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Suburban Gardener

Has Earth Day Lost Its Punch In 2 Years?

By BETTY FRANKEL
 Special Writer

"Earth Day," April 22, came and went this year with very little fanfare. It was just two years ago that the first "Earth Day" was celebrated with huge rallies in high schools and on college campuses all over the country. Ecologists and politicians, concerned students and their equally concerned parents gathered to discuss environmental problems and promised to bend every effort toward finding solutions to these problems.

"Pete" Petoskey, of the Michigan State Department of Natural Resources, commented that two years ago he was asked to give 11 talks on ecology. Last year six groups asked him to talk, and this year there were no requests at all.

Is it possible to become so complacent so quickly? Although some progress has been made, the environmental problems that aroused such concern two years ago still exist.

The air is still being polluted by fumes from automobiles and factory smokestacks. The water in lakes and streams is still being polluted with waste products from industrial plants and with sewage from communities. We are still using resources with reckless abandon. Natural areas are being converted into housing developments. Wetlands are being filled in, and rich farmland is being paved for parking lots.

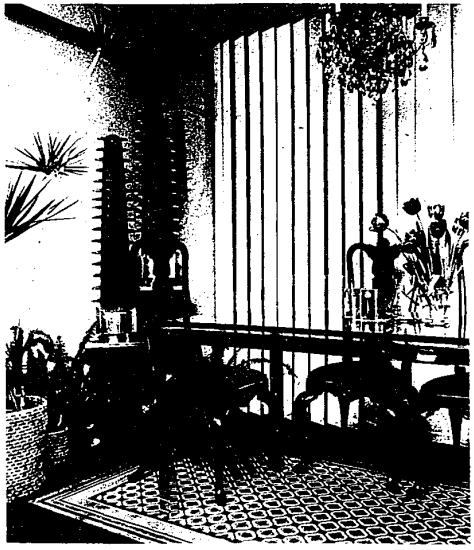
Have we forgotten the problems and the dangers—or have we just given up?

THESE ARE things that you can do as a gardener, as a homeowner, and as a concerned citizen.

Do you bother to take your newspapers to a collection center? Do you recycle your bottles and cans? It is a small gesture, but worth doing. Many cities find that the volume of trash they collect has fallen over 25 per cent because of recycling.

Do you try to conserve fuel and energy—turn off the lights when they are not needed; form a car pool, etc.?

Do you have a compost pile in your yard to convert fallen leaves and clippings into humus that can be recycled back into the soil to keep it rich and fertile? A compost



THE FIRST COLLECTION of European area rugs introduced by Concepts International, Inc., is having its debut in retail stores across the country in June. Inspiration for designs are taken from such items as Sevres porcelain, Tudor textiles and paintings. All are machine made and 100 per cent wool. Price tags for 9x12 size are between \$295 and \$395. Hudson's will handle the collection locally.

ARBOR WEEK
 plant a beautiful flowering TREE

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MANY INSECTS and diseases can be controlled by checking the yard and garden frequently and picking off or cutting off twigs that are infested. Also, plant trees and shrubs that provide food and shelter for birds. The birds attracted to the yard will help you keep the insects under control.

Use mulches around shrubs and in garden beds to conserve moisture and keep down weeds. Wood chips, pebbles, grass clippings, hay, straw, buckwheat hulls, cocoa bean shells, chopped corn cobs are but a few of the things that can be used for mulching.

Another thing that you can do is explore the undeveloped areas in your community. Learn what these lands are like and what their assets are. Are you aware of the value of wetlands? These low, marshy areas—big or small—are so important. They are a valuable resource and should not be filled in. They are needed so water can collect in them and then gradually seep into the ground replenishing the supply of ground water. This keeps it at the proper level so wells continue to flow and plants can flourish. Wetlands are valuable wildlife areas.

Garden Reminders

The planting season is here. Now is the time to plant leafy trees and shrubs, evergreens, roses and perennials... Get deciduous trees and shrubs planted as soon as possible... Early May is the best time to plant fruit trees, magnolias, birch trees and others with thin bark... Evergreens are best planted later in May... Perennials are sprouting and they can be dug, divided and transplanted now. If possible wait until later in the season to divide early blooming perennials or flowers may be sacrificed... Seeds of hardy vegetables and annuals can be sown in the garden now, but wait a bit before seeding tender plants or setting out tomatoes or eggplant.

MANY KINDS of grasses and reeds, shrubs and wild flowers grow in these areas giving them a special, unique beauty, and they are the home of a multitude of small creatures — frogs and dragonflies, herons and redwing blackbirds, mink and muskrats, and many more — all dependent on each other and on the wetland habitat.

This you and your representatives can work together to keep earth alive.

Plant Delphiniums In Early Spring

Among the stateliest of garden flowers is the delphinium. Stems may grow to six feet and more in height.

The closely set florets turn much of the stems into spires of color.

Contrary to popular belief, the finest delphiniums do not grow from seeds sown in late summer.

Instead they result from sowing seeds outdoors early in spring in rich, well drained soil, preferably in a special seed bed.

An important tip: cover seeds with sieved soil only an eighth inch deep. Then firm soil to seeds.

When seedlings sprout remove any that are crowded, first transplanting them if you wish, but leaving most where they grew until they are three or four inches tall.

Then move them where they are to bloom, allowing at least 1 1/2 feet between plants.

Regular fertilization and plenty of water (laying down the hose and soaking the soil around the roots) should result in some blooms the first year; a full crop the second.



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There's A Tomato For Every Purpose

You may think that a tomato is a tomato is a tomato but that's not precisely the case. There are varieties that bear such huge fruits that a single one may tip the scale at two pounds! Then there are the little fellows intended for popping whole into the mouth. And in between there are many sizes, several colors, early, mid-season and late-bearing varieties, plus those resistant to one or several common tomato diseases and those for specialized purposes.

For huge fruits, to impress friends and neighbors yet please the family's palate, choose Beekeeper, Burpee's Delicious or Park's Whopper, the last named ripening fruit about a week earlier than the others. All three are disease resistant.

AT THE OTHER end of the size scale are the always popular Yellow or Red Pear, Yellow or Red Plum and Red Cherry tomatoes, loved by children.

There are also newer small-fruited varieties, excellent for growing in pots; provide food while ornamenting your patio.

These include Small Fry, Pato, Pixie, Stokesalaska and Tiny Tim, the last two earliest to bear. There's also Sugar Lump, its name referring to the extra-sweet flavor.

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