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Lookin' sharp for 2008 ...

You obviously noticed something different when you picked up our magazine this time. We got away from the newsprint cover we've always had, and now feature a shiny look with our first-ever glossy one! We hope it enhances your enjoyment of our magazine. And if the red-bellied woodpecker caught your eye, see page 22!

Volume 3, Number 6
January 2008

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In this issue:

Fee, Fi, Faux Fun

Faux finishes and decorative painting help sidestep complete overhauls.
by Stephanie Jordan, Page 12

The woeful American Chestnut
Blight has all but wiped out the American Chestnut tree. Can it rally?
by Kevin George, Page 32

Preserve your poinsettias

Now that the holidays are over, how can your poinsettia get through the year?
by Carol Kinsley, Page 18

Air apparent to conservation

A wind turbine generates electricity that heats a home and powers its appliances.
by Sean Clougherty, Page 24

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you'd like to share?

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Can you handle this? ...

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Brian T. Brown, President



Just clowning around

I am a recreational birder.

I do a lot of bird watching this time of the year from the comfort of the indoors.

Still armed with binoculars, field guide and a notebook, I love every precious minute I have or steal to pursue my hobby.

I do not have the freedom or the time required to be a disciplined birder that could make me legendary or a renown member of an Ornithological Society.

Yet the more I stop, look, listen and read, the more I feel the yearning to spread my wings and fly to the freedom from what is now a hobby to what I know could become an obsession of detailed observance.

Meanwhile, I am grateful for a prime setting that my husband and I have enhanced to make the most of my birding opportunities.

Among my favorites to observe this time of year are the variety of woodpeckers and other tree climbing insect eaters while obviously not ignoring the countless other birds on the feeders, on the ground and scratching amidst the bushes.

I call woodpeckers the pantomime clowns.

Their antics are entertaining to watch, but understanding the reason behind the performances educates me to what life-sustaining food sources offer to them and their best method of presentation.

Even proper identification of many woodpeckers is like a magician's trick.

Red-bellied woodpeckers have red heads, but are not "red-headed woodpeckers."

Hairy woodpeckers have down of course, but are not downy woodpeckers. ... Do downy woodpeckers have hair?

Tall props on feeders are appreciated for assistance in upright feeding, but hanging upside down defying the law of gravity is no problem either.

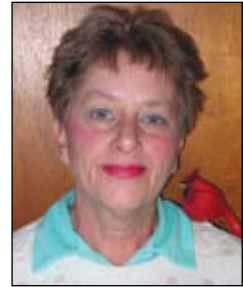
Confused yet? Welcome to the circus act.

Sit back and enjoy the show. The price of admission is minimal, if not free!

All clowning aside, here are some tips on what to look for if natural habitat is already available and how to enhance it or offer attractants that your landscaping may otherwise lack:

By Bev Leitch
Columnist

*Shore Home
& Garden
Magazine*



Depending upon preceding weather conditions by the time January rolls around, finding insects behind tree bark, leftover acorns or other small nuts may be like a scavenger hunt with little to find.

You may still spot woodpeckers desperately looking on tree trunks' rotted limbs or tossing the ground cover about with their long bills to see what's still available. It takes very little to offer them a lot of alternative.

Woodpeckers and other birds will be grateful for (PAGE 40)



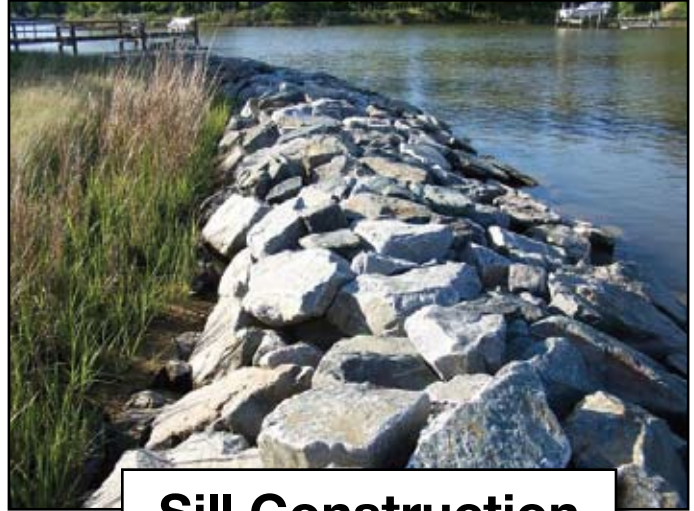
A pair of downy woodpeckers brave the wintry elements to feast on an icy suet feeder.



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Don't let orchids scare you

Orchids always sound exotic and expensive, but many of them can be grown in a home for a very reasonable price.

Orchids take five years to bloom from a seedling, so always purchase an orchid while it is in bloom or just before it begins to bloom.

The Phalaenopsis or Moth Orchids are the easiest to grow followed by the Dendrobiums and the Oncidiums or Dancing Lady Orchids.

Don't let the names of the orchids intimidate you — just find one you like and bring it home!

Most of these orchids need the same temperatures that people like in their homes, 65 to 70 degrees, with the night temperatures cooler than the day temperatures.

All three of these orchids also grow very well in the light provided by most homes.

Placing the orchids beside a south- or west-facing window will give it all the light it needs without scorching or burning the leaves and flowers.

These orchids live their natural lives on the trunks of trees and depend on the trees to shade them from the direct sunlight.

In the summer, orchids like to grow under the shade of trees where they can get morning light and afternoon shade.

Watering orchids is the only tricky part of growing them, but if you remember that they grow on trees, you will know that they don't need a lot of water!

Grow the orchids on a tray of pebbles so the water will fill the tray, the orchids will receive all the humidity from the tray and still be sitting high and dry after watering.

Orchids usually only need to be watered once a week, more often if the plants are grown in clay pots, but be sure to let the media dry out before watering again.

Fertilizing orchids is fairly easy as well.

Orchids need some fertilizer to grow and bloom well, but again remember that these orchids usually grow on trees and a lot of fertilizer will burn the roots.

Use a fertilizer for orchids and dilute it to add to

By Ginny Rosenkranz
*Extension Educator
Commercial Horticulture*



the water twice a week.

Be sure to water with clear water every other week to rinse out the excess fertilizer.

The best part of growing orchids is watching them bloom and bloom ... and bloom.

Most orchids will bloom for two to three months!

After they bloom, trim back the bloom stalk and wait until next winter when the orchids will bloom again. 🌱



Remembering that orchids naturally grow on the sides of trees can help prevent applying too much water and fertilizer.



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What's in your tool box?

When I started my business more than 15 years ago, my largest expense was my arsenal of tools.

The odd hand tools and empty steel tool boxes that were lying around the garage just would not do for a burgeoning interior decorator.

My father added to my tool box occasionally saying, "You might need this one day," then instructs me on the proper use of the new gadget.

He was a machinist by trade and had to invent his own tools occasionally for special jobs.

Yes, I am the son my father never had, and could not help but glean tidbits of knowledge about plumbing, small outboard engine and car and household repair. I really did not have a choice; I was the gofer and the extra pair of hands that could reach into tight places, but the knowledge has served me well.

My first decision was to purchase a large tool box I could stand on as well as hold everything that I would need to use while working in someone's home or office.

This was a wise choice; I usually do not carry, nor need, a ladder. The extra 13 inches provided by my toolbox is sufficient for me to reach and hang the highest piece of art on a wall. Should I need a ladder, the homeowner always has one. Most of the tools in the box are what I need to hang art, mirrors, sconces, tapestries, plaques, taxidermy and window treatments.

Hand tools were my next purchase: Regular-sized hammer, a six-in-one screwdriver, small level, picture-hanging tool, utility knife, wire cutter, pliers and a stud finder.

I don't recommend going into a hardware store and telling a gentleman you need a stud finder. Yes, I did it! ... Look for it yourself.

My picture-hanging tool is my favorite tool. It is a 12-inch-long sturdy piece of plastic with a hook on one end. The wire that is across the back of most pictures hangs over the hook. I hold this up to the wall where I want the art to hang, then press on the top of the frame. A small indentation is made where the appropriate hanger needs to go. There's no measuring — and this makes my clients who are engineers crazy.

Through the years I have refined my collection by adding a much smaller hammer, some have called it "wimpy," but I am only putting small picture hangers in the wall, so I don't need the larger one unless I find a wooden stud.

I was so excited when I found a



By Michele Roark
Columnist

Shore Home & Garden Magazine

good, quality screwdriver with flowers on the handle; my clients get a chuckle out of seeing me use it.

In order to avoid damaging dry-wall, I carry a baseball cap for when I need to pry an old nail out of the wall. I put the bill of the cap behind the hammer so that the wall or trim behind the hammer is protected.

For my business, I find furniture sliders have been one of the best things to come on the market. They protect flooring as well as my back. Originally, I bought a pair of 6-foot and 4-foot-long Teflon "furniture movers" from (PAGE 40)



A large toolbox is an essential purchase — big enough to stand on and capable of holding many tools.