

Get foreign exchange of garden information



GARDEN SPOT
MARTY FIGLEY

"Hardy Herbaceous Perennials," Leo Jelitto and Wilhelm Schacht (Timber Press, \$125 per set), is so complete that it consists of two volumes.

The original editions were in German and have been used by Continental plantmen for 40 years. Now available in English, the encyclopedia has been updated to include the latest plant introductions in the United States and the United Kingdom. Another benefit to American gardeners is the USDA hardiness zones that are included.

The 809 genera, 4,286 species, subspecies, varieties and hybrids, and 3,617 cultivars were chosen because they were hardy in temperate latitudes and are garden-worthy. Some species were included because of their botanical interest or their importance to the ecology.

Descriptions of all the plants are most understandable. Site locations and specific instructions are given so that the gardener will be successful. Anyone who is interested in and wants to learn more about perennials will find a

spot in their library for this important set of books.

Information, please

"The Why and How of Home Horticulture," D.R. Blens (Freeman, \$37.50), was written when the author discovered that a suitable textbook wasn't available for an elective course on horticulture. This book can be used as a textbook, but, more important, it explains to the home gardener, in layman's terms, correct horticultural practices.

You will learn when to do specific tasks in any type of garden situation, with ornamentals, vegetables, trees, shrubs, all plants: learn about pruning, propagation and so much more, indoors or out. All are included. In short, this book should be on all gardeners' bookshelves.

"Easy Care Shade Flowers," Patricia A. Taylor (Fireside, \$14, soft), concentrates on small gardens. All parts of the country have been visited, and descriptions and photos abound with ideas. Lists of plants for specific areas of the country have been obtained from institutions (Michigan State University is included). Lots of information in a small book.

Garden variety

"The Contained Garden," Kenneth Beckett, David Carr and Da-

vid Stevens (Penguin, from \$16.95 to \$21.99), is one in a series of Viking Home Gardening Bookshelf books. This one is devoted to outdoor plants—trees, shrubs, flowers, vegetables and fruits—almost half of it is encyclopedic. Siting container plants is shown in photos that will encourage you to try this gardening method. Some of the references are purely English, but all in all, lots of good information.

"Mrs. Greenthumbs," Cassandra Danz (Crown, \$12), is a witty account of her experiences in and around the garden. It follows a monthly schedule of chores. Get this entertaining book for a good chuckle and to learn some seasoned gardening ideas along the way.

"The Evening Garden: Flowers and Fragrance From Dusk Till Dawn," Peter Loewer (Macmillan, \$25), was written for people who want to extend their time in the garden after the sun has set.

Here is just the book to guide you to successfully plan and plant an evening paradise. Loewer describes each plant, from tropicals, annuals, perennials, vines, bulbs and those that "look like they should bloom at night" and alerts us to the night creatures. His line drawings exquisitely illustrate the book. Wonderful reading even if you don't garden.

Cranbrook reference

"Purpleleaf Plums," Arthur Lee Jacobson (Timber Press, \$27.95), compiles all the pertinent information about these plants. Before you select a purpleleaf

plum for your landscape, read this most comprehensive book and show it to your nurseryman. Jacobson includes personal observations and some historical data about these trees that were first exported from the Shah of Persia's garden in the late 18th century.

Sunset Books has just released "Herbs: Growing and Using Them Today" (\$8.99, soft). This is good basic information, especially for beginners. My eye caught the photo of the herb garden at Cranbrook (page 10) that is maintained by members of the Southern Michigan Unit of the Herb Society of America Inc.

TIMELY GARDEN TIPS

■ Pinch back the candles (new growth at the end of the branches) of pine trees to control the growth of the plant. Remove part of the candle for moderate growth, or the

entire candle for branched compact growth.

■ When you plant petunias, pinch off the blossoms right away for fuller plants, then pinch a second time after they have bloomed.

■ Shrubs that have finished flowering can be pruned. Cut out one-third of the old stems to encourage new growth.

■ Plant annuals in containers and hanging baskets.

■ Fertilize peonies with a top-dressing of bone meal or well-decomposed manure mixed with good, rich compost.

■ Set out tomato, eggplant and pepper seedlings.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1832. Her fax number is (313) 644-1814.

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