

Create a watering spot for feathered friends

(NC) - Bird-watching is an enjoyable activity for young and old alike any time of the year. One way to attract birds is to create a perfect backyard watering hole they can't resist. You will see an increase in the activity and variety of wild birds attracted to your backyard.

Outdoor experts offer the following tips for attracting birds to your bird bath:

- Wild birds need secure footing around water. If your bird bath has a slick surface, layer a few partly submerged flat rocks or pieces of wood to make the spot more bird-friendly.
- Many birds also have a fear of deep water. A maximum depth of seven centimetres is best, with a gradual slope to the deepest point. A minimum diameter of half a metre will allow numerous birds to share the spot at any one time.
- Keep the water open year round as fresh water can become quite scarce in many parts of the country during winter. Regularly clean the bird bath and ensure the water is fresh.
- Bathing birds can be easy targets for predators, so keep elevated bird baths at least three feet above the ground level. For the same reason, situate low level watering spots in open areas.
- The sound of moving water is extremely appealing to birds and birdwatchers alike — gentle sounding drips, tinkles and gurgles are their favourites.

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What's Hot What's Not and What It's All About

(NC) - Attitudes to colour are constantly changing. That's because the colours we choose to bring into our lives reflect our innermost feelings. There are deep psychological and emotional reasons why the Victorians liked to surround themselves with deep rich colours and textures — and why the colours they felt comfortable with would make us distinctly uncomfortable in our present day homes.

Yes, the colour wheel keeps on turning, and just as out-of-date fashions (Capri pants! Bell-bottoms!) are revived and look good for a while, so out-of-date colours begin to look new again. Homeowners preparing to re-decorate find that their biggest challenge today is not finding the time or paying for new carpet, but selecting the right colours.

So what about it? The sun's peeking into the living room and it doesn't like what it sees — tired old colours, ready to be replaced by something new. What's hot? And why? **Always something new**

One of the strongest



forces driving the colour wheel is boredom. We get tired of looking at the same old colours and search around for new ones. This is quite an orderly process.

At any given time there are established colours, colours which are accepted by most people, and which usually reflect the mood of the time. And there are what we call "influencer colours". Colours which work well with the established colours.

Strongly in favour of neutrals

Scan a few decorating magazines and you'll soon see how popular "neutral" colour treatments still are. They provide a background against which

foreground and accent colours can play. But the word neutral is often misunderstood. Properly, the term should be used for the colour which covers most of the surface of the room. If the walls and ceilings were painted black, then black would be the neutral colour in that room, and the foreground and accent colours would be seen within a black environment.

In practice, the neutral colours are usually pale — off-whites, beige, some tans. More and more, especially in Canada, yellow is moving in as a very strong influencer colour. Living in these northern parts with long and sometimes dull winters, we welcome the warm, sunny character of yellow. With time, it could be that yellow will be-

come a popular neutral, a brighter form of beige.

Into the new Millennium

If the 90s were cautious, then the next decade may be a free-for-all. Colour is on the move, and a sales success at the same time. At first it seemed a fad, then as fruit colours spread out into bathroom accessories, table linen, sports wear and everywhere else it became clear that a new trend was upon us.

It is time turn up the contrast. We've spent two decades surrounded by very quiet colours. Then a couple of years ago the excitement began to build. Now colour is once again one of the great pleasures of life. We're learning to take risks, to try new effects which we have never seen before.

Whatever lies ahead in the world of colour, it won't be dull.

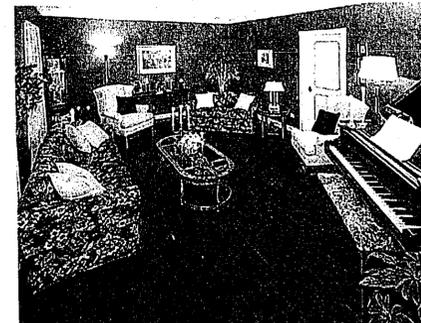
Solid hardwood & area rugs — a new compromise!

(NC) - In the early days of solid hardwood flooring, although the floor had the capability to last 100 years, the finishes available could not stand up to the normal wear and tear of everyday life. To protect them, homeowners used "runners", those long rolled rugs that ran down the hall, and area rugs that were scattered in the family room and other formal areas.

With the introduction of "wall-to-wall" broadloom nearly 50 years ago, both solid hardwood flooring and rugs slowly took a back seat to this new flooring alternative. Primarily due to its low cost and decorating versatility, it became the flooring of choice for many years. But over the last decade, much of that has changed again.

The desire for more natural looking products on the floor such as stone and wood, a trend towards more health friendly products together with the introduction of prefinished technology for solid hardwood flooring offered new alternatives to the homeowner. And now, to compliment this change, we're again seeing a move to area rugs. But why? With the new strong finish technologies available, the protection originally afforded by the use of area rugs is no longer necessary.

Although the growth of prefinished solid hardwood flooring continues



on the rise, we are beginning to also see a considerable resurgence of demand for area rugs. Area rugs can highlight the beauty of the hardwood flooring and vice-versa. The wide array of styles and colours of area rugs coming into the market, both manufactured locally and imported, together with the reasonable cost of this product makes it an exciting accessory in decorating any area. In addition, the broad range of both light and dark colours that are offered in prefinished solid hardwood flooring tends to better enhance the look of the rugs than the natural tones that were the mainstay of the product in early years.

And the combination of both prefinished solid hardwood flooring and area rugs offers a combination of decorating alternatives that gives the ultimate flexibility to the homeowner and decorator. The timeless beauty, durability and refinishability of solid hardwood flooring keeps it as the new flooring of choice for many consumers while area rugs compliment the décor of the room.

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Enjoying the summer safely: first aid checklist

(NC) - As summer approaches, it's always a good idea to put together several first aid kits: one for the house, another for the cottage, one you can carry in the car and a smaller one that you can pop in your knapsack when you go camping.

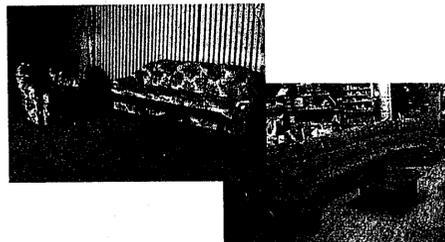
Home Hardware offers the following suggestions for stocking your family's first aid kit:

- A good first aid manual
- Triangular bandage
- Elastic wrap bandage
- Emergency blanket
- Gauze pads and bandages
- Antiseptic wipes
- Instant cold pack
- Saline solution
- Adhesive tape
- Aspirin or pain reliever
- Sterilized water packet
- Burn ointment
- Folding scissors
- Adhesive bandages
- Safety pins
- Tweezers
- Calamine lotion

One of the best things you can do to prepare for emergencies is to take a first aid course. Contact your local branch of the Canadian Red Cross, St. John Ambulance or local community centre for more information!

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