plans in "**Design Ideas: Before-After**". Free, just walk in.

Saturday, July 24, 8:00 a.m. - noon., *Garden by Janet - Bring your gloves and tools.* At the **Detroit Zoo**, Woodward Avenue at I-696. Your chance for hands-on instruction in garden **deadheading, cutting back, weeding** and **problem diagnosis**. You'll also be helping the Detroit Zoo maintain its place as a great garden destination. To reserve a place in this limited-space session at the zoo, email mstgarden@gmail.com by July 21 with the subject line "Help at the zoo."

Thursday, August 5, 10:00 a.m., Janet's at the Waterford Garden Club meeting in **Waterford, Michigan** with *Four-season Landscape Design**. The meeting's in the Parks and Rec Center, 2303 Crescent Lake Road about a mile north of M-59/Highland Road. Free to club members, \$3 fee* to guests. No advance registration required.

Saturday, August 14, 8:00 a.m. - noon., *Garden by Janet - Bring your gloves and tools.* At the **Detroit Zoo**, Woodward Avenue at I-696. Your chance for hands-on instruction in garden **deadheading, cutting back,** and **color cures for "August Blahs"**. You'll also be helping the Detroit Zoo maintain its place as a great garden destination. To reserve a place in this limited-space session at the zoo, email mstgarden@gmail.com by August 11 with the subject line "Help at the zoo."

Saturday, August 28, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., *Cutting back the rambunctious garden: Pruning trees and shrubs.* Learn from Janet, a pruning expert, how to tame overgrown trees and shrubs or keep currently-civil plants from going wild. This class includes a lecture, pruning demonstration, and hands-on participation. (Bring your pruners.) Sponsored by the Detroit Garden Center at the **Belle Isle Nature Zoo** auditorium in **Detroit, Michigan's Belle Isle Park** this session also goes outdoors on the nature zoo grounds. Come prepared for pruning

outdoors. \$25 for a Detroit Garden Center member or Master Gardener, \$30 for a non-member. To print out a mail-in registration form, go to www.detroitgardencenter.org and click on "Tree and Shrub Pruning Workshop" in the right margin. Or register by email to detroitgardenctr@yahoo.com, or calling the Detroit Garden Center at 313-259-6363.

Gardening a Wooded Lot.

October 2 and 3 in Ortonville, Michigan at Hadley Hill Farm, a two-day intensive workshop where Janet, Steven and designer Celia Ryker help you who are *Gardening a Wooded Lot*.

Saturday and Sunday, **October 2 and 3,**
Natural Gardening and the Wooded Lot
8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30
p.m. Sunday,
at Hadley Hill Farm, 1344 South Hadley road
in Ortonville, Michigan (between Detroit and Flint).

In this two-day intensive workshop Janet Macunovich, Steven Nikkila and designer Celia Ryker who specializes in natural landscapes and wildlife help you develop a wooded lot in ways that edit Nature without upsetting its balance. In the classroom as well as out on a wooded demonstration site you'll learn about native trees, shrubs, vines, and perennial wildflowers, their advantages and how best to use them in your own spaces. You'll consider legal, ethical and practical aspects of turning spaces below trees into garden. The main topics are:

- Native Trees and Shrubs of Great Lakes woodlands
- Working with Your Woods: Assessing, modifying and designing wooded spaces
- Woodland Wildflowers



Designer Celia Ryker, with Steven Nikkila, leads the *Wooded Lot* workshop. Ryker is one of the expert instructors Steven and Janet help you bring to your town. See page 12.

Register for the full two-day workshop or a single day. Every participant will be provided with a workbook which is both a collection of important facts from the workshop and a step by step guide for applying that information to a specific wooded lot. Those who participate in both days of the workshop may also register to submit their workbook plan to the instructors for written review and suggestions.

Two-day Natural Gardening and the Wooded Lot workshop \$195.00

Two-day workshop plus workbook review \$245.00*

Saturday only (basics and woody plants) \$115.00

Sunday only (design steps and wildflowers) \$115.00

*Register by September 15 to have time to receive and complete a pre-class assignment important to your plan development.

For questions, to register or for a detailed brochure about this class and its schedule, contact Janet (248-681-7850, JMaxGarden@aol.com) or Celia (248-627-2356, HadleyHillFarm@aol.com)

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**
- a **hands-on workshop** at your site, or
- a **multi-part class** for 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's thumbs have been green all their lives. For instance, Janet learned *Wisteria* pruning as a kid, from her dad, John Macunovich (shown here with her sister Diane and brother John Allan). Steven, devoted trout fisher since childhood, realized during a college classes in plant identification and native species, that even fish-less treks along streams in Michigan's Upper Peninsula had been fruitful, as lessons in woodland plants.

They began producing conferences in the early '90s and ran a gardening school from 1995 through 2008, featuring experts who know their stuff in the garden as well as how to get their messages across in front of an audience. Janet and Steven are glad to help you yourselves for presentations but also pleased to connect you to experts they know or send you their list of people, topics and contact information.

Email **JMaxGarden@aol.com** or call **248-681-7850** for a speaker/ topic list or 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 garden beauty and stories you love, framed or on canvas.



You can own any of Steven's images you've seen in *What's Coming Up*, or request almost any flower, type of scene or hue you can imagine. His library includes tens of thousands of plants and nearly as many natural images.

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

Above: Crocosmia 'Lucifer' burns hot even when wet.

Right: The blue spotted purple butterfly. What seems an odd name makes more sense if you see the *underside* of the wings.

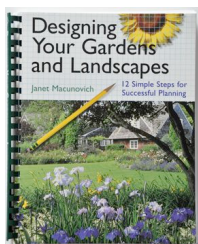
There is so much clear detail in these images that they are as clear at 8' x 12' as 8" x 12". Prices depend on your choices in format and size. For example:

Matted, in 11" x 14.5" frame \$48.00

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