

STAR

5 THINGS

The weekend is packed with monster events including the Art Car Parade and the Houston Barbecue Festival.

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Section D **

IN THE GARDEN

Homeowners want their landscapes to stand out on the block



Courtesy photo

Homeowners want a distinctive look, great plants, natural stone and professional design help for their yards.

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Rame Hruska

Landscape architects are using less color and more texture in contemporary gardens.

with one bold strike here and two bold strokes there," he said.

Houzz — which offers remodeling and design ideas — recently released a report on trends in home landscaping.

Survey results supported local observations: homeowners want a distinctive look, great plants, natural stone and professional design help.

At Curtis & Windham, landscape designer Frank Brown III has been busy turning parts of soft green lawns into functional sources of food.

"Organic vegetable gardens," Brown said. "I've never done so many in my life. Almost every client is asking for one now."

Some are small herb gardens in window boxes or patio pots. Many, though, are raised beds filled with peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and zucchini.

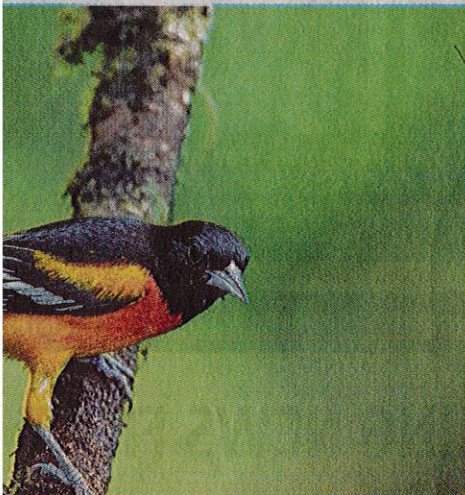
"First it was with people who had children, but now it's everyone just wanting good food," Brown said.

More attention is being paid to lighting, with clients ditching harsh light in favor of warmer tones that feel more like indoors and can be op-

Homeowners continues on D2

NATURE

Traveler Baltimore oriole is a bird to admire



By Gary Clark

I was thinking about Baltimore orioles I'd seen in Costa Rica last month because they're migrating to our neighborhoods right now.

The jet plane from Costa Rica whizzed me 1,551-mile from Central America and over the Gulf of Mexico to Houston in a little over three hours. The orioles will have traveled the same distance over Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico's Yucatan

Peninsula and 600-miles across the Gulf of Mexico in about 30 days.

One of them could land in your backyard gleaming like a sunburst. Readers every spring excitedly send me photos of the bird with its gold and orange body offset by a radiant black hood extending like a cape down the upper back to accent black wings marked with a bright white bar.

While the bird's luxurious colors seize our attention, we might also marvel

at the incredible distance it travels from Central and South American wintering grounds to North American breeding grounds. It will not breed in our neighborhoods but will instead head to a vast swath of territory a little farther north and east of the Rockies that includes the eastern edge of the Texas Panhandle.

Baltimore orioles are neotropical migrants, referring to their yearly spring and fall journey

Nature continues on D2

BY: Frustrated husband seeks solution for his jealousy. PAGE D5

HINTS FROM HELOISE: How to care for feral cats. PAGE D5

Homeowners want a yard that stands out

abandoned rose bushes or are moving to roses or knockouts, they don't require the chemical spraying. It's about being a better steward of the land," Steele

Here are highlights from the Houzz landscape survey:
Stand out in a crowd: More than wanting a front yard, 41 percent of homeowners want front yards to look distinctly different from their neighbors.

Go-to plants: More than half of those updating their front yards say lawn beds or borders (47 percent), shrubs (29 percent) and perennials (28 percent) are most important.

Motivation: More than half of homeowners buying homes are making updates on outdoor projects. The 2017 survey reports that 33 percent of homeowners want to do more outdoors, compared to 25 percent a year ago.

Light it up: It's not enough to improve your yard, people also want to see it. That's why



San Francisco Chronicle

Organic vegetable gardens have become very popular, said landscape designer Frank Brown III. "Almost every client is asking for one," he said.

45 percent of people working on outdoor projects are updating lighting, with 73 percent opting for LEDs and 20 percent adding "smart" lighting that can be controlled remotely.

Go for it: Homeowners with projects underway are going big: 37 per-

cent are doing a complete overhaul while another 48 percent call their projects "major renovations."

Professional help: Those who have completed their projects are fairly evenly split on hiring experts: 34 percent hired a landscape contractor, 34 percent hired a landscape

architect or designer and 32 percent hired stone/concrete specialists.

What to build: More renovating homeowners are opting for patios or terraces (38 percent) over arbors, gazebos, pergolas or trellises (26 percent) or decks (20 percent).

On the ground: Hard-

scapes (pavers, stone, etc.) are the top choice (66 percent) over garden beds (60 percent) and other ground cover (55 percent). Brown said that blue stone is the most commonly used stone among his clients; Steele shops all over the world for various stone treatments. When a client asked for white marble, Steele produced samples from the U.S., China, Mexico and Italy. "The variety of materials is almost limitless," Steele said.

Take a seat: Purchases for renovated outdoor space include outdoor lounge furniture (36 percent), a fire pit (32 percent) or outdoor dining furniture (28 percent).

Spending: The breakdown of spending ranges from under \$1,000 to more than \$50,000. Here are some numbers: 73 percent of projects cost \$5,000 or less; 23 percent spent \$5,000 to \$15,000; and 4 percent spent more than \$15,000.

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serve, 20303 Drape, Tomball; npsot.org/wp/houston. \$52. Class also held April 29 and May 13.

Hanging Baskets: with Jim Maas and Pat Cordray. 10 a.m. at Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville, Seabrook; 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com. \$25.

Soils and Composting: with Harris County Master Gardeners. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Parker Williams Branch Library, 10851 Scarsdale; 281-484-2036. Free.

Planning and Planting a Habitat Garden: with Nancy Greig. 10 a.m. at Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond, 281-937-9449; 2 p.m. at Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond, 281-341-1206; myenchanted.com. Free.

Seeds of Spring: 10:30 a.m.-noon and 1-2:30 p.m. at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway; 713-681-8433, register at houstonarboretum.org. \$45, per pair;

ages 5 years and up.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

Houston Amaryllis Society Spring Show and Sale: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. April 8, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. April 9 at Enchanted Forest Garden Center, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond; 281-937-9449, myenchanted.com. Free.

MONDAY

Propagating Native Plants: with

Mark Morgenstern, sponsored by the Native Plant Society of Texas: 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the University of Houston Clear Lake, Bayou Building; npsot.org/wp/clearlake. Free.

APRIL 13

Delighting in the Fragrance of Garden Roses: with Michael Shoup. 7:30 p.m. at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, McGovern Centennial Gardens, 1500 Hermann Drive; houstonrose.



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