



# The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

We receive more letters asking for information about the philodendron than any other plant. The plants can be nice and green when brought into the home from the flower shop, but within 2 or 3 days the leaves develop brown spots (mostly on the edges) and turn brown at the bottom.

What's wrong? Philodendrons need to have a well-drained soil. If over-watered, the roots suffer from a lack of oxygen and the leaves take on brown spots, followed later by entire browning of the foliage. You see this happen often, especially if the pots are set inside a jardiniere.

Hint: grow your philodendrons in clay pots, and make sure the soil mixture is loose. Our old standby, 1/2 sand, peat and loam is fine. Also be sure and put some pieces of broken pottery in the bottom to help drainage. When leaves fail to split or form the "Swiss cheese" effect, it means the plants are not getting enough light. Also, sometimes if the soil is hard and dry, lacking organic matter, it will cause the leaves to remain intact, without splitting.

Growing nuts at home: One of the problems of growing walnuts in the back yard or on the farm is wormy nuts. This is due to the moth larvae. One way to check this pest is to spray the trees with Sevin in August. If your trees haven't set a good crop, blame it on frost injury or a lack of cross-pollination.

LAST YEAR we had complaints from owners of nut trees, telling us the kernels inside were black or brown. This is due to high temperatures in August, or allowing the nuts to remain too long on the ground. To prevent mold, remove husks as soon as the nuts drop. The walnut maggot found in the husk can be prevented by spraying the trees with Sevin when nuts are about 3/16" in diameter - which means it's too late this year.

Leaf worms can be checked by spraying the trees with Sevin or Methoxychlor.

**GREEN THUMB CLINIC:** A reader writes: "Every year we have a good crop of berries on our Firethorn (Pyracantha) but the fruits turn black. What can be done to prevent this?"

**ANSWER:** Your firethorn has an infection caused by a scab fungus (fusidicium). Scab lesions also occur on the twigs, and the disease is always more prevalent during rainy seasons.

Control: Don't wait until the fungus strikes. Spray the young green fruits with either ferbam or zineb, now and again two weeks later. The spray will make the fruits less palatable to birds, but will not harm them if eaten.

# PINE

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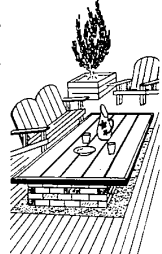
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## Outdoor Room Adds Interest

A new remodeling concept - "the outdoor room" - organizes familiar wood decks and fences into a private world of greenery, planters, benches, lights and sculpture, into which an interior room readily opens.

Unlike the more-costly atqum or courtyard, the outdoor room adds living space outside the walls of a home. It avoids the expense of interior reconstruction, while adding design interest and the texture and beauty of western woods.

As designed by architect Alex Pierce, the concept ranges from basic to luxurious in adaptations for kitchens, family rooms, baths, bedrooms and entries. It's practical for difficult, sloping sites, or to utilize a wasted side yard.

Besides bringing new life to existing homes, the outdoor room adapts readily to new homes, townhouses, or vacation homes. The deck area, combined with minimum-care planter strips, is easily kept up.

For the 12-page richly illustrated book, "The Outdoor Room," send 15 cents in coin to Western Wood Products Assn., Dept. 547-P, Yeon Bldg., Portland, Ore. 97204. For the idea book plus a plans book, send 25 cents to Dept. 547-48-P.

## Lawns Revive In Autumn

Weather is your ally for reviving bedraggled lawns in autumn. Cool, crisp nights, gentle rains, urge lagging Kentucky bluegrasses and fine fescues into a spectacular showing then. Help the grasses along with generous fertilization.

If grass of good quality is insufficient, overseed with a bluegrass-fescue blend, preferably accompanied by thinning or scarification of the old sod (perhaps you will want to rent a "power rake"?). Thinning and thatch removal are necessary for new seed to contact mineral soil where it can strike root.

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