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Face it, it's autumn ...

For centuries, the scarecrow was as much of a staple of a farm as the plow that was used to till the land. Technology has all but made our courage-yearning friend all but obsolete in agriculture, but he's become the face of decorating for the fall. It's become a friendly nudge that the weather is getting a bit of a chill to it. ... Don't forget to set your clocks back on Nov. 1.

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In this issue:

Keep your home pest-free

Now that the temperatures are falling, critters who are supposed to stay outside are looking to be somewhere warm. Don't let it be your house.
by Carol Kinsley, Page 18

Think green – not drab and dreary

Want to make sure you have color in your landscape year-round?
Then try planting evergreens in your yard.
by Stephanie Jordan-Scwhind, Page 30

Bargain hunting welcome

With today's tough economy, consignment shops are becoming more popular as folks look for good deals to combat the hard times.
by Sean Clougherty, Page 38

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Gardeners look for squirrel solution

The squirrel scampered along the top of the fence.

In his mouth, a tomato. A small green tomato.

It was my tomato, from my garden, four tomato plants tucked into a corner of the fence.

It was not the first daylight robbery of my garden, or that of our neighbor, who nurses a determinedly organic garden on the other side of the fence.

We, this small neighborhood, have been invaded by squirrels. I am told by those, who are supposed to know about these things, that there has been explosion in the squirrel population because of mild winters

Rural Ramblings

By Bruce Hotchkiss



which, presumably, make it less difficult for them to find the nuts they have buried and perhaps it increases their efforts at procreation.

Another neighbor, across the street, rescued two baby squirrels from a nest of five that had fallen out of a tree into her yard. Three of the babies were dead. The two she attempted to resuscitate didn't make it either.

(You don't mess with Mother Nature.)

Back to my yard, though. As my tomato plants finally began to produce fruit — is a tomato a fruit? — it was apparent from the abundance that the Hotchkiss family would be well endowed with that summer delight.

The neighbors reported an equal crop in their small garden, which also boasted plantings such as pole beans and lettuce and radishes and the like, all in minimal supply because of the size of the garden and all, of course, organic.

Until all of that began to disappear — (PAGE 43)

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Try decorating on the 'wild' side

It would be hard not to notice the trend of animal prints.

They have been "spotted" on everything from clothing to home décor.

Animal prints are not a new trend. In fact, they have been around for quite some time, peaking and subsiding in popularity. Once thought to be a temporary trend, animal prints are reappearing for just about every season.

Patterns of zebra, tiger, leopard, cheetah, giraffe and cow can be found in clothing, accessory and furniture collections everywhere.

Why are animal prints so popular?

First of all, they are very versatile. Animal prints can fit into just about any style from casual to elegant.

There is also something about them that adds a little more excitement to an outfit or a room.

Animal prints are far from "tame" and allow you to let your imagination run "wild."

Lastly, animal prints are timeless. Even though their popularity fluctuates, they will always be around.

Animal prints in decorating are a classic and easy transition into a home.

There are those who love animal prints and those who are not particularly fond of them.

If you are one who is not too fond of the trend but still desire to use some animal printing,



Redesign of the Times

By Marianne DeTar

there are ways to subtly incorporate them into your decorating.

This can be accomplished by adding a small touch of animal print here and there through accessories.

Animal prints make a bold statement. Because of that, they translate well when displayed in small proportions.

This means keeping in mind that "less is more."

You may moderately incorporate animal prints into your home by accenting with pillows,

lamp shades or perhaps faux fur throws.

Here are some suggestions for room-by-room touches without becoming too busy or chaotic:

Living Areas: The living areas of your home are the rooms you need to be careful to avoid overdoing in animal print.

Too much will make the room seem busy and give it a sense of chaos.

Animal print accents blend better against a solid backdrop.

This means animal print accents, such as pillows or throws, on a neutral or solid sofa or chair work best. There are also endless fabrics and rugs in animal prints that work well in a living room.

The key is to select the right proportions in order to not over-energize the room.

Kitchen: Animal print in the kitchen is probably where you should use

(PAGE 29)



Avoid overusing animal prints in the living room and stick to accents, such as with pillows or throws, on a neutral or solid sofa or chair.