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Making a Little Space for Life
Have not forgotten you, nor fallen off ladder while decorating, nor been engulfed in Yule log flames, figurative or otherwise. Just been trying to make a little space for life. I've been out of the ha...
December 10, 2014

Mabel, Mabel, Strong and Able, Keep Your Cell Phones off the Table
Can we all agree here? In this week of Thanksgiving, as we gather together, let's be there, with one another, eye to eye. Much as I want to see the picture of your cat in her pilgrim cost...
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Holiday Centerpiece With Birch Bark, Foliage, Fruit, and Flowers
Here is an impressive but easy centerpiece for the holidays or any day. For mantel or table, the size and height are easily varied. Use any combination of foliage, fruit, and flowers. ...
November 22, 2014

popular posts

A Gallop Through the Getty, and Jackson Pollock's Mural
I promised you a gallop through the Getty Center in Los Angeles, and a gallop it shall be. The place is so large and the collections so extensive that you must gallop, or at least briskly trot, t...
Mar 28, 2014

The Inimitable Frances Dittmer
The small charter plane went missing on Wednesday afternoon, February 5, somewhere between Puerto Vallarta and Careyes, Mexico. When the smoldering wreckage was found Thursday, worst fears

Home

Invasive Plants—Just Don't Do It

Posted on August 8, 2014

Seems evil Russian computer hackers are not all that's invading our world these days... In the botanical world, it's all fun and games until somebody loses a species. You know what I'm sayin? As we think ahead to fall planting, we need to make sure we are planting good. Jan Merryweather of California's PlantRight reached out to me recently about the serious mischief of invasive plants, the second biggest threat to biodiversity after people. Shocking! She's here today to tell us more. Take it away Jan...

What's the fuss? Invasive plants ravage native habitat, alter soil composition, clog waterways and provide dangerous fuel for wildfires. By stopping invasive plants we protect our wild lands and native critters, not to mention our tax dollars. California alone spends over \$82 million each year battling invasive plants.

Menacing Mexican Feathergrass:



The photo above appeared in the Spring 2014 issue of Association of Professional Landscape Designers magazine. "Planting for the Future" article is [here](#). The whole magazine is [here](#). Mexican feathergrass is the plant that everyone has been falling for, yet they have no idea that this mature plant produces 70,000 to 100,000 seeds per year, and because it easily re-seeds, is bound to become the next pampas grass debacle unless we can cut it off at the pass. Thus the campaign!

Pernicious Pampas Grass

were confir...
Feb 13, 2014

Comfort Food for Company – Linguini and Sausage Casserole

We like this linguini and sausage dish anytime of day. Seriously, breakfast, lunch or dinner. It is just as good the next day (if there's any left), and if you eat it standing up in front of the fridg...

Mar 11, 2014

Planning a Wedding? Going to One? Please Read This.

You won't often hear me beg. But there is knowledge which, if possessed by all nuptial-bound humanity, would make the world a better place. That knowledge is etiquette. And etiquette is about manners,...

Apr 5, 2014

Scot Meacham Wood's Divine San Fran Abode

Been telling myself for weeks: Must tout wonders of Scot Meacham Wood's divine San Francisco apartment, even though it's been out a while, as in the Dec/Jan issue of House Beautiful, written by m...

Jan 29, 2014

Recent Comments

"Lovely post! And ahead of time.....lovely , lovely article in Veranda.....about my friends Brooke and Steve's amazing house in Ojai! It is great!"

Penelope Bianchi

"Perfect timing for your message. I was turning into a donkey beaded toward the edge. Have a Merry Christmas."

Maureen Mulvany

"Absolutely incredible and wonderful and amazing, dear Frances! I am THRILLED beyond belief that you gave this gift to yourself and can't wait to hear"

Hollye Harrington Jacobs

"It wasn't a sacred spirit illumination but the flu that reminded me to slow down and not sweat the small stuff. God does use the many tools available "

Alison At The Gracious Posse

"Absolutely! Have let go of a lot of "stuff" physical, mental and emotional, it's a good feeling. I have learned to trust the sky I am under ... hmmm,"

E.B.

"I worked teaching high school until a few days ago. I have let go of Christmas cards. I love baking, but if everything is not baked by the first day o"

Susan Telfer

"Seems you found the real answer at the base of the rainbow! What a beautiful place is Sedona. Bob Schieffer on CBS Face the Nation Sunday had as hi"

Lynn And Dick Ziglar

"I think it was a perfectly normal, sane



What can we do? On the West Coast, learn about [PlantRight](#) and their campaign to stop California's next plant invasion before it starts. They're working with plant breeders, growers and retailers to phase out invasives voluntarily. See the CA plant list [here](#).

In New York this past July, there was [Invasive Species Awareness Week](#), with workshops statewide. New Jersey is also recruiting citizen scientists to join their [Strike Team](#) and nip invasives in the bud. In the South, the University of Georgia's [Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health](#) offers some wild (literally) ideas for dealing with invasive plants, post-invasion.

Scurrilous Scotch Broom



Many of our problem plants were introduced via the nursery chain. Not with mal intent, but simply because the plants were deemed beautiful or useful. (It seemed like a good idea at the time...) In California, examples include pampas grass, scotch broom and green fountain grass. In the Northeast, there is oriental bittersweet,

and fabulous thing to do!! I let many "busy" things go this Christmas...and expect it to be just as filled with
[Jennifer](#)

"Thanks for making me feel better about the "letting go" I have already done this season. It's great when you give yourself a gift of a new perspective"
[Leslie In Little Rock](#)

"You're right of course, but unfortunately those twice baked potatoes aren't going to stuff themselves! Merry merry to you Frances. Your blog has cer"
[Amie Irby](#)

barberry and purple loosestrife. In the South, kudzu !

Plants contribute spiritually, aesthetically and physically to our personal well-being and to our local economies. Let's do what we can to help the good guys, and not the guys in these photos.

Vicious Vinca Major



vinca-major

See also this piece about PlantRight from the LA Times a few days ago. They are always copying me, I swear.

Thanks again, Jan!

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Happy (Non-invasive) Planting, Readers!

Posted in [Blog](#), [Flowers & Gardens](#) | [9 comments](#)

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9 Responses to: *Invasive Plants—Just Don't Do It*

1. *Lynn Ziglar* says: A, I think, well meaning flower arranger in my N.C. neighborhood, brought a plant of Gooseneck. Pretty little white filler in a flower arrangement until it filled the county. It is up there with mint, kudzu and horseradish for rapid spread.
August 8, 2014 at 1:29 pm
REPLY
2. *Gillian* says: Great post! Don't forget that native plants are also food for our native animals. When they get crowded out by the invasive plants, it leaves the food stocks depleted for our local animals. It's a bit like going to the fridge and finding your yummy yoghurt replaced by chopped liver - and not the nice kind!

August 8, 2014 at 1:44 pm

REPLY

3. *Maureen* says: Very important information for us to be aware of. Thank you.

August 8, 2014 at 2:46 pm

REPLY

4. *cc* says: Hey Frances, Such excitement ! So very glad about your book about Bee Cottage! So proud of you!!!! As is all of Tarboro , I am certain. We are heading to see Sallie next week. We then go to Paris and on to Provence. I rented an artist's house, Isabel Petrovic, in Aix. It made me think of you! I am hoping to contact ...is it Julie Steen?having a sr moment here....the artist who led your workshop. She is a friend of a friend of ours, Carolyn Meares in Richmond . Do you have any advice or anything we shouldn't miss? I do want to show Sam Villa Gallaci. Will ck out Les Violets but it may be \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ now., if its still thereNancy and the priest in training may have set the place on fire! Lol! Obviously this isn't for publication. Lol! Hope all is well with you and His Grace. Hugs, CC PS. Bamboo is the curse of my garden along with Wisteria!!!!

August 8, 2014 at 4:34 pm

REPLY

5. *kenna bullard* says: Every Southerner in the world knows about wisteria...don't EVER plant it, no matter how pretty it looks in Charleston. I've been trying to get rid of one plant for over 20 years, and it's winning.

August 8, 2014 at 5:01 pm

REPLY

6. *Annie* says: Thank you for adding more voices to this important and manageable topic, Frances. It may not be so easy to take a public stand on other issues these days, but I am wholehearted about this one. Seeing new birds and more lizards and bees at my studio since reintroducing native plants no my narrow strip of dirt makes me happy too.

August 8, 2014 at 5:22 pm

REPLY

7. *paige ward* says: I just took a landscaping class at Duke Gardens on invasive plants that are invading NC. I was sad to see crepe myrtles on the list especially as I had just planted several in my yard.... Awareness is important to protect the environment. Thx for bringing this up!

August 13, 2014 at 7:59 am

REPLY

Frances says: Thank you Miss Paige, but wow, I am surprised about the Crape/Crepe myrtles as well. Srsly? PS - I also was curious about the spelling, and found this: <http://www.garden.com/garden-articles/is-it-crape-myrtle-or-crepe-myrtle/140/> xox Frances

August 13, 2014 at 8:48 am

REPLY

8. *Merryweather* says: Equal parts joy+honor to be included in the Fabulous Frances Schultz news/blog. Thank you for helping raise awareness about invasive plants and for helping us all design even more beautiful gardens! The PlantRight team is most grateful...as are all of California's open spaces and native species.

August 15, 2014 at 6:28 pm

REPLY