

Book explains unusual landscape form

Mountains in the Sea: The Vietnamese Miniature Landscape Art of Hon Non Bo, Phan Van Lit with Lew Buller (Timber Press, \$34.95), introduces us to an unusual art form. "Hon Non Bo" is translated literally as "mountainous island in the sea."

This art form reflects the ancient Vietnamese custom of worshipping stones, trees and rivers, a creed or form of meditation that is distinctly theirs. As we travel through the book, we visit this picturesque country and learn the philosophical concepts that have affected the evolution of the art. Each step of this ancient art is explained in detail and many illustrations further depict the creative process that is similar to Japanese bonsai and Chinese penjing.

I don't know one person who doesn't like hummingbirds. Peterson Field Guides: Hummingbirds of North America, Sheri L. Williamson (Houghton Mifflin, \$22), details the distribution, and



Garden spot
Marty Figley

lists similar species, their calls (sounds), behavior, habitat and much more of 31 North American species. The color photos of the birds, especially the close-ups of the tails and heads, will make us more appreciative of their coloration. The author has had much experience observing and studying these birds.

Take this along with you when you're out and about. You may get lucky and spy a beauty!

Cubed Foot Gardening: Growing Vegetables in Raised, Intensive Beds, Christopher O. Bird (Timber Press, \$18.95, soft), is filled with innovative information. Bird gardens in beds that are

framed 2-by-12-foot lumber and are intensely planted. A master gardener who has gardened in a number of diverse places, his practice produces good results.

He begins with the very simple basics of gardening and then takes us through the steps to perfect results, from seed sources to buying seedlings. The bulk of the book deals with specific vegetables and what to do when. Anyone will learn from this, especially beginners.

Father John L. Fiola's book *Lilacs: The Genus Syringa*, first published in 1988 by Timber Press, is now available in paperback (\$34.95).

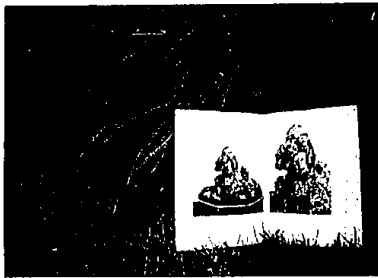
This publisher has received many requests for Lilacs and is reprinting it, including 398 color photographs from the first edition. It will be some time before a revised edition will be available. Father Fiola (1924-1990) was a leading grower and hybridizer of lilacs and a founding director of the

International Lilac Society. This scholarly work includes information about the taxonomy, lilac species from Europe, China, India, Korea and Japan, color, landscaping considerations and culture. I found the information about lilac hybridizers who have gone before and those still involved in hybridizing quite fascinating.

In 1984, Houghton Mifflin originally published *An Island Garden* by Celia Thaxter. Now we have a new slipcased facsimile edition, which contains the original chromolithographs by Childe Hassam and a new introduction by Tasha Tudor.

Thaxter, a popular poet, created a garden on Appledore Island during the 19th century. This is the account of a year in the life of the garden.

Thaxter grew most of the many plants from seeds and she writes with complete honesty of her successes and failures, with a descriptive phrasing. Her account of introducing toads in the garden, and the way she deals with



MARTY FIGLEY

Pages from *Mountains in the Sea* are descriptive and beautiful.

Weeds and pests, is interesting, but her knowledge of plant life and the wonder of it are awe inspiring. A great gift for \$35.

GOODGARDEN TIP

Brown grass has gone into dormancy. DON'T mow it! It

will take more than a shower or two to bring it back. Be patient. Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

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Laural Wayne, floral designer at Blossoms in Birmingham, adds greenery to fill empty spaces in an arrangement she has assembled using numerous flower varieties. The focal point is a simple multi-bud hydrangea.

DESIGN

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the vase.

If you're desperately struggling with design, look to the flowers themselves for answers, said Cathy Valadez, a floral designer for Thrifty, which has florist shops in Birmingham, Huntingdon Woods and Waterford.

While you're experimenting and learning, don't forget arranging flowers, like interior design, is ultimately an expression of personal style, said Valadez.

"Just do whatever looks nice to you," she said. "Everybody designs slightly different. Everybody's tastes are little bit different."

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