

# gardening

## EYE LEVEL

Add variety to your indoor landscape by hanging cascading flora.

By Pat Leuchtman

**H**anging plants can lend variety and interest to a collection of houseplants. Even the containers can be an attractive addition to your decorating. White or green plastic pots with attached saucers to catch extra water are practical because they are light and durable, but handsome pottery

Swedish ivy, which is neither Swedish nor an ivy. This Australian plant is actually a succulent with round, shiny serrated leaves. It is important to remember that this is a succulent because you don't want to overwater it. Choose a potting soil that drains quickly and let it dry out between waterings.

Like the spider plant it is happiest in a window that gets bright light,

The following information is provided by the Franklin County Extension Service:

### Now is the time to:

- write to request seed catalogs.
  - keep azaleas in a cool location and don't allow the soil to dry out completely or your plant will drop leaves.
  - order gloxinias and tuberous begonias.
  - use sand on ice where salt may injure plants.
- Note:

- Want day by day tips for gardening? Contact the Franklin County Extension Service for a free garden calendar.
- Don't throw away your Christmas tree. Use it as a feeder for birds or cut off boughs and use for mulch. □

Garden Calendar

pots with decorative cording or macrame holders are also available.

The spider plant is one of the easiest hanging plants to grow. Use a standard potting soil and place it in a window that does not get too much direct sun. Right now my variegated spider plant is thriving in an east window in a cool room. The soil dries out between waterings with no ill effects. This is one plant that is generally accommodating to a wide variety of circumstances.

Propagating the spider plant is very easy. When the roots become slightly crowded, the plant will send out long arching stems with a tiny plant at each end. (I imagine this is how it gets its name, these stems look like so many spider legs springing from the mother plant.) The baby plants come equipped with their own rudimentary roots and can easily be cut from the main plant, potted and nourished to maturity and a new crop of babies. This will give you a never ending supply of plants to give as gifts or to sell at PTA bake and plant sales.

A very different looking plant is

but not too much direct sun.

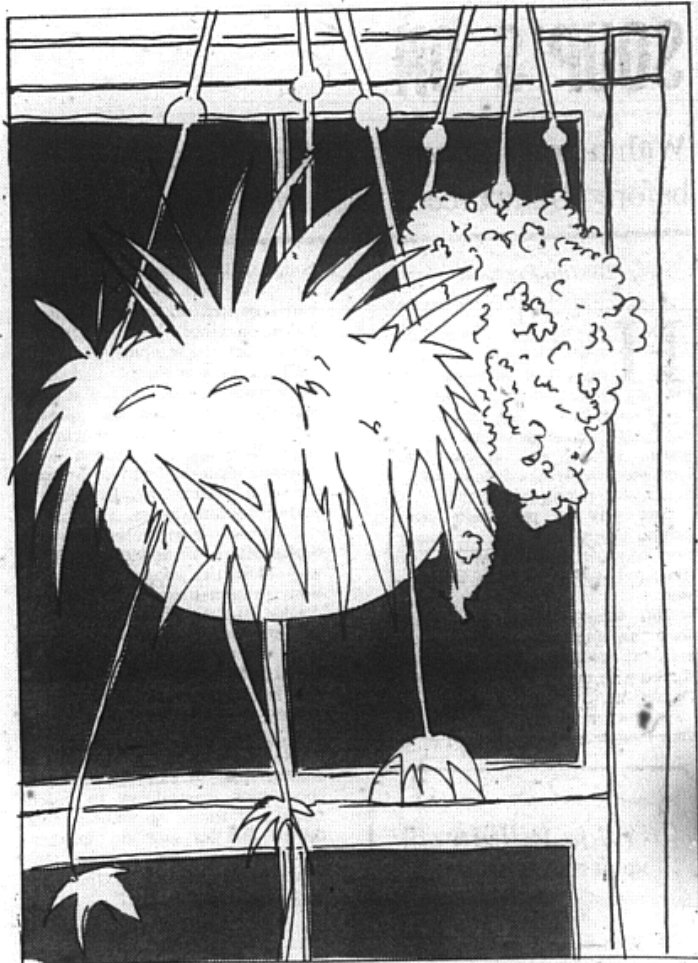
Keep it pinched back and it will reward you with thick glossy foliage cascading over the sides of your hanging pot.

Two types of plant travel under the common name Wandering Jew, the tradescantia fluminensis and the zebra pendula. Both have striped purple or green leaves about 3 inches long carried on drooping stems that make a very attractive display. Both prefer cool and bright locations, but the tradescantia likes daytime temperatures that remain below 70 degrees and it likes to dry out between waterings.

The zebra plants like it to be slightly warmer and they prefer a slightly moist soil at all times.

The variegated foliage of the Wandering Jew is one of its most attractive features; if it starts to look faded, increase the intensity of light and the coloring will soon become deep and vivid again.

Finally, one of my favorite plants is the asparagus fern with its delicate, airy foliage. It will also produce small white flowers followed



by tiny red berries.

The asparagus fern has a large leaf surface and requires a great deal of moisture so it must be adequately watered; keep the soil moist. You may also want to give it a little extra spraying with a mister. Because the foliage is so delicate, don't let it bake in a sunny window. The asparagus fern will do well in low light, even in a north window.

As you add new plants to your

collection, aim for a variety of foliage types. Contrasts in the form and color of the leaves, as well as the general shape of the plant are pleasing to the eye. You can arrange a display that is attractive even to those who are not especially interested in growing plants themselves. Different hanging plants are one way to achieve this variety and relieve the monotony of plants marching straight across a windowsill. □

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