

## What's Coming Up:

Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila answer your growing concerns  
Issue 132, February 16, 2011

### In this issue:

Evergreen pruning,  
pages 1-5

Winter clips to spruce  
tips, page 6

Midwest spruce old  
before its time, pp. 6-7

Pruning tool: What's Up  
Index, pages 7 - 8

Mystery of missing  
birds, page 8

Signs of spring, page 9

Juniper: Self sown so it's  
weedy? Pages 9 - 10

Rusty undesirables,  
page 10

Who are Janet and  
Steven?

How can I contact  
them? Pages 10 - 11

Where to catch Janet & Steven in-person, pages 11-13

Invite us or our expert friends to your town, page 13

Buy photos, books, magazines and CDs, pages 14 - 16



Blue spruce in early candle stage, so beautiful, so shear-able (pages 1 & 5 ). Yet probably not a good bet for the long term in your landscape (page 6).

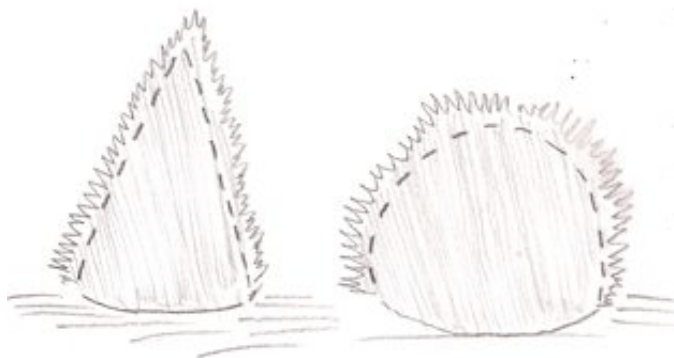
## Smaller, shapelier evergreens: Develop the eye and the knack

When is the **best time to prune** and trim evergreen trees? I'm most interested in blue spruce, black hills **spruce**, and so on. - D.B. -

You can prune **whenever you find the time**, D.B. However, we start with *why* you're pruning to determine the when and how that will make things easiest and also least damaging to the plant.

**To make a plant fuller** we shear during its most active growth phase, while tip cells are dividing and new wood is still green and soft. Then, each cut tip will quickly form not just one but many new tips -- it bushes out. For most evergreens this phase of growth, called candlering, comes in **late May**.

To **restrict a tree's size** without increasing its density, as when we want it small yet with a



If you shear needled evergreens, be timely and be tough. Shear when they're candlering, and cut enough that remaining shoots can grow unchecked all summer.

**natural, tree-like, open profile**, it's better to prune after mid-**August** when the season's growth has finished, but before early April when the new growth commences. Prune *outside* the season of rapid new growth and each twig you nip is less likely to develop multiple replacement tips. The tree stays small without acquiring a shrub's bushiness.

On needled trees and shrubs, **make all cuts individually** rather than shearing. Or shear and then go back over the plant to eliminate needle-less stubs and shorten some branches further. Every cut you make should be **to just above a side branch** or bud that is aimed in the right direction to become a replacement tip. Prune every branch that has reached or exceeded your height or width limit, removing enough that the new tip must grow for two or more years before reaching your outer limit once again. With this system, about one-third of the branches need shortening each year.

**To reduce the size** of a shrub or tree that's already too large, prune in **late March or early April** just before the plant begins the season's growth. Cut so each stub ends in a desirable side branch or bud. Don't be concerned if the branches you leave in place look a little awkward for ending in right angles -- a stub with a side branch that is now out at the fore. The side shoots of those outer-edge branches will grow outward, branching and hiding that stubby cut-back frame within the plant's new, smaller outline.

Water the plant well throughout spring and correct any wayward growth. Rub out any misdirected or awkward new shoots while they're still soft.

**To have it all** in a needled evergreen -- bushiness, restricted size and a tight shape -- you'll **make two cuts a year**. Cut while new growth is soft in May to promote bushiness. At the same time, cut some branches back further into the interior. These deep cuts allow light to reach inner buds, keeping them growing so the plant keeps a thicker "coat." Prune again after mid-August when branch extension growth has stopped for the year, to fine-tune the outline and shorten some limbs further.

### Clipping your evergreens: Exceptions

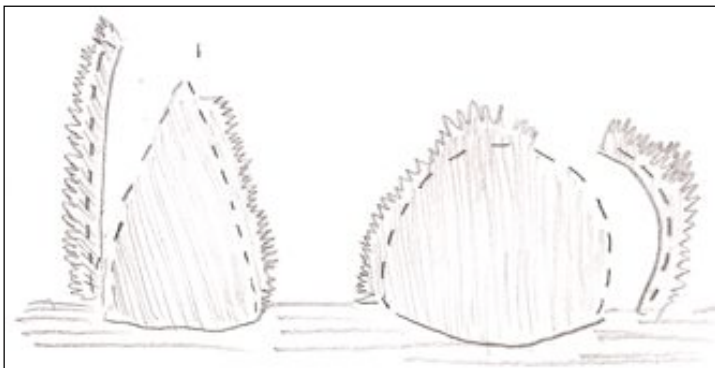
**Wet weather:** It's usually best to **avoid pruning evergreens** when it's wet or very humid. Junipers are prone to *Phomopsis* tip blight, a **fungus disease** with propensity to spread in wet weather. Similarly, various pines are plagued by *Diplodia* blight and spruce by *Cytospora* canker. These pathogens are usually not aggressive enough to enter sound foliage or intact wood but their spores float on damp air and travel on wet cutting blades to infect through wounds or cuts, killing branch tips. On humid or rainy days, they spread between branches and trees, and find easy access in fresh cuts.

**Pines:** To **avoid borer insect** trouble. Some of these insects simply kill tips, marring a tree's shape. Others that do more serious damage. Borers are active early in the year and are attracted to fresh cuts in wood. So **don't cut pines early in the year**. Do any shearing *late* in the plants' candling stage, and do any restriction pruning in late summer or during a winter thaw rather than in March or April.

**Evergreens that can be cut to leafless wood:** The advice in this article is specific to juniper, pine, spruce and arborvitae, which rarely sprout from barren wood. Some other evergreens, including yews, boxwood, rhododendrons, azaleas, and euonymus **can be cut more drastically** than described here because they can sprout new growth from leafless stubs, as long as they are otherwise healthy and given reasonable care during the recovery period.

## For a bushy, tightly sculpted needled evergreen

The plant begins each year at or just beyond the size you want (below, left: dotted line). During the candle phase when new growth is soft -- not yet woody -- shear, or shorten individual branches. Cut the plant to smaller than desired, to allow room for the new growth to expand.

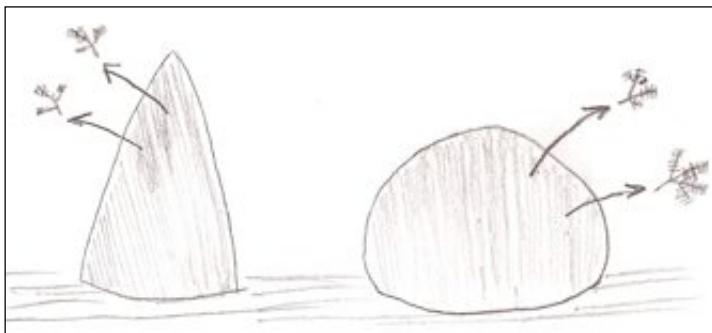
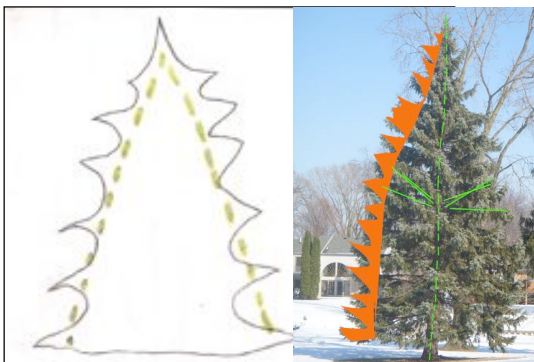


Don't leave needle-less, bud-less stubs. Make your cuts to just outside a leafy (needle-y) side branch, or clip out stubs left in shearing.

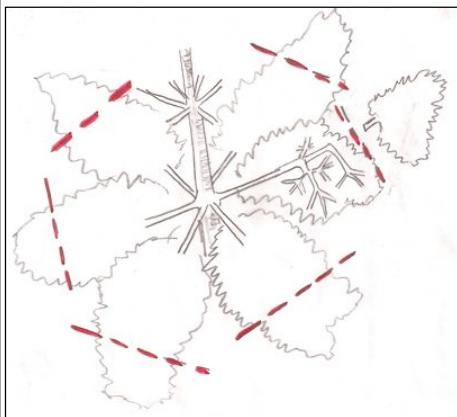
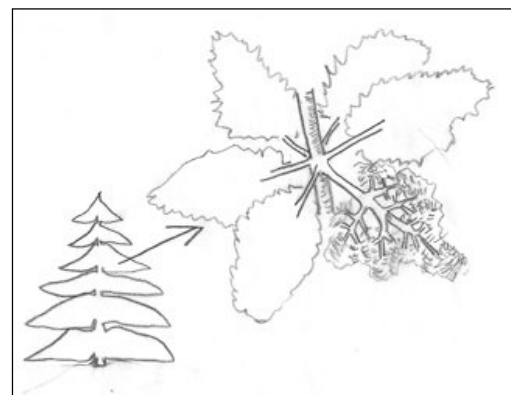
Cut about 1 out of 5 branches even shorter so light can reach inner buds and keep growth coming from the interior. Decide which branches to cut by patting the shrub. If a branch is stout enough and so many times branched that it won't flex at a pat, it's a candidate for being cut back to a side branch

## For a natural shape but restricted size

Below: Once growth has finished for the year, shorten every branch that has crossed the line in terms of width or height. The dashed line here represents the size you want. Cut limbs back to well within your desired outline, so they can grow for at least a year or two before crossing the line again.



Right: Needled evergreens such as spruces produce a whorl of new branches each year. Below, and left, center: Shorten each branch in each whorl.



Right: One branch from a whorl. More on page 4!



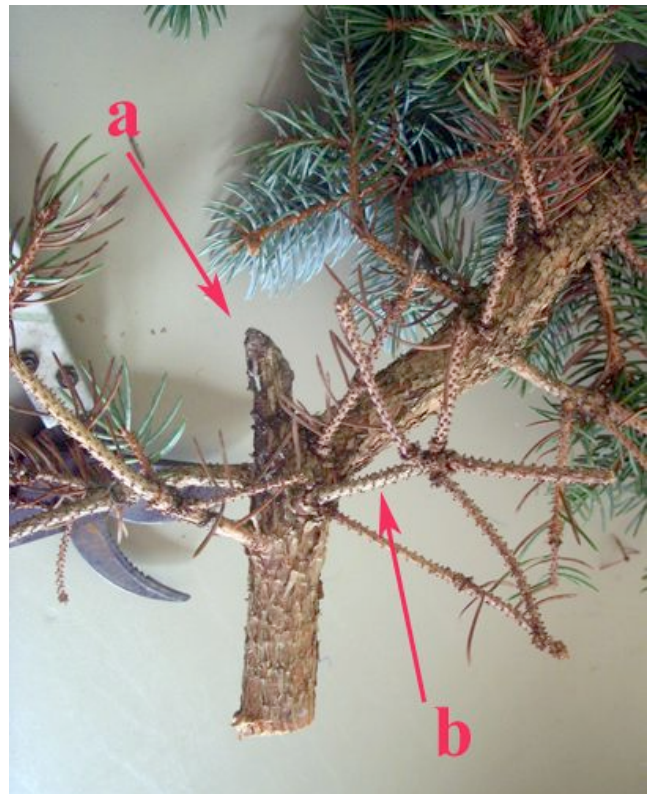
Left, bottom: After shortening the top (leader) plus each whorl branch of the needled evergreen tree or shrub, the branch tips that now extend to your boundary lines are intact tips that can grow unchecked. They are also dominant by virtue of their location at the end of a limb, and energized by increased light.

Right: Here is one branch from a whorl. It was cut back previously to a side branch -- you can see the stub from that cut, at the arrow, and in the enlarged photo, lower right.

Lower right, at "a": Stub remaining from previous pruning.

Below: Cut back some branches to side shoots well within the desired outline so that light will reach inner shoots, keeping the plant dense and replacement shoots vigorous.

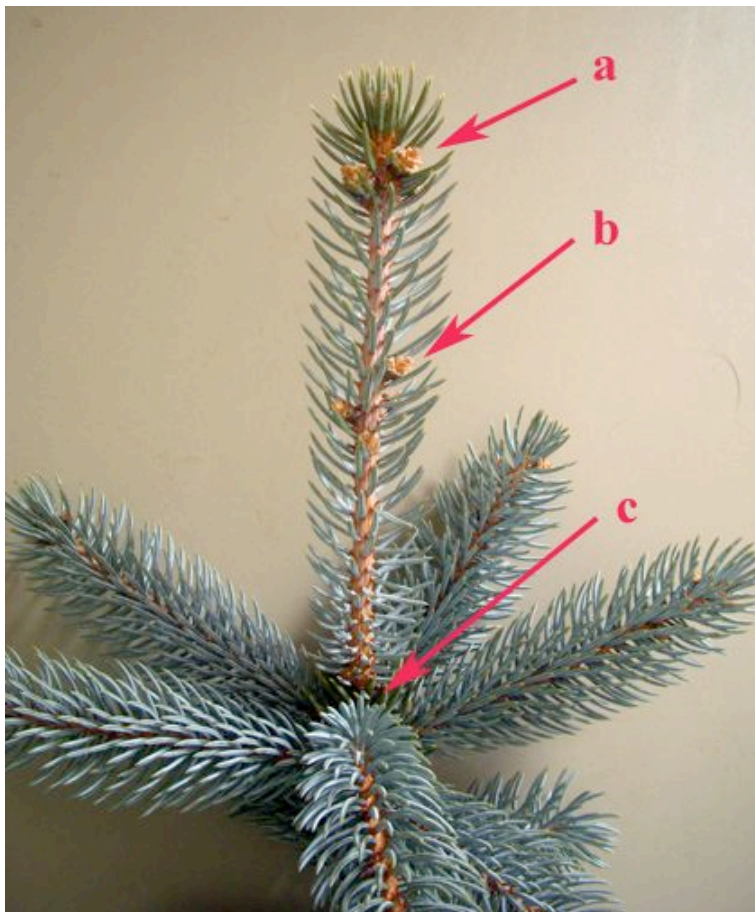
Make each cut to just above a side branch that has intact tip buds.



Above, "b": Buds "left behind" in an increasingly shaded interior will simply stop growing and die. The needles on a bud-less twig will age, be shed and leave that branch without energy. The tree lets it die, and sheds it.



Whichever bud remains at the end of a branch will become dominant and grow more than those behind it. If you cut this large limb back to the indicated point, the short branches attached just below that point will switch from a role as a "just in case" shoot likely to be lost in the shaded interior, to a dominant bud. This whole branch developed from such a bud after the previous pruning.



This young branch has buds ready to grow at its tip and midway along its length. The buds at the tip of the shoot will become branches -- a new whorl. The whorl at the bottom of this shoot came from last spring's tip buds.

This small branch is old enough that it has become woody. It can produce new growth only from its buds. If you snip it so that it is a stub without buds, it will live until it drops its existing needles, and then die. However, a shoot that is in "candle" stage -- soft, not yet woody, as on page 1 -- can form new buds at its cut tip. Thus, needled evergreens can be sheared while candling.

*Go thou  
and like an executioner  
cut off the heads  
of too fast growing sprays.  
- Gardener in Richard II,  
by William Shakespeare -*

## A little off the bottom

I have 4 Colorado **blue spruces** which are approximately 40 feet tall and hang over my driveway. I have been keeping them trimmed up so a car can pass under their branches. Is **this time of year OK to trim them?** I forgot to do it in the late fall/early winter which is when I usually do it. They are starting to scrape the tops of my vehicles. I usually take off about a foot of the tips and with the reduced weight gone, the branches spring back up and I actually gain a couple more feet of room for vehicles to move under the trees. - N.T. -

P.S. Love my blue spruce!! They are like "hotels" for birds, including hummingbirds.

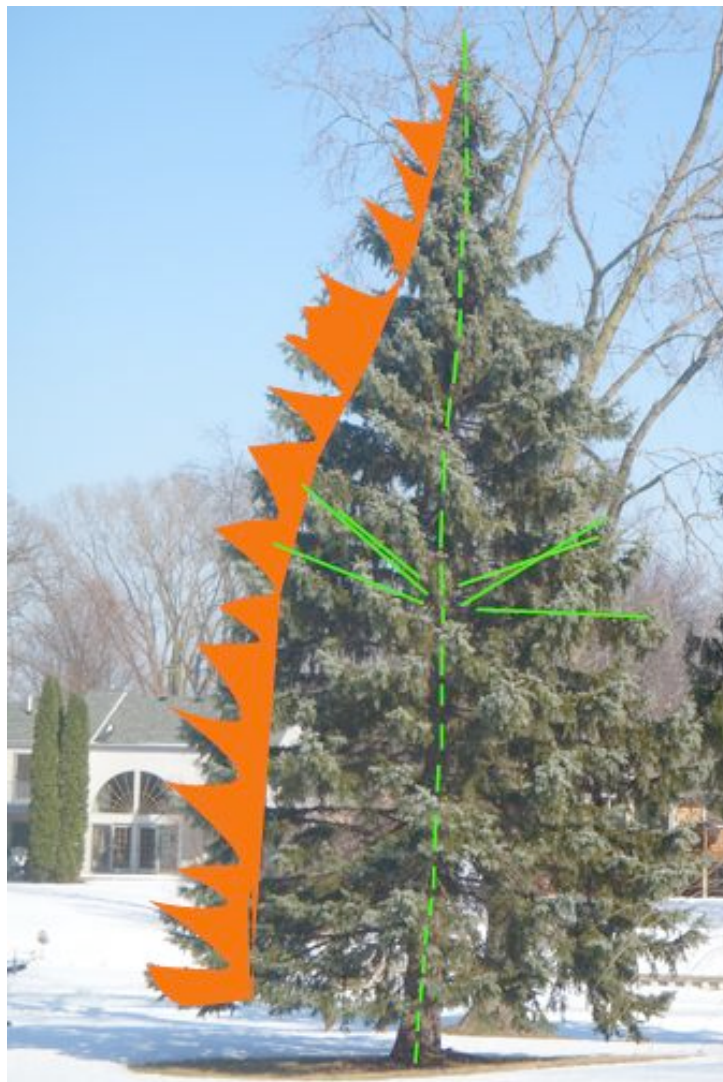
**You can cut them now.** Consider **two things.**

When **cutting branches back during winter**, check the weather. Cut during a multiple-day thaw or when cloudy skies moderate the day-night temperature range. If you cut on a warm, winter day before a clear night, sunset is likely to usher in a huge, fast drop in temperature. **Interior needles and twigs** are suddenly exposed and may not have time to acquire outer-edge hardiness. They **may freeze and die**. You may not recognize the damage until spring when they finally go brown and drop off.

Second, keep an eye on the overall shape of those trees. While lower branches are wider than those above, they receive sufficient light. Each time you shorten them, they become more shaded by the growth that continues above them. The **bottom limbs will weaken** from lack of light. Eventually they will die back and be shed as unproductive wood. At that point you should **think about replacing the spruces**. See "Where mountain goats roam" below.

### Oh give it a home where the mountain goats roam...

Blue spruce is probably best treated as a 20 year plant in a Midwest landscape. Outside its high-altitude home ground in a few Rocky Mountain States, it tends to develop more problems than it's worth after its first couple of decades.



This 30' spruce, like others of its kind and many conifers, produces a whorl of branches each year -- the green spokes trace the branches of one whorl in this 26-whorl blue spruce. The spiked scallops we draw (orange) on cartoon evergreen trees correspond to the tips of whorls and spaces between.

The blue spruce shown on page 6 is growing in Michigan where it doesn't get the cool summers and reliable winter snow cover its species is adapted for. In addition, its roots must compete with lawn, an unnatural situation for which the tree has no coping mechanism. Where it should have a root zone as wide or wider as it is tall, its roots have probably been discouraged by the bluegrass and may barely reach the tree's dripline.

That tree is only 26 (a spruce's age is apparent since one whorl of branches forms per year). In the wild where it evolved such a tree could live a century or two, but here it's old way before its time in terms of general health. The lower branches have slowed in growth so that what should be a generous, ground-hugging, soil-temperature-moderating skirt is skimpy to non-existent. The roots will be more and more stressed as the tree limbs itself up -- a set-up for other troubles and accelerating decline.

## More pruning plus keeping trees small: In your archives, our CD and magazine

In 2010 we released our magazine, *Trees*, which features a 5 page, illustrated account of pruning to restrict the size of a tree -- evergreen or deciduous.

Also, throughout 2009 and 2010 we answered and illustrated a great many pruning questions.



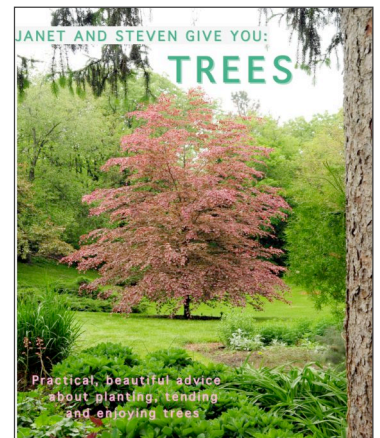
Now that pruning season is upon us, answers are at your fingertips in your own newsletter collection or the 2009-2010 issues on the *Potting Up Perennials* CD. Use your *What's Coming Up* Index.

See page 16# for more about our magazines and CDs.

For instance, in *What's Coming Up* #86, we provided a complete list of shrubs and pruning directions. Here are excerpts from that issue for pruning shrubby spruces:

### **Spruce, dwarf birdsnest, globe, etc. (*Picea* species)**

- kept smaller than its potential and tightly shaped, as in a sculpted cone or ball. 12
- kept smaller than its potential but allowed a natural, loose outline. 7 + 7a
- grown for full size and natural shape. 1 + 1a
- has been too big for two or more years. 8 + 8a + 8b



#### **What's Coming Up:** Janet Macunovich and Steven Nikkila answer your growing concerns Issue 86, March 27, 2010

#### **In this issue:**

Shaded lawn fades: Time to let it go? Pages 1-2  
Groundcover for shade: page 2-3  
Hiding the line on ash borer? Pages 4-5  
Share old woody mess under pines, page 6-7  
Shrubs: Cut now... pp. 7-11 and how! pp. 12-13  
Cold berks a Japanese maple, p. 15  
Who are Janet and Steven?  
How can I contact them? Pg. 16  
Let us be teach in your town, p. 18  
Where to catch Janet & Steven in person, page 16-18  
Beautiful gardens to order for your walls, page 19  
Books, magazines and CDs, pp. 20-21



When the protective covers pop off the buds of hardy evergreens and shrubs, we gardeners come to attention. The old rule is to select a good deal of energy in our chosen direction. See pages 7-13.  
Plant your site and show themselves some, too. Notice that feet on a plant time their own winter rest to end as their favorite plant's growing season begins. If you're looking to head off a repeat performance by a noxious insect such as pine aphid, read the signs at budbreak to learn if this year you'll find an infestation. It's looks like the pine's presence will be hairy, budbreak is time to start countermeasures, such as dormant oil. See page 6.

Photo 13-106, Page 1

#### **Thinning grass may be going in the right direction**

I'd like to get the lawn into better shape. It's thin. It seems like nothing I do ever lasts. There are a lot of trees in my yard. - Pat -

It's not you, Pat. It's the way it is. In a shady yard, to keep a nice lawn you should aerate, overseed, topdress with slow release organic fertilizer, water more frequently, prune the trees to let in more light - repeat. It's a never-ending fight to keep a lawn under stress. Because grass doesn't belong in the shade. Even the fescue grass we plant there only tolerates shade.

Grow what loves a place. Do not settle for plants that only tolerate the situation your garden offers. Would you take a driving vacation with a companion who only tolerates you?

How about this: Let the lawn keep going in the direction it's going. In other words, let it die. Replace it with groundcover. Outline areas that encompass individual trees or groups of trees. Make these beds large enough to be in balance with the trees' mass. Spread a couple of inches of compost, or more as necessary to level.

All text plus photos not credited otherwise. ©2009 Janet Macunovich & Steven Nikkila JMaxGarden@aol.com

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**1 - Cut only to remove wood that's dead, damaged, or declining. Cut when you will.**

**1a - While the plant is young, select permanent framework branches. In August of any year, cut out excess, awkward or weak growth while that wood is still small.**

-----++++-----++++-----++++-----++++-----++++-----++++-----++++-----++++-----  
7 - Wait, put up with irregularities until August, then cut for the shape or size you want. Do this by cutting back any limb that has crossed the lines you set to define its greatest acceptable height and width. Shorten each limb you cut by about two year's growth. Determine annual growth rate by looking for the differences between its current-year wood and older wood. Often, new wood has not developed bark or is a different color or texture. Cut any of that limb's side branches, too, if their tips extend beyond the end point you just established.  
7a - For juniper, arborvitae, pine and spruce, make all cuts to just above a side branch.

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8 - Cut back hard, best in early spring. Cut selectively rather than simply shearing; you should not leave bare wood at any tip. Make every cut to just above a side branch that has a leafy / needled tip well within your height and width limit. Remove completely any branch that has no foliage, leafy bud or leafy side branch within your outline.  
8a - Keep the plant well watered and fertilize once it begins to grow. While new growth is soft, nip the tip of any shoot that crosses your outer limits so that it will be encouraged to produce side branches further inside the outline. Begin cutting per other objectives once the plant develops some density.  
8b - If the plant has none / very little foliage within your outline, or you can't abide the just-cut plant's appearance, or renewed density of leaf doesn't come within two years, replace the shrub with something better suited to the site.

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12 - Best to cut while the plant is candling -- while new growth is extending itself and before that new growth changes from soft and green to woody. Shear the soft growth to remove as many inches as the plant adds each year, then clip to remove any woody, tip-less twigs. Then thin the plant's shell by clipping individual branches to shorten them by another year's growth. As you thin, target the thickest branches with the densest cluster of "fingers" at their tip. Thinning may leave "holes" in the surface but don't worry. Through the openings, light will reach into the plant's interior, promoting growth from within to quickly fill gaps and keep the plant denser and healthier.

## Looking up the answer to bird feeder mystery

Many different species of birds have been at our feeder for the past few weeks when it has been dark and dreary. However, last Sunday and today when it has been bright and sunny, **there are no birds around**. Do you know why? - M.H. -

Usually we look up when things become still around our feeders. **Hawks** are especially hungry now during nesting season and may home in on activity around a bird feeding station.



We know our air space is hunted by a redtail- as well as a sharpshinned hawk, with occasional visits by a cooper's hawk. Our songbirds know it, too. They don't seem to distinguish between birds of prey such as redtails that are more likely to take rodents and rabbits, and those that prefer birds. **Songbirds make themselves scarce** when any hawk's circling.

## Hark the spring herald!

Spring has arrived in my garden where the snowdrops are blooming! - W.S. -

That's great! We start looking for our earliest bulbs -- snow crocus (*Crocus minimus*) -- to flower in about ten days. Meanwhile, another spring herald has already arrived. It's the smell of skunk, caught now three times after months of respite. The groundhog is not the only creature that begins to stir in early February.

## Tall, evergreen weed?

Hello Janet and Steven. **Junipers are weeds?!** An article I read says:

Eastern red cedar... a pest... self-seeded themselves in spring and are already 2-3 feet tall! When trying to dig one out, an alarmingly deep tap root was discovered.

...actually a juniper not a cedar. It does smell strongly of cedar when stems or needles are crushed. It's best to pull out when young. More mature plants can be killed by cutting them down at ground level.

Yet another online article I received is encouraging this native conifer for the birds as good for berries, nesting, and winter protection for the birds.

So which is it? I already have a rocky mountain 'Wichita Blue' narrow upright cultivar in my yard. After reading that National Wildlife article, I added a female, a smaller eastern red cedar cultivar called 'Canaertii' to

my 2011 garden list. Now I am confused. What is your opinion on junipers? - S.J. -

**Any plant can be a weed if it is growing where it's not wanted.**

*Juniperus virginiana* is native throughout most of the eastern U.S.\* and is a valuable wildlife plant, providing food and shelter to many birds and small mammals. Birds do spread its seed and so it can appear where someone may not want it. We have a 'Canaertii' in our own yard (left\*) and love the cheerful noise that emanates from it each morning from all the birds sheltering there.

\* [www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics\\_manual/volume\\_1/juniperus/virginiana.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_1/juniperus/virginiana.htm)



*Juniperus virginiana* 'Canaertii' and berries.

## Imagine being banned for being a bit rusty...

Virginia junipers appear on some communities' "undesirable plants" lists because the species is an alternate host for a disease that can affect apples -- cedar apple rust. That may have been entirely logical when the community first formed, if there were many orchards in the area. Barberry (black stem rust of wheat) is not welcome in many farming States, and members of the *Ribes* genus (including currant- and gooseberry bushes) are blacklisted in the same way in logging areas as hosts of white pine blister rust. Although such lists could be reviewed and updated when an area becomes predominantly residential, they more often remain on the books, unregarded.

**Green thumbs up** to being **reasonable about seed starting**. It's fun to watch seeds grow but is there so much more joy in watching 50, as 5, that it can make up for the anxiety of trying to find homes for all those seedlings?

**Green thumbs down** to unclear directions on seed packets. "Seed must freeze" should read "Seed must be kept moist and 40°F or cooler for about 60 days."

*The love of gardening is a seed that once sown never dies.*

- Gertrude Jekyll -

*Bad seed is a robbery of the worst kind: for your pocket-book not only suffers by it, but your preparations are lost and a season passes away unimproved.*

- George Washington -

*There is one thing you will find practically impossible to carry into your own greenhouse and that is tension.*

- Charles H. Potter -

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



### **A professional gardener with many hats.**

To make gardens one's business in a region with an eight-month growing season, versatility's essential. In 1988 Janet Macunovich turned her part-time gardening business into a full time affair. She had to elect an off-season occupation, too, because she was the primary wage earner for a four-person family -- husband Steven was then their chosen full-time, award-winning child-raiser. So she drew on college and career skills (she'd planned to be an art teacher, and had 11 years training telephone company technicians and management) to spend winters teaching and writing about gardening. Says Macunovich, "It's more up my alley than the standard answer -- plowing snow!" Since then she's written nine books, over 900 newspaper and magazine articles, taught more than 15,000 gardeners and green industry professionals, and run a gardening school, a gardening website and a weekly radio show. "All the gardens I've made or helped others make, and the lively network of gardeners sharing

information that's evolved, they make the effort worthwhile. I know I'll keep on doing this until I 'spade' away!"

**The guy with the dirty camera.** Professional gardener and horticultural photographer Steven Nikkila is often on both ends of a "shoot" -- doing the garden work as well as capturing it for the enlightenment and enjoyment of others. He says a camera's worst enemies are water, sand and the camera owner. Like almost everything he includes in his photos, publications and gardens, that is based on personal experience. When you see his shots of gardens and gardeners at work, and hear his explanations how-to, keep in mind that he was peeling off gloves -- or muddying the camera! -- between every shot. Nikkila feels that, "doing the work myself that I describe in my articles and photos makes me better at teaching, writing and photography. Yet even after 20 years of doing this, I'm still lousy when it comes to keeping cameras clean!"

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

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

**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 with the subject line of your email "Help at zoo."

### **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 and Taylor Garden Club's 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**. Registration forms can be downloaded at either [taylorconservatory.org](http://taylorconservatory.org) or [taylorgardenclub.com](http://taylorgardenclub.com)

**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 **Udly, Michigan**.

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

### 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,
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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](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) or 248-681-7850 when you want to set up a talk, workshop or class.

### Errata

Issue #131 should have reported that the Kent County, Michigan Master Gardeners' *Stuck on Gardening* conference would feature Felder Rushing.

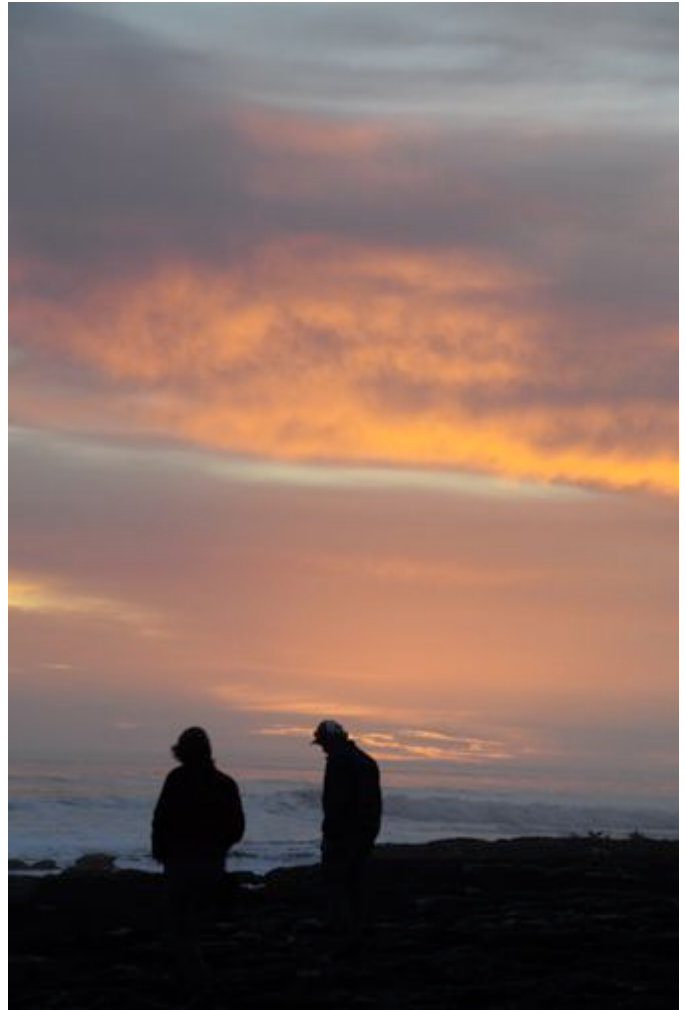
## Time to garden your walls...

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.

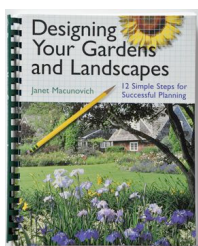


Prices for **Steven's garden art** vary with your wishes in format and size. Examples:

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



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### ***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.

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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.

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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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