

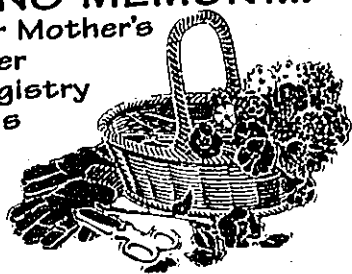
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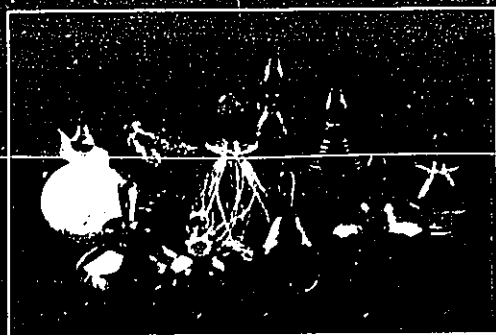
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GARDEN SPOT

Books help plan growing season



MARTY FIGLEY

Winter weather had certainly kept us indoors where we had time to study gardening books and plan for the coming season. The following books contain new information as well as advice from long ago.

We enjoyed the birds and their antics at the feeders this winter. We saw black-capped chickadees, nuthatches, finches, cardinals, a red-bellied woodpecker and others. "The National Audubon Society North American Bird Feeder Handbook," Robert Burton (\$24.95), contains 80 portraits of many North American species. It is a new edition with updates for the '90s and is an excellent guide. Cross references make it user-friendly. It includes habitat and nesting information, and food preferences.

"The National Audubon Society The Bird Garden," Stephen Kress (\$24.95), deals with plants that will attract birds in the garden so they will visit all during the year. Large trees to ground covers all play a part in a bird's life and the book details them all -- shrubs, perennials, etc. -- and food sources such as the seeds and berries they produce. It also includes information about barriers, how to control predators and protect the feeders. The regional guide will help to pinpoint a particular section of the country.

Plant information

"The Herb Society of America Encyclopedia of Herbs and Their Uses," Doni Brown (Dorling Kindersley, \$29.95), is filled with information about these plants. Descriptions and photos of herb plants from around the world, how they are used in a specific country, and more, make this an invaluable guide.

The Herb Catalog portion contains portraits of a wide range of herbs accompanied by horticulture information and photographs. Another section, The Herb Dictionary, gives detailed information on the uses of every species listed, instructions for growing, etc. Design, propagation, harvesting and storing round out the book. A fine reference work that will provide much valuable information.

Malcolm Hillier's "Color Garden: A Year-round Guide to Creating Imaginative Color Combinations" (Dorling Kindersley, \$29.95) has taken an innovative approach in illustrating how colors can be used to the best advantage. Each season of the year is highlighted with specific flowers that will be complementary. He talks of harmonizing

and opposite colors, how colors are affected by their neighbors, then explains with succinct text and many colorful illustrations. Another beautiful book by Hillier.

Updates

Timber Press has just released two books from its new Royal Horticulture Classic Garden Writers series, which are reprints of previously published works. They have been edited by Graham Stuart Thomas, a noted British plantsman, and contain information with the latest changes in plant names.

The first, "Colour in the Flower Garden," Gertrude Jekyll (\$22.95), was first published in 1908. Jekyll relates her definite opinions on gardening as she leads us through her numerous gardens and tells how and why she used particular plants, especially for color. We must remember a small garden for her could have been an acre!

The second, "We Made a Garden," Margery Fish (\$19.95), first published in 1956, describes how Fish and her husband created a typical cottage garden. Her writing is smooth and personal; she tells of successes as well as failures and shares her good advice freely. I believe she studied, worked and learned in her garden as long as possible.

Clarification

The Jan. 11 column should have read: Anti-transpirant should be sprayed on broadleaf evergreens when the temperature is above 32 degrees for 24 hours.

TIMELY GARDEN TIPS

If you can't plant bare-root shrubs or trees right away after purchase, set them in a shallow trench and cover roots with soil. Before planting, soak them overnight in a bucket of muddy water.

When you cut long sprays of lilacs for indoors, keep the shape of the bush in mind.

Have your lawn mower blade sharpened if you didn't do it earlier.

Ferry-Morse is sending its first-ever fall catalog. If you haven't received a copy, call (800) 283-3400. It's free.

Plant seeds directly into the garden.

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, 1859. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.

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