

IN THE GARDEN

December 1997

by Joan Sargent

I recently visited the garden of a neat and tidy Greenwich man the other day. I assume his message to the gardener was “cut everything away”. The large perennial border showed no sign that anything ever grew there. He doesn't like untidyness. Are tall dead stems ugly? Are clumps of geraniums with their coloring leaves an eye-sore? Are seed heads with their life saving offerings for the birds an affront to this man? I suppose so. I love the winter look of bleached grasses, of silver-stemmed *Perovskia*, (Russian Sage) of dark brown Siberian Iris seed pods. I love the message they give-- we are all sleeping, but wait until next year. Tying a piece of red wool on a stem reminds me to move this plant, or green means to divide a plant in the early spring.

This Greenwich man and I would not have much in common.

If you are interested in trees and shrubs you will want to put Michael Dirr's new book, Trees and Shrubs, an illustrated encyclopedia, on your Christmas Wish List. Pricey, but worth every penny, fabulous color pictures.

Ed. note:

We have tried to find photos of each for reference.

Joan Sargent, a longtime member and master gardener who passed away in August; wrote about 24 gardening columns through the years for our newsletter. We are reprinting them again.



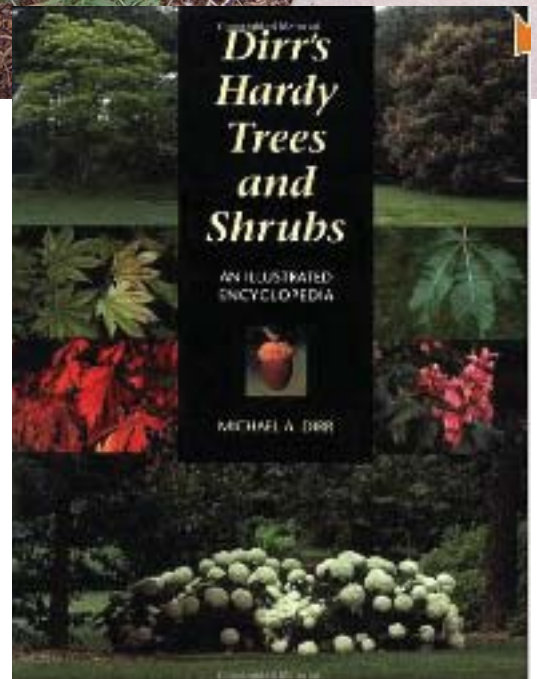
Iris Siberica seed heads



Black-eyed Susans provide seed for the birds in winter, also worth noting.



Perovskia has gray green leaves in the winter landscape.



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