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neighbors. I now have a plant in my garden and anticipate the time when I can enjoy them from my own back yard.

Margaret explained that the plants, which like plenty of sun, won't bear very many fruits the first year, but there will be plenty the second year. After picking the berries she cuts off the ends of the branches where they grew, then and throughout the fall she cuts old dead runners to the ground "as I see them — a little bit here and a little bit there." All this has to be destroyed and not left around the plants so that disease is prevented.

The new shoots are left to grow to produce the following year. She winds these shoots around tomato cages that

are used to support the plants, but a row of double wires or a wooden tepee or trellis would work just as well.

Each year compost or manure is worked in the garden in the spring, and she fertilizes the whole garden, which contains vegetables, herbs and flowers, with Rapid-Gro twice each year. These plants need to be kept well watered, but the effort is worth it.

Margaret's husband always made the jelly from the harvest. He is now deceased, so this is the first year she has made the jelly. She shared a jar with me, and it is delicious!

This generous lady likes to try lots of new plants and has a relaxed attitude about gardening.



MARTY FIGLEY

It's the berries: Margaret Miller of Birmingham has enjoyed growing blackberries in her garden.

## Planning

"I don't think about anything growing or living with me. I'm not a fanatic about analyzing things: If it grows, it grows."

She recently read about a new type of blackberry that grows upright like a bush that she would like to try. Her thornless blackberries are proof that they like what she does. Although spring is the best time to plant berry crops, you might wish to consider growing them as you plan next year's garden.

The book "Movable Harvests: The Simplicity & Bounty of Container Gardens," Chuck and Barbara Crandall (Chapters, \$19.95 paper, \$29.95 hard), has a section relating to growing berries. It recommends several "erect types" of blackberries; "Alfred" and "Raven" are two.

The information about growing berries is given in a simple, clear way as are the directions for growing all types of warm and cool season vegetables, fruits and herbs. This book is about growing in many different kinds of containers and explains what types to use, soil, fertilizing, diseases, pests, etc., and recommends suitable varieties for this kind of culture.

## TIMELY GARDEN TIPS

■ It's leaf-raking time. The revolutionary new A-just-O-RAKE will make garden cleanup a breeze. It expands from 7 1/4 inches to two feet wide; cultivates; rakes up heavy things such as nuts and

pine needles. From this year's MDIA/ Meadow Brook Landscape Show, it's still available at a special price of \$20, plus shipping and handling. Call Horizons Ltd., (800) 969-4553 to order. It is 100 percent guaranteed.

■ When adding to the compost pile during cleanup, don't include diseased plants.

■ The Avant Gardener suggests growing the annual Nemesia as a winter house plant. Seeds sown now will bloom in a sunny window in late March or early April. They come in many colors. Available from Thompson & Morgan, Box 1308, Jackson, N.J. 08527.

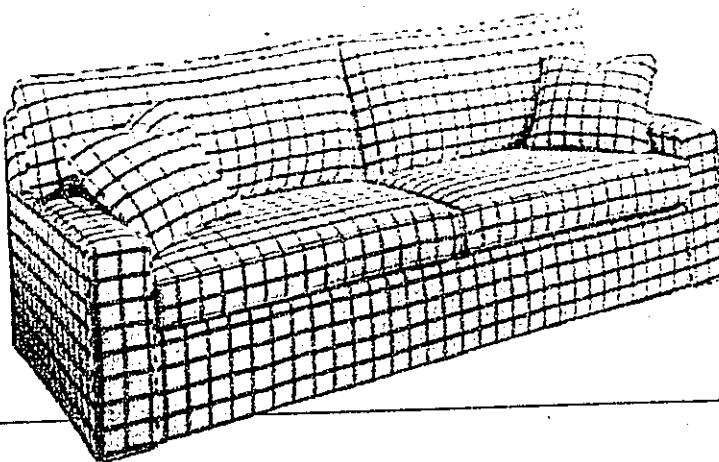
■ The best way to see if your house plants are pot bound is to look at the roots. If they're thick and matted, they need to be repotted into a larger container.

■ Sun Gro Horticulture Inc. is producer of Sunshine Potting Mixes, a new product that is peat-based; there are several formulas for specific uses. Many professional growers use them, and they are available at local retailers. Call (800) 665-4592 for one in your locality.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (313) 959-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then her mailbox number, 1859. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.

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