



## What's Coming Up:

Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila answer your growing concerns  
Issue 131, February 9, 2011

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Any day now the February thaw will come, spring witchhazels will bloom (left, *Hamamelis x intermedia*), and the gardener's winter R&R ends. So we're hustling to finish design projects (page 10) and others are scurrying to fit in a day of fun and learning (page 5).

### Improving the soil: And so the worm turns

What time of year is best to add worms to a garden? Where can I get them? Aren't they bad, though, not native? - D.G. -

Biological agents, from aphid-eating ladybugs to snake-battling mongooses, survive and stick around to involve themselves in the battles of our choice only if they find suitable living conditions. So there's no sense releasing worms to loosen the soil unless there's worm-

appropriate food, water and shelter. Thus the proprietors of DMF Bait, worm suppliers to the lower 48 States, look at us askance when we once asked about buying worms in late fall. They know Steven doesn't fish in winter and that we have planted their nightcrawlers in gardens. They said, "You aren't going to stick these outside now, are you? They need time to get under cover, and don't move well even at 40°F."

If you're going to augment an existing worm population, wait until plants begin to show a little growth in spring or leaves are falling in autumn, scrape up a generous blanket of leaves over the target area -- at least 4 or 5 inches deep -- wet that down and put the worms there. Post a guard to fend off birds until the worms wriggle into the bedding. We've seen robins swoop in immediately -- don't ask because we don't know how the birds could know what we were up to, to have been watching us. One grabbed a whole clot of worms, such a heavy load that it couldn't get off the ground with its catch when we took up the chase. The little thief got away because Janet was laughing too hard to run any further, after pursuing it across two lawns.

## Night crawling invaders

Nightcrawlers (*Lumbricus terrestris*), despite the inaccurate common name *Canadian* nightcrawler, are not native to North America and are playing a major role in ecological degradation in forest environments. The damage appears especially pervasive in wooded areas adjacent to fishing sites. The worms can multiply so quickly that they deplete the supply of leaf litter and perhaps even change the soil chemistry. Then, seedlings die of exposure, wildflower and native tree seeds fail to sprout, and even mature plants may be affected.

So don't introduce nightcrawlers in natural areas. Steven's been urging his fisher friends to take unused bait worms home to a garden rather than dumping them where they fish. However, neither of us see much point in denying the fact that these worms are already entrenched in developed areas. They're long established in any ground that has been farmed in the past couple of centuries. In that disturbed terrain they do make a positive contribution by mixing organic matter into the root zone and improving drainage and aeration.

## Will we worm our way out of this position?

Despite having employed tiller worms now and then, it's been many years since we saw the need. In the past ten years we have also been watching environmental news\* for practical advice.

Almost 20 years ago our scientist friend / client C.P. greeted us on one work day with a worried expression, then replied to our inquiries, "I can't keep up. They're eating (the mulch) as fast as I put it down." Neither he nor we had introduced any worms but there they were, taking advantage of his generous application of shredded leaves and bark. His thoughtful approach sticks with us.

When we told him of adding worms to a difficult bed, he devised methodology to monitor that population's activity or increase. If we ever again release worms, we may implement that study in his memory, and send results to Great Lakes Worm Watch [www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/action/index.html](http://www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/action/index.html)

\*"Given the slow migration of earthworms in soil, however, most experts agree that containing them is of lower priority than preventing new introductions. This means developing stricter laws regulating the importation of worms (which the USDA is considering) and getting the word out to the public." From <http://chicagoconservationcorps.org/blog/wp-content/uploads2/2009/06/L40%20Vermicomposting%20and%20Invasive%20Earth%20Worms.pdf>





## So what worked North American soil before Eurasian worms arrived?

Some worm species, non so prolific as the nightcrawler, are native to the New World. Most worms in what became the northern U.S. and Canada were killed by glaciation and have yet to re-colonize. Yet those that were there, along with fungi, grubs, moles, voles, prairie dogs and other soil animals, kept the soil bank solvent prior to Columbian exchange and may still operate as before in virgin forest and prairie.

## Takes a lifetime to grow a tree... Not!

In many ways, experience means nothing in gardening. We keep learning each year how much we don't know. Which can mean that some things just never "take" in our brains.

Like how quickly trees can grow and how big a "small" tree really is. J.J., a veteran of at least 40 years on her knees, looked up recently and then emailed:

I was just admiring my tri-color beech... and am absolutely amazed how big it has gotten!



J.J.'s tricolor beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Roseomarginata'). We aren't positive of its years on site but think its tenure is about the same as our own tricolor, which went into the ground at 6' and after 16 years has hit the 35' mark. That growth rate of 12-18 inches a year is about average for what we see garden beeches doing. Although it's faster than what we read in some books, we're not surprised since those books also call for this variety of beech to be 30' tall and we see 40' all the time.

## Spread fertilizer, attract deer?

I recently read an article that addressed the issue of why do deer eat plants that are suppose to be deer-proof. The author took two exact plants, fertilized one and not the other, guess what the deer ate.....the fertilized one. Supposing that the salts from the fertilizer made the plant, that was previously not one the deer would eat, more munchable! It's not easy to stay ahead of a hungry animal. - G.R. -

We heard the same thing, G.R., years ago when we were at Holden Arboretum (east of Cleveland in Willoughby, Ohio). We had wondered aloud about some plants that were caged to prevent deer browse, although they were of species we thought were not usually troubled by deer. One of the horticulturists heard us and explained that they protect *all* new plants. "Even one deer taking a taste can do damage to a new tree. If every one of the herd has a nibble, that's a big loss. And it seems they are attracted to the new things. We think it may be because a new plant is richer, having been fertilized at a high rate by the grower..."

We've also seen that some deer communities develop a taste for plants that others pass by, or pass by something most deer eat. Perhaps a doe long since gone taught her youngsters to bypass tulips, or to browse holly, and that tendency been passed along ever since. Who knows for sure?!



Too many plants at risk in a botanical garden in deer country. Holden Arboretum, like many public gardens, fences them out.



## Go learn and have fun on an off season day

Hey Janet & Steven! Looking for an all day event about gardening -- Ford Field or didn't Horticulture magazine sponsor an event in February a few years back?? Remember when you came to St. Clair Shores for the Yardners Springposium?? I'm thinking of going to Philly for the garden show in March but there must be things closer to home -- any ideas?? R.L.

Horticulture Magazine changed ownership and direction and abruptly ended their very popular road shows. (We miss you, Nan Sinton, symposia organizer and speaker extraordinaire!) The company that put on the Michigan Home and Garden Show at Ford Field plans shows in Grand Rapids (March 3-6), Pontiac (March 11-12) and Lansing (March 17-20). Check [www.showspan.com](http://www.showspan.com) or search the Internet for the words (your State name) Home and Garden Show.

Better yet, check Extension offices in the area you're in and nearby, and Master Gardener websites for purely educational, enthusiasm-laced events organized and staffed by volunteers. The West Michigan Home and Garden Show in **Grand Rapids**, for instance, happens in the same facility as the **March 5** Kent County Master Gardener *Stuck on Gardening conference*. A ticket to the Master Gardener's conference, which this year features nationally known speaker Felder Rushing, also gets you into the Show.

[www.msue.msu.edu/portal/default.cfm?pageset\\_id=27672&page\\_id=137956&msue\\_portal\\_id=25643](http://www.msue.msu.edu/portal/default.cfm?pageset_id=27672&page_id=137956&msue_portal_id=25643)

Check botanical gardens' websites, too!

We can't feature an exhaustive list here of such upcoming events because we have friends and readers in a huge area and would want to include everything. We just don't have the time to undertake such a big job. So here are some for-instances.

That's what we did. The results, in no particular order:

Our friend **Art Cameron**, Director of the Michigan State University Horticulture Gardens, who's not only wise and practical in his teaching, but could hold his own at a comedy club, will be speaking about Art in the Garden on Saturday, **March 5** from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Leelanau County Government Center in **Suttons Bay, Michigan**, at the Master Gardener Association of Northwest Michigan  
Questions to 231-649-1021 \$30

[www.mganm.org](http://www.mganm.org)

Dow Gardens, in **Midland, Michigan** at the center of the mitten, presents its annual Know and Grow Conference on **March 5**, featuring authors Melinda Myers and Jeff Gillman. \$60 if you register by February 16, \$75 after. [www.dowgardens.org/forms/know\\_grow\\_2011\\_2.pdf](http://www.dowgardens.org/forms/know_grow_2011_2.pdf)

### About ticket price

As you scan the list, don't judge any event by ticket price. They are all equal and also worth a great deal more than their registration fee might suggest. The difference between \$40 and \$70 events may be simply that one Master Gardener host group is using the day as a fund raiser for their Plant-A-Row for the Hungry farm while another planned only to cover costs and a third chanced upon a great speaker who would happen to be in town and so waive expenses.

Consider traveling to any of these. The Philadelphia Flower Show ([theflowershow.com](http://theflowershow.com)) is fantastic and few events can match its display gardens. Yet every one of the events on this list shares a more important characteristic with the Philly show -- they bring together a crowd of gardeners thrilled by the day. All by itself that creates an atmosphere so charged it crackles.

Many of these events include exhibits by gardening and nature associations and a vendor marketplace so you'll be able to shop and keep learning even during breaks and lunch.

Enlightenment comes not only from lectures and workshops, but in the vendor area at a conference.



St. Clair County, Michigan Master Gardeners are hosting an all-day symposium on Saturday, **March 19** in **Clyde, Michigan** featuring author Lee Reich and photographer Ian Adams. \$70  
At <http://msue.stclaircounty.org> click on Tools of the Gardener in the "Events" list

The Master Gardeners of Huron County, Michigan hold their 9th annual day-long "Spring Into Gardening" conference in **Udly, Michigan on March 16** featuring Janet Macunovich, Coleen French and others, \$40. [www.msue.msu.edu/objects/content\\_revision/download.cfm/item\\_id.596454/workspace\\_id.-30/2011%20SIG%20Brochure.pdf](http://www.msue.msu.edu/objects/content_revision/download.cfm/item_id.596454/workspace_id.-30/2011%20SIG%20Brochure.pdf)

The Linn County Master Gardeners' Winter Garden Fair is **February 19 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa**, where \$49 for the day is the key to choices from among 60 presentations.  
Email or call [lillieb@iastate.edu](mailto:lillieb@iastate.edu) or 319-377-9839 or check [www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/yardgarden.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/yardgarden.htm)

Penn State's York County Master Gardeners present GardenWise in **York, Pennsylvania**. This annual event happens this year on **March 12**. \$60 (\$49 if you register right away). Attend this year's program and you will delve into edibles and learn about growing the organic way and becoming more conservation-wise. <http://york.extension.psu.edu/Horticulture/PDFs/GardenWiseBrochure2011.pdf>

The Massachusetts Master Gardeners site lists their own events.

[www.massmastergardeners.org/calendarofevents](http://www.massmastergardeners.org/calendarofevents)

Kudos to this group that's kept itself growing for over 20 years without State help! It also links you to the **Massachusetts Horticultural Society's show in Boston, March 16-20**.

[www.masshort.org/Blooms-and-the-Boston-Flower-&-Garden-Show](http://www.masshort.org/Blooms-and-the-Boston-Flower-&-Garden-Show)

There's the **Chicago Flower and Garden Show March 5-13** at Navy Pier. Seminars go on all day and there are garden displays and an impressive marketplace. <http://chicagoflower.com>

**Chicago Botanic Garden's** site invites you to their **February 25 Sense of Place** day.

<http://www.chicagobotanic.org/school/symposia/>

The CBG site **also connects you to Master Gardener day-long conferences** all over northern Illinois including *four* events on March 5 (at Northern Illinois University, Bloomington, Quincy and Canton) plus two on March 12, one on March 19...

[www.chicago-botanic.org/downloads/mastergardener/Imagine\\_Vol12\\_No1.pdf](http://www.chicago-botanic.org/downloads/mastergardener/Imagine_Vol12_No1.pdf) lists



## Ground's not frozen? Must be planting time for *something*!

The ground's thawed?! Does that mean I could go out there and plant the garlic I didn't get planted in fall? – E.H. –

Yup, go for it. You remind us of our friend Jim who would plant his peas as early as ever he could, knowing they would then be up and growing in the cool weather they love. We know he planted in January once.

Shovel the snow away, plant the cloves and then pull that snowy blanket back over the spot. Leftover flower bulbs can go in, too. The plants may not get a full spate of rooting time before spring coaxes them up, so they may not flower this year, but they will build a bulb and be ready for harvest late in the summer or bloom the next spring.

Separate a garlic bulb into cloves for planting. Plant each clove pointy end up about 4 inches down. You can buy planting garlic from mail order nurseries, or plant what you bought from a grocery store. Buy organically grown garlic if you intend to plant it, as much of the conventionally grown garlic at groceries has been treated to extend storage life with a growth regulator that delays and may even prevent sprouting.



Here's a gateway to cold-weather garlic growing info and news of the February 23-24 Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention: [www.garlicgrowers.on.ca/](http://www.garlicgrowers.on.ca/)



### Another tool care tip

Amazingly enough, crumpled up aluminum foil and a bit of water are great at removing rust and gunk from tools. Seriously. I didn't believe it either until I tried it! – M.M. –

We believe it. The **foil acts like very fine emery paper**, so using it more apt to polish than scour. For serious rust, the kind that develops on tools dropped under a shrub in spring and not found again until the leaves fall, use something coarser, such as steel wool.

## Early February news from South Carolina.

Here's some food for thought for those of us who are snowed in. At least we have this time off!

The rain has quit for the day but weatherman says it will be back tomorrow. We **finished cutting back the perennial grasses!** The next gardening plan is to cut back the variegated liriope - I made too many divisions from a few plants - it's time to give away! - L.T. -

### Landscape opening: Burned or bronzed arbs need not apply!

I have about 20 arborvitae evergreens. My first winter I put up a wall of burlap to protect them. When I took the burlap down in the spring there was some winter burn.

Last year I sprayed some "Winterpruf" which is supposed to prevent winter drouth and burn. I also wrapped each bush with burlap instead of the wall technique. The 12 bushes on the west side looked great but the eight on the east had some winter burn. I took that burlap off the second week of March.

Do you have any suggestions to prevent this burn? - R.M. -

The best way to **prevent winter burn** in evergreens is to **match the plant to the site** -- arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) rarely chooses to grow in windy, dry sites, for instance. The species is native to moist bottomlands in the northeastern U.S. and southeastern Canada. Although they sometimes occur on rocky hillsides, those are the exceptions and their struggle with dry wind is evident in reduced size and vigor.

Holly, rhododendron, azalea, boxwood, Japanese andromeda and other broadleaf evergreens also prefer sites where **moisture is abundant but wind is not**. Many gardeners growing these other species have worked the row you're now hoeing.

Even in the best site, **a new plant needs time** to surmount transplant shock and grow roots into

### Is it burn or normal bronzing?

Sometimes what a gardener sees as burn is normal seasonal discoloration. Winter-burned needles dry and fall off once the growing season begins, leaving bare branch tips or defoliated spaces on twigs. Winter discoloration, on the other hand, is simply the habit of some evergreen tissue, which changes its chemical composition in its own defense and is most pronounced on portions of the plant exposed to full sun during winter. There, foliage turns yellow or brown but greens up again in spring.



The discolored tips on this arborvitae branch are not burned. During winter's cold they reacted to light and cold with a change in internal chemistry. Clip such a spray, put it in a vase with water on a sunny indoor windowsill and it will go back to green. If tips do freeze dry in winter's cold, they continue to deteriorate in spring even as the rest of the plant "wakes up." When that happens, the contrast increases so dramatically between burned foliage and new or revived greenery that many gardeners suddenly notice it and say, "It was fine and then in spring it died."



surrounding soil. A new evergreen is likely to show some burn in the first year or two simply because its **roots are still restricted** to the unnaturally small root ball convenient for nursery sales. That small amount of soil can't provide enough water to get the plant through winter. **Anti-desiccants** such as Wilt-pruf® and Moisturin® can reduce water loss, and well-placed **wind screens** reduce evaporative water loss, but that may not be enough.

**You should water** to keep the root balls and surrounding soil moist until the ground freezes, and during extended winter thaws. As roots grow wider, the plants become less dependent on watering and stop-gap measures. They literally "grow out" of the tendency to burn. In a good site, arbs may not need pampering after the first winter. However, where it's windy, dry, or the soil is poor -- perhaps on that east end of your hedge -- extra watering, wind screens, and anti-desiccants may have to be a permanent part of the fall and winter routine.

There's also the chance you're seeing normal winter discoloration (see *Is it burn...* on page 8).

**If they burn despite the best care** during the growing season and fencing rather than wrapping during winter, **switch to a species better suited to that site** such as upright juniper (*Juniperus virginiana*).

## The good screen

Many wind screens we see are not well-placed. Cloth or snow fence should never touch the plant being protected, particularly if one of the elements being screened is road salt. Abrasion from a wind-rattled fence is damaging to buds, leaves and branches. When the "protection" is salt-soaked, the damage is even worse. For this reason, experienced horticulturists don't wrap plants to screen out wind or salt.

Wind screens should be erected upwind and well away from the plants being sheltered. Further away is better than closer, and snow fence is better than solid materials since the turbulence a few feet downwind of a solid screen can be greater than the unbroken wind, especially near the ends of a windbreak.

## A final end run in winter: Critical time for evergreens

More evergreen damage occurs in late winter cold following a thaw, than in winter's bitter depths. So if you have unprotected at-risk plants, there's still time to screen them.

## Arbs selected for winter green

Plant selection has provided a way around bronzing -- many of the best varieties of arborvitae were selected and named for their ability to remain true green through winter.

We discussed arborvitae recently with Brad Meehle, a horticulturist we've consulted during his 35 years in the landscape business. "Woodward arb (*Thuja occidentalis* 'Woodwardii'), a big globe-shaped shrub, turns brown every winter. So do some older pyramidal forms like 'Elegantissima' and 'Pyramidalis', but varieties with better winter color have been developed and those are the ones we sell. So none of the commonly available, upright arbs should turn brown. 'Emerald' is a very good pyramidal arb for hedges that holds its green right through winter. 'Techny', which is also called 'Mission' arborvitae, is a slightly bluer green that also holds true during winter. Both of these grow to about 15 feet tall but 'Techny' is a nice, fat arb -- you can use a few less 'Techny' than 'Emerald' arbs to make the same length of hedge. There is also an arborvitae that's a bit lower maintenance, foundational planting called 'Hetz Midget' that keeps its green and is only about 3' x 3'."

## This week in our garden

### Grow with us! This week:

**Prune oaks** that need it during any mild spell now. We do this work now when disease-vectoring insects are not around to home in on the new-cut surfaces.

\*\*\*\*\*

Yikes, it's almost spring and our schedule says we have gardens to plant and change. We're hustling now to **plan the plantings** and renovations!



We looked last year at a side entry that the owner described as "Needing help."

It's the south side yard, a narrow (17') strip that is the entrance to the back yard. Here's how it presents itself as you pull into the driveway.



More important, that area happens to be the first glimpse an approaching visitor has of this home. Here is that angle, from the road across the neighbor's driveway. The view could go a lot farther to speak of the residents' welcoming warmth, love of gardens, and flair for color and line.



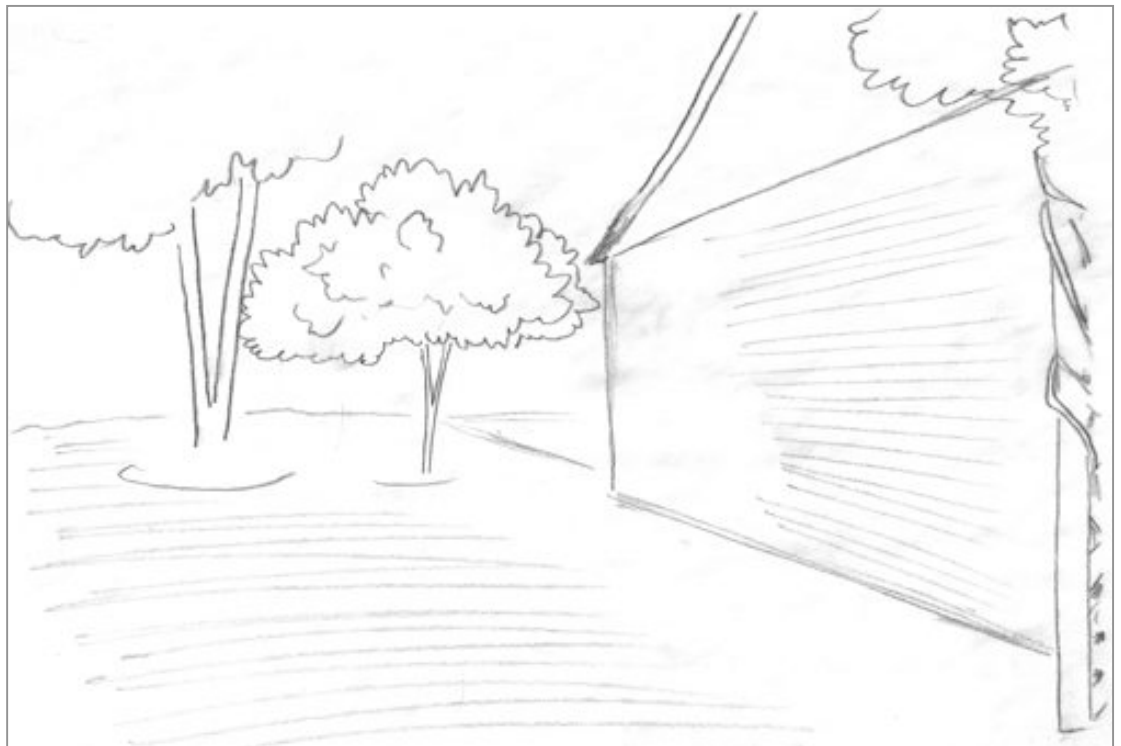


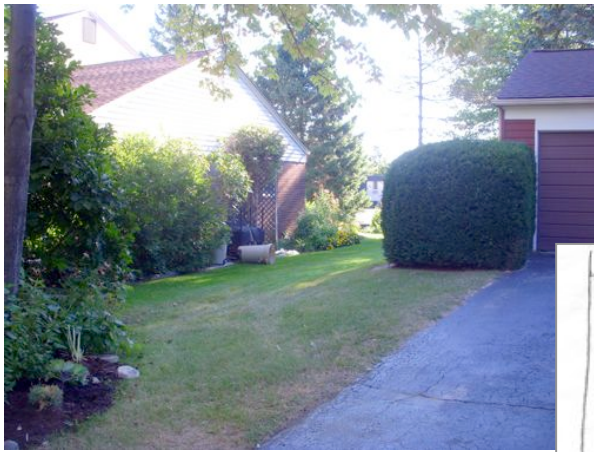
We also took a look coming from the back yard around to the front through this area. The wood storage and yard waste can staging areas draw the eye. Friends departing a party would take away as their freshest memory of the yard, this look at its maintenance end. This is not to say the cans and wood pile should be eliminated. Utility areas are essential and these are practically placed near the door into the garage (here just out of the frame).

The door is shielded by a vine covered lattice arbor, one post of which you can see on the far right. So our plans must incorporate them.

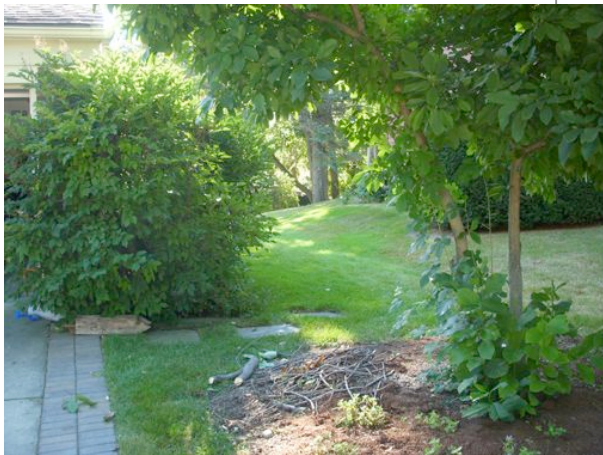
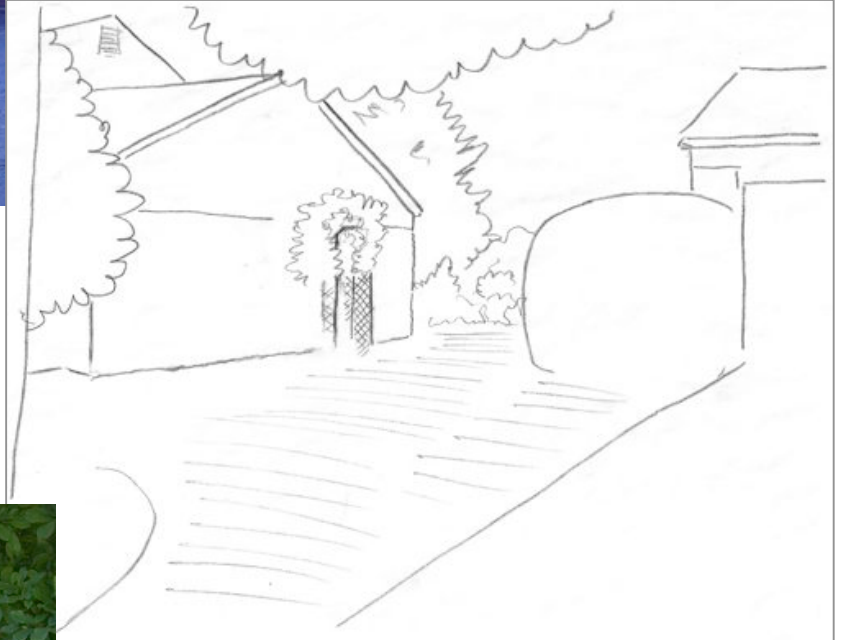
The first thing we do is strip the scene to the bare essentials -- what must stay. In this case that's a star magnolia, the wood storage and yard waste space, and the arbor, solidly and lovingly made by a family member.

The lilacs are not sacred and the cans and wood can be shifted.





The arbor is a good focal point, sitting off center along the wall.



The shrub at the front corner of the garage is overbearing -- in the way of traffic and also cutting off any glimpse into the side.







The star magnolia tree (*M. stellata*) that greets anyone who approaches the side yard from the street adds an interesting side story:

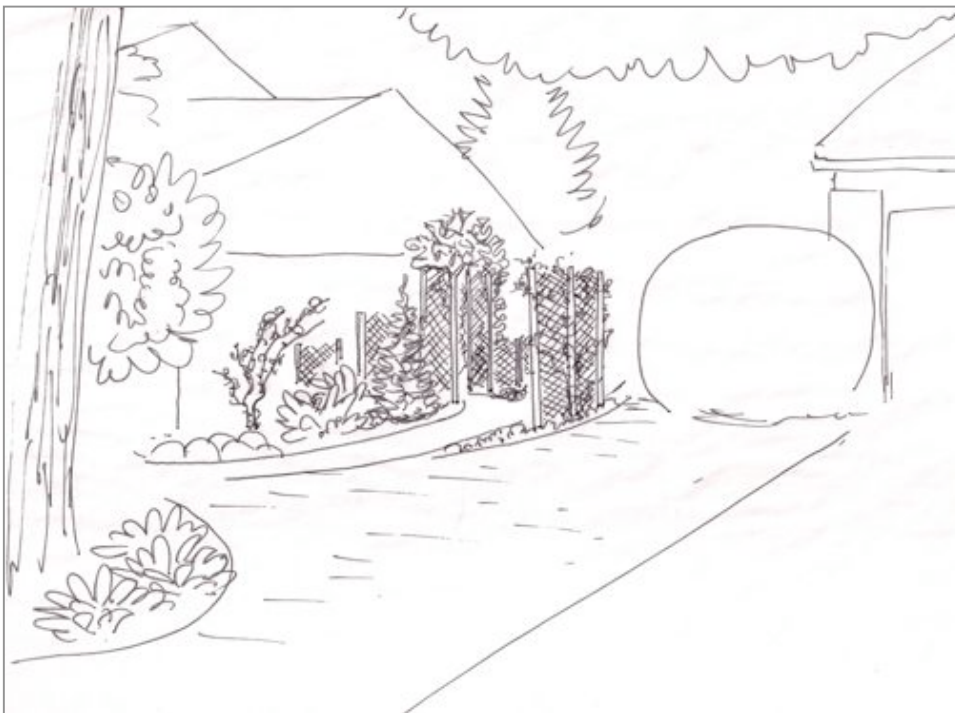
We've been pruning it for two years to re-shape it. One step in that process was to "ask it" to give us new growth from its base that we could make into a third trunk. It's done that (MA), presenting us with three suckers to choose from.

Last summer, one of those soft new shoots was nibbled by deer. As we contemplated that situation and discussed protecting it, we noticed something we'd overlooked -- a volunteer mulberry (MU). (Isn't it amazing how something so big can escape notice?!) We also noticed that the deer had chewed every stem of the mulberry and most of its leaves were replacements.

We decided to leave the mulberry growing there as a sop to the deer. Eventually we'll get rid of it, once our magnolia suckers become large and woody enough that deer will pass them by, as they do the rest of the tree.

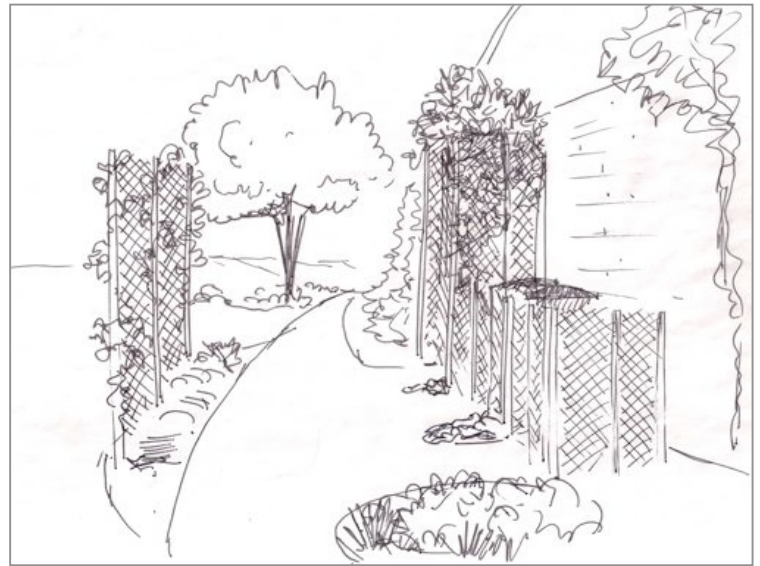
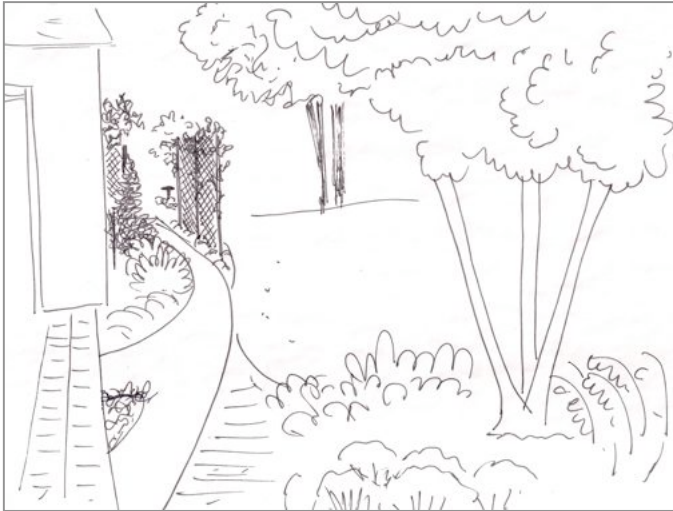
Two notions came to mind for this area.

Both involve the arbor, moving the yard waste and wood storage to the backyard



side of the arbor, and using the wall as backdrop for interesting year-round shapes and textures.

The first possibility (left and next page) repeats the lattice arbor in a free standing trellis just inside the lot line. Between the arbor and the trellis a room is formed. The trellis also screens the view into the back from that angle across the neighbor's driveway, effectively splitting the long narrow area so the front section remains to greet the visitor.



An alternate (below) builds out from the magnolia but otherwise remains along the wall.



Will we build and plant this?  
Maybe. Maybe we'll need to develop  
more options or refine these. No way to  
know until we get it on paper so we can  
talk about it.



**Green thumbs up** to new eyes on a garden. Now's the time to make a reciprocal date with a friend, such as, "On April 3, I'll come garden with you. Can you come help me April 10?" Talk as you work, or afterward. Treasure the revelations, tiny or large, that come from a fresh perspective on your garden from that intimate, caretaker's angle.

**Green thumbs down** to over-sensing, when a little extra is just too much. Janet smells well. Steven sees. Great sometimes, but there can be no commiseration or even confirmation at other times. For instance, "I smell a mouse. Do you smell that mouse, again?" Or "There! It zipped across there, did you see? It's *not* the same mouse!"

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

**The gardener's trainer.** For over twenty years Janet Macunovich has been helping gardeners grow through her classes, books and other publications. She shares what she learns in attending classes herself at educational institutions all over the country, reading, participating in professional symposia, and applying it all in her own and client's gardens.



**The gardener's eye.** Steven Nikkila is a professional gardener and horticultural photographer who finds dimensions and makes connections others miss. "Maybe it comes from having to sit so still and wait for just the right shot," he says, "but I see the greatest things happen out there. I love to show and tell others about them." One of his favorite instances is the changed outlook people have after seeing his images of a butterfly successfully defending its flowers against a hungry hummingbird. His photos have solved mysteries, too, such as when he noted and captured water droplets from a sprinkler glistening prettily on a plant, but obviously on only one side of it. He solved that plant's "unknown ailment" by putting a riser on the sprinkler head to carry its water over the top to wet the entire root zone.



Email questions to Janet or Steven at [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) or call 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 by developing new material or "hybridizing" from what we already have.

So, whether it's...

- a **how-to lesson for a meeting**,
  - a **hands-on workshop** at a site of your choosing or
  - a **multi-part class** for a 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 talks or get a referral and list of speakers. **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.. and they also clean up pretty well (above, for son Cory's wedding). 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 or 248-681-7850 when you want to set up a talk, workshop or class.



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

**Tuesday evening, February 15.** Janet explains and entertains with *What the Groundhog Won't Tell*. This look at gardening folklore, its basis and practical application, takes place at the Fremont Area District Library in **Fremont, Michigan**. Free. No advance registration required. Contact Jill Hansen at the library 231-928-0256 for more details.

**Thursday, February 17, 10:00 a.m. - noon,** *Cutting Back the Rambunctious Garden*. Janet helps sort out the problems of overgrown gardens and too-big plants with instructions for pruning, growing season cuts on herbaceous plants, dividing to keep small, and other restraints. Geared for professional gardeners. At **Ray Wiegand's Nursery Wholesale Office, Macomb, Michigan**. Contact Wiegand's wholesale office at 586-286-3658 for more information.

Right: Janet explains the cuts, then guides students' saws to keep a Japanese maple small at a *Garden By Janet* hands-on offshoot of her *Rambunctious Garden* presentation.





**Saturday, February 19, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** Janet teaches *Flower Gardens*, a segment of the Michigan State University Master Gardener class. At the Wayne County Extension office, 640 Temple Street, just a block west of the Masonic Temple theater in **Detroit, Michigan**. Open to the current class of Wayne County Master Gardener candidates plus active Master Gardeners looking for a refresher on this topic. Limited seating. Contact Anita Callendar at 734-727-7238 to reserve a spot.

**Wednesday, February 23, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.,** *Pruning Your Trees and Shrubs*. Janet helps you learn what to prune, when and how in plenty of time to take advantage of two prime pruning periods: winter thaws and very early spring. She invites you to "bring a branch" to get specific directions and some hands-on for trimming your own plant.

**Thursday, February 24, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** *Gardens for Small Spaces*. A hands-on design workshop where you can learn and try out Janet's how-to and what to grow for those small courtyards, awkward corners and tiny but important beds.

Take one or both of these 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, registration fees and to download a registration form: <http://www.olbrich.org/education/classes.cfm>

**Friday, February 25, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m.,** Janet presents *Renovating the Older Landscape, Part 2*: 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.

**Monday, February 21, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** *Garden by Janet - Bring your gloves and tools!* We'll be **pruning to shape and control** two ornamental trees to keep them healthy, attractive and in proportion to the small spaces they occupy. **Waterford and Orchard Lake, Michigan**. Email or call (JMaxGarden@aol.com or 248-681-7850) to reserve a spot and learn the location. Include your phone number so we can call you as the date approaches, in case weather changes the plan. This is a limited-space workshop.

### **To attend Garden by Janet sessions:**

We're let-me-see, hands-on people. That's how we learn best. From time to time there are *Garden by Janet* sessions listed here to afford you that kind of chance to grow. You visit us where we're working to either watch or work with Janet. Generally, there is no charge and we're in one of two kinds of locations:

1) At the **gardens we tend through our business, Perennial Favorites**: Our clients understand our enthusiasm for teaching. Some open their gardens to small groups who want to see and practice "how to." When the work we're scheduled to do may be of interest to you, we invite you in.

2) In the **Detroit Zoo, Adopt-A-Garden** program where we're 22-year veterans. Many people have worked with us there, some for a day and others for years. We have fun, we learn, we accomplish much. You can check out this program by coming in as my student on a temporary pass. **To join Janet at the Zoo**, email [mstgarden@gmail.com](mailto:mstgarden@gmail.com) with the subject line of your email "Help at zoo."

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

We're co-hosting parties this year with friends and fellow educators Celia Ryker, Sue Shuttleworth, Deb Hall and the Detroit Garden Center. Details vary but expect to chip in about \$5 toward supplies. Email or call Janet and Steven to reserve a spot and receive location details.

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

**Sunday, February 27, 1 - 3 p.m.** in Detroit near the old Michigan Central depot.

**Save the date for these events coming up in March -- details in upcoming issues:**

**March 1, Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.,** Janet's presenting **8 Months of Color** at the Howell Carnegie District Library in **Howell, Michigan**. Free.

**March 3, Thursday, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.,** Janet explains how to **Get the Garden Ready for Spring**. In Waterford, Michigan at the Waterford Garden club meeting in the Waterford Parks and Rec Building. Free.

**March 7, Monday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.,** help from Janet about **Gardening in Small Spaces** at the Northville Library in **Northville, Michigan**. Free.

**March 10, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.,** join Janet for **Canned Goods: Container Gardens** at the **Farmington, Michigan** Hill and Dale Garden club meeting in Heritage Park's Spicer House.

**March 12, Saturday, 10:00 - 2:00 p.m.,** **Garden by Janet - Making wattle fencing**. Open to MSU Extension Education Center Tollgate Farm volunteers. Novi, Michigan.

**March 12, Saturday, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.** **Free range Q&A**. You bring the topics to Gardenviews Store in Northville, Michigan. Janet helps you with the answers. Free.

**March 14, Monday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.,** **Great Plants and Combinations** by Janet at the Lathrup Village Gardeners meeting at Lathrup Village City Hall, 27400 Southfield Road, **Lathrup Village, Michigan**. Refreshments, raffle, educational exhibits, too. Voluntary \$5 contribution asked of non-members.

**March 15 & 16, Tuesday and Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.,** a two-part, come to one or both presentation by Janet to help you **Get Your Garden Ready for Spring**. Open to residents of Rochester and Rochester Hills and their guests, at the Rochester Hills Public Library in **Rochester, Michigan**.

**March 17, Thursday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.,** Janet's advice for a **Low Maintenance Landscape** at the Waterford Township Library in **Waterford, Michigan**. Free.

**March 19, Saturday,** start your day of learning at the 2011 Taylor Conservatory Growing Great Gardens symposium with Janet's take on **Edible Landscapes**. Symposium is 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in **Taylor, Michigan**.

**March 19, Saturday,** Janet's part of the afternoon sessions at the 12th Annual spring education seminar hosted by the Allen County Master Gardeners in **Lima, Ohio**.

**March 24, Thursday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.,** Janet's recipe for **More Color, More Fun** at the Waterford Township Library in **Waterford, Michigan**. Free.

**March 26, Saturday,** Janet's at the Huron County Master Gardeners' Spring Into Gardening Day in **Ubley, Michigan**.

**Garden By Janet** opportunities in Michigan and Massachusetts. Watch here for details.

Snow, snow, go away --  
Let the dandelions nod & sway.  
- Frank Harney -



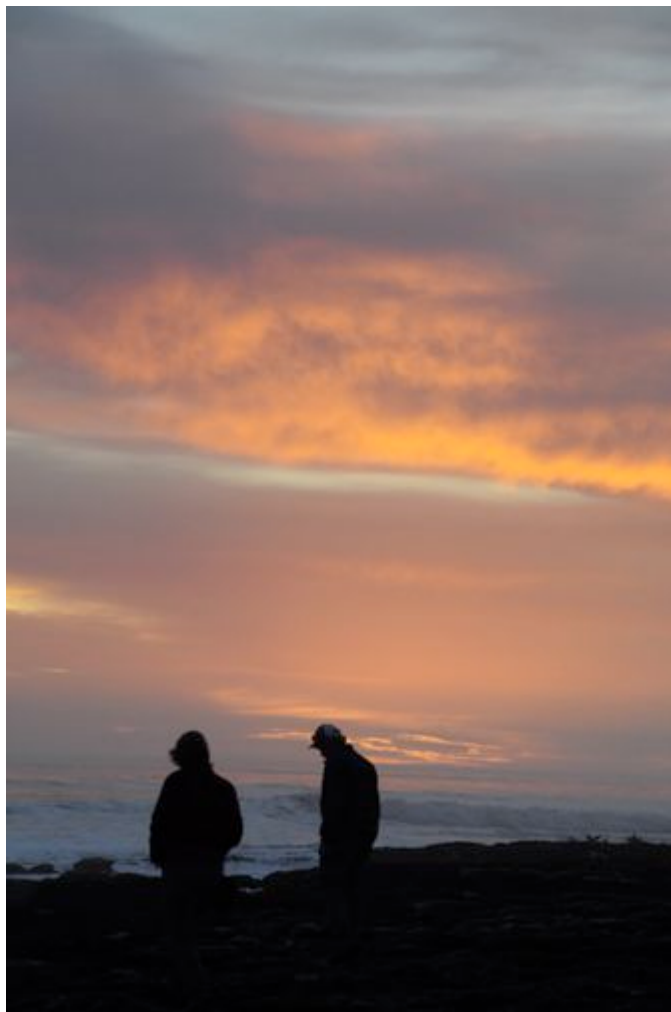
## Time to garden your walls...

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



<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.

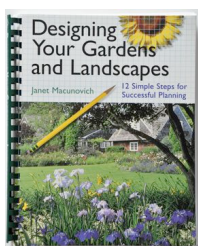


Prices for **Steven's garden art** vary with your wishes in format and size. Examples:

**Matted, framed**, overall 11 x 15", \$48  
36 x 48' no-fade **cloth tapestry**, \$215



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### ***Designing Your Gardens and Landscape***

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.

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### ***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.

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

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



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