

Nature filled with striking beauty in fall

Soon the winter winds will blow and bring snow. It will probably arrive before we're really ready, if these past few weeks have been any indication. In the fall we can still find beauty in Nature, if we look closely.



Garden Spot

Marty Figley

As I write this in early November, I've noticed that this year the leaves have been brighter in color than before, especially the reds. Our crab apple tree leaves are deep crimson, as are those on the silver maple (a large, very old specimen). The gold leaves of the birch tree glow!

Foliage on the ornamental grass, *nicanthus sinensis*, is also showing that crimson hue. The pretty silvery seed heads on this grass add light, and "Karl Foerster" is still green with the tall, golden, spiky seed heads adding their subtle color.

The blooms of "Autumn Joy" sedum have also been quite striking, and today as I walked the garden I noticed the silver on the ribbon grass, lavender and sage.

Perhaps you'd like to plan for more beauty in your garden next season, and now is the time to do just that. Asters and chrysanthemums are natural for the fall garden, and the stems of yellow and red dogwood are most interesting.

Different vines also change color, and often are overlooked, especially if they grow in a place where we often walk by.

Vines come to mind, as does the annual lablab bean that has foliage that turns dark purple.

The seed pods grow longer and swell and glow like a deep ruby in sunlight.

There are short lived beauties like the first touch of frost blackens them overnight, but the memory of the beauty will last a long time.



The stately maple in our back yard is simply beautiful each year at this time.

Woody plants seem to shine at this time of year. I mentioned the red and yellow dogwood stems and the various shadings of the blooms of the pee-gee hydrangea - from lime green early on, then as the sunlight strikes them they turn a deep shade of red rose.

A complimentary container flowing over with these blossoms adds elegance wherever they are placed in a home.

Pyracantha or fire-thorn, the versatile shrubs that produce clusters of berries in shades of red, orange or yellow, have a dual purpose: beauty and food for the birds. Red or orange rose hips are also in this category.

A bright orange for the landscape is provided by the Chinese lantern plant and is an interesting addition to a garden.

During the winter the shell will gradually disintegrate, leaving only the veins and exposing the fruit within a wiry skeleton cage. The orange lantern is great in dried bouquets.

The silvery maple plant is also revealed after the dried outer coating is carefully rubbed off. If you take the time to help Nature remove the outer coating while the plant is still in the garden, the silver is a pretty scene. These are also great for dried bouquets.

A tree that provides nice fall color is the mountain ash, with foliage that turns a rusty-red and clusters of orange to red berries. Another group of plants, the viburnums, produces red or black fruits in the fall.

I can't leave out the many Japanese maples that are so popular in the gardens all year round.

There are many varieties, from those with narrow leaves to those with green leaves during most of the year.

We enjoy our green Japanese maple, an "Acer distichophyllum".

The leaves change color almost overnight and are now golden/yellow, orange/red. Its gray bark adds winter interest.

Speaking of bark: Take a look as you walk around your neighborhood or when you visit a park this fall.

The various textures and colors are most interesting and warrant a column of their own!

GOOD GARDEN TIP
To protect evergreens from dry winter winds, apply an antitranspirant this month and again at the end of February. Follow label directions.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (248) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

GARDEN CALENDAR

America Recycles Day
Celebrate America Recycles Day with the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority (SOCRRRA). SOCRRRA will offer tours of the Material Recovery Facility at 955 Coolidge, between 14 and 15 Mile in Troy, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15 and 16. This is an opportunity to see how

recyclables are sorted and baled. Tours will take place 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. Saturday. The tours last about 1-1/4 hours. Call SOCRRRA at (248) 288-9150 in advance to reserve a spot. Michigan Orchid Society The Michigan Orchid Society will have a general meeting 2:30 p.m. Sunday,

Nov. 17, at First Baptist Church, 300 Willets in Birmingham. Evening Primrose Garden Club The Evening Primrose Garden Club will meet Tuesday, Nov. 19, at the Troy Community Center, 3179 Livernis, north of Big Beaver Road. Guest speaker Fran Kendall, owner of Goldner Walsh Nursery Inc., will show

and tell about Decorating for the Holidays. Refreshments will be served 7 p.m. The program will begin 7:30 p.m. Guest fee \$3. The club is accepting new memberships for residents and non-residents of Troy. It meets the third Tuesday of each month.

HOME CALENDAR

Art and accessories

The Home Accessory Warehouse's fourth annual Gala Art Event, a benefit for the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, is set for 6-10 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14, at the store, 1017 W. Maple in Walled Lake. Visit the showroom, save 20 to 50 percent on merchandise over \$20, bid in a silent auction and enjoy wine and hors d'oeuvres. The sale continues 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 15-16, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 17. All proceeds benefit Karmanos. For more information, call (248) 624-6700.

Auction

The Frank H. Boos Gallery, 420 Enterprise Court in Bloomfield Hills, will conduct an auction featuring property from numerous estates and private collectors 6 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 20 and 21. A preview will take place noon to 8 p.m. Friday and Monday, Nov. 15 and 18, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 19. Call (248) 332-1500 or visit www.boos-gallery.com.

Cranbrook Holiday Tables

Elegant tables offering creative ideas for holiday entertaining will be displayed Friday-Sunday, Nov. 22-24, at Cranbrook House, 380 Lone Pine Road in Bloomfield Hills. Proceeds benefit the preservation of Cranbrook House, metro Detroit's oldest mansion home. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 22-23, noon to 4 p.m. Nov. 24. General admission is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Free parking and shuttle service will be available in the Christ Church Cranbrook lot, across Lone Pine Road.

A Benefactors' Party is scheduled 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14, at Heiman Marcus in the Somerset Collection, Big Beaver and Coolidge Road in Troy. Tickets are \$100. The evening includes a strolling cocktail reception. Patron tea will take place 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 21, at Cranbrook House. Tickets to either tea are \$50. A combination ticket for the Benefactors' Party and Tea costs \$125. Call (248) 645-3147 for more information, and to buy Benefactors' Party, Patron Tea and advance general admission tickets.

Flu shots

Flu vaccines will be administered by nurses from the Visiting Nurses Association of Michigan 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16, at all Art Van Furniture stores. Individuals age 18 years or older are invited to prepare for the cold and flu season by receiving a flu vaccine. Priority may be given to at-risk patients. The vaccine

will be offered at an affordable fee. Members of the Medicare Part B insurance plan may show their card and receive a vaccine at no cost to them. Some locations will also offer pneumonia vaccines at \$25. For more information, call (800) 880-0000.

Figure skating

In partnership with the Palace of Auburn Hills, all Art Van Furniture stores will give away 25 pairs of tickets Sunday, Nov. 17, to see the ABC Sports International Figure Skating Challenge at the Palace of Auburn Hills Friday, Dec. 13. In addition, all guests will be eligible to enter a drawing for one of seven VIP packages. The package includes four top-priced tickets and a pre-show food and beverage reception. The competition, sanctioned by the International Skating Union and the U.S. Figure Skating Association, will feature the top stars from the United States and an international lineup of World and Olympic medalists.

Home decor

Huberman Fabrics in Royal Oak offers a variety of home decor classes. Pre-registration is required. Space is limited and classes fill quickly. Call (248) 541-0010 or visit www.huber-mannfabrics.com for more information. The schedule includes Simple Lined Curtain (\$50), Tuesdays, Nov. 19 to Dec. 3, and Creative Christmas Stockings (\$20), Thursday, Nov. 21.

Basement remodeling

Waterford Community Education, in cooperation with Oakland Builders Institute, will offer an eight-hour basement remodeling seminar that will meet Monday and Wednesday, Dec. 2 and 4, at Manley Campus, 2989 Van Zandt Road. The seminar will take place 6-10 p.m. each day. It is designed to help people make better use of valuable space in their homes by planning and completing a successful basement remodeling. Cost is \$99, plus a textbook fee of \$8. Pre-registration with payment to Waterford Community Education is required no later than Wednesday, Nov. 27. To register, call (248) 614-3145 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. The instructor, a licensed builder, will explain the many facets of basement remodeling - including planning, meeting building codes, insurance, permits, estimating materials, the basics of home construction, working with subcontractors, finishing techniques and tying into existing plumbing, electrical and heating systems. Oakland Builders Institute teaches courses in 38 schools in Michigan. For more information, visit www.buildersinstitute.com.

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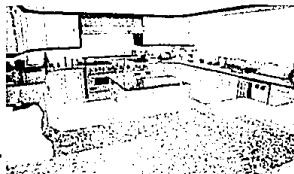
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