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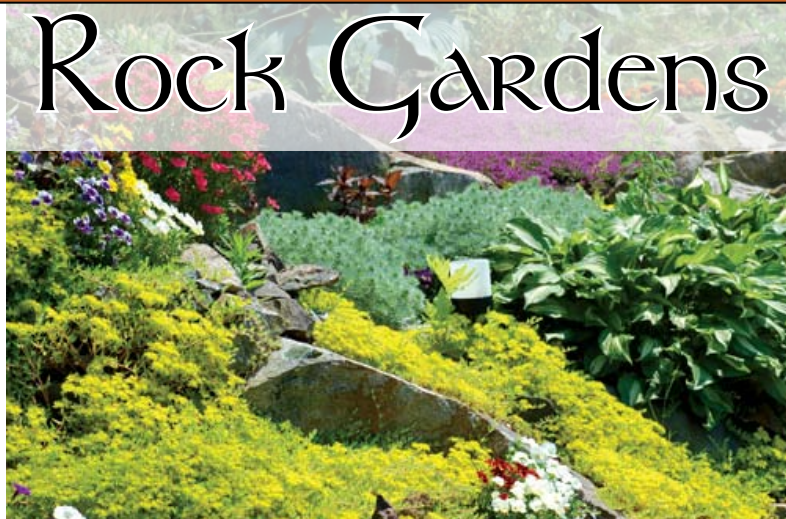
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by Colleen Williams\*

Rock gardens are an easy way of adding dimension to your landscape. They can be as big or as small as you like. At **The Rock Pile and Garden Center** we not only have a number of different kinds of natural stone to start off your project, but we also have all the plants, soil and everything else you will need to create a beautiful and interesting element in your yard.



First determine where you would like to create this feature. The dimensions will guide you as you pick out your materials. The process is rather like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, except YOU determine how that puzzle turns out. Begin with the rocks. Choose rocks of various sizes and shapes. You may not want to place all of your rocks right away. Remember, it's a lot easier to change your mind and move a rock to another position than it is to dig up plants and replant them somewhere else. Keep in mind that there's a delicate balance between planting and rock placement. Your goal is to cover as much of the surface as possible with rocks and plants. The look to achieve would be a mix of rocks with plants popping out between, around and over them. Rock gardens are composed of plants that require a soil with good drainage. Use our **Premium Blend Topsoil** or mix in our **Top Dressing** or **Manure & Compost** into your current soil to promote better drainage.

When selecting plants, there are a few things to take into consideration. Focus on foliage which will be the backbone for your composition. Choose different foliage textures; plants that creep, crawl or remain clump-like work well. Contrast in texture, size and color will create a visually stimulating effect. And while the visual effect is important, it is not the only factor. Plants as living things have growing requirements to take into consideration. Think light requirements. Is your area shady or sunny? This may expand or limit your plant selection. Install plants like our "**Nooks & Crannies**", which are just perfect for this project. These smaller perennial plants are very easy to work with and are all you really need to create a beautiful rock garden. The end result will be a garden with many levels, textures, colors and interesting visual points.

This is an easy project that the whole family will love. Don't stress over this project, it's a fun and easy way of spicing up your landscape. Think of rock gardens like this... It's not Mozart, it's Miles Davis, it's not Michelangelo, it's Jackson Pollock, it's not Shakespeare, it's your kids putting on a play in your backyard.

Check out our selection of **Natural Landscape Stone** online at [www.therockpile.com](http://www.therockpile.com)

\*Art and Melinda Packer contributed to this article

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in." --Greek proverb



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## UNINVITED Dinner Guests



Photo by Howard B Eskin

by Jamie Haas

It's that time of year when the grackles are introducing themselves to our feeders. They really are pretty birds with their iridescent purple hues and white eye ring. But soon they will be driving people who feed birds a little crazy. With their ravenous appetites and large numbers they can be a bit irritating as they crowd out other birds. While we, at **The Rock Pile**, enjoy the bump these uninvited guests provide to our bird feed sales, we'd rather you truly enjoy your bird feeding experience.

You do have some options in dealing with grackles. One is to feed **safflower**. You usually have to slowly introduce your feeder birds to safflower. Sometimes, when you have been feeding **black oil sunflower** all winter and then make the sudden switch to safflower, the usual feeder crowd quits coming. It would be like going to your favorite eatery only to find they had completely changed the menu. You may not dislike the new food, you were just expecting something else. Switching cold turkey could take a few weeks to get regular bird activity back to "normal". It works best if you can gradually increase the safflower in your mix so the birds get used to the change. Do not be disappointed if the grackles toss the seed out of the feeder looking for something they may like. In time, they will give up and move on to other feeding areas.

The advantage to feeding safflower is Grackles, Sparrows, Starlings and many other birds cannot work the hard outer shell, while Cardinals, Chickadees, Titmice, Nuthatches and Grosbeaks also enjoy it. Also, squirrels and other mammals do not like the bitter taste of safflower.



**10% OFF**  
any size  
**SAFFLOWER**

Expires July 15, 2010

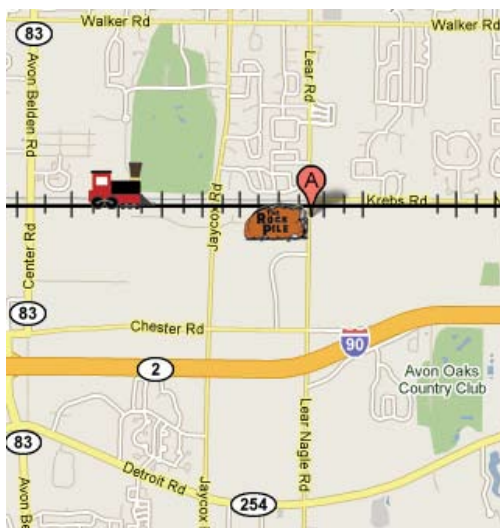
**STANDING IN DEFENSE OF OUR CONSTITUTION**  
*In Matters of Style,  
Swim with the Current. In Matters of Principle,  
Stand Like a Rock.*

~Thomas Jefferson

*"Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will deserve neither and lose both."*

~Benjamin Franklin

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WE'RE RIGHT AROUND  
THE CORNER!**



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# The Stone Tablet

Yard · Bird · Garden



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## Attract Birds to Your Garden ~ with Water

by Sharon Blair (in her Stone Tablet debut)

Fresh clean water is an essential element for all birds to drink, bathe and preen. Providing a source of water such as a decorative BIRDBATH, a simple plant saucer or a garbage can lid turned upside down will attract seed and insect eating birds.

To feel comfortable, smaller birds like to walk slowly into a birdbath to drink or bathe. Two or three inches of water are preferred by many birds but you can also provide "BIRDBATH FILLERS" for deeper baths. Fillers are specially selected round river rocks that look great and allow birds to wade in.

Moving water will attract many birds. Use a DRIPPER, MISTER or WATER WIGGLER. Drippers and misters refill the bath with fresh water as well as make the water move. Hummingbirds love to dart through the mist created by a mister. Foliage near misters offers birds an area to leaf bathe. The WATER WIGGLER, which runs on batteries, is also a great way to get water moving in any birdbath and also prevent mosquito production. After the birds finish bathing watch how they preen their feathers as they perch nearby to finish their grooming.

To keep your birdbaths clean and free of algae, dump the water daily or at least weekly, scrub with a BRUSH and refill with fresh water. A capful of BIRDBATH PROTECTOR will reduce and dissolve mineral deposits, reduce sludge buildup and prevent mosquitoes.

Providing water with seed will:

**ATTRACT A GREATER NUMBER OF BIRDS • FILL BIRDS' NEED FOR WATER • ADD BEAUTY TO YOUR GARDEN**



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### BIRD OF THE MONTH



RED WINGED  
BLACKBIRD

### Chickity Doo Doo

Organic Fertilizer  
is derived from  
100%  
chicken manure.



## WHAT A DAD NEEDS...

by Jenny Keener

Father's Day is almost here and I'm sure that I'm not the only one who is always at a complete loss as to what to get the fathers in my life. I have my husband, my father, and my father-in-law to think of something that they need, want or would otherwise not make them wonder if I actually cared about them.

It shouldn't be terribly difficult to show appreciation to the man who raised me, the man who raised my husband and the man who is raising my children. Shouldn't be, but it is. Why? Because, at some deep level I suspect they don't relate to 'thoughtful' gifts the same way women do.

We girly types are so happy to receive the handmade cards and gifts, a bath & body basket thrown in and a new plant to nurture in our garden. And we save those things. The cards go in a special box and we keep them, guard them. I have this feeling, though, that many guys wonder what in the world they're supposed to do with the cute, handmade thing that looks a little bit like a wreath. Not to say that they don't love it, but as soon as they're done 'loving' it, they really want it to have some sort of functionality. Anxiety then sets in as they figure out what to do with it.

The point I'm eventually getting to is: Dads are action-oriented, and they always have such a long list of things-to-do; get them something that doesn't add to their do-to lists or force them to find a use for "thoughtful" gifts!

*Feel free to steal some of these ideas to do for Dad*

Mulch the garden; Plant some flowers; Plant a tree; Place a new garden statue; Install a natural stone walkway (or a few stepping stones); Build a raised bed; Place a new boulder; Fertilize the lawn or garden; Hang a new birdfeeder; Place a new birdbath; Fill up that Propane Tank and cook him dinner; dig up that old walkway he's been wanting to get rid of. How about a Rock Pile Gift Card with a handmade "coupon" to help with whatever project he'd like to start?





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# The Stone Tablet

Yard • Bird • Garden

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Our Website is Growing! More information added daily!



therockpile.com

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Coupons: In-Stock Only.  
Expires: July 15, 2010  
Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Not Valid with other offers or prior purchases. Subject to Availability. Not responsible for typographical errors. Discount is off regular price.

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## The Secret Life of Cats

When we last left our cats... Pebbles tried to find a way to sneak out of the store!



by Colleen Williams

## Enter to win a FREE TREE

ENTER JUNE 1, 2010 TO JUNE 30, 2010  
CHOOSE FROM A VARIETY PRESELECTED TREES.  
SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.

## What's New?

FreeLand  
RootBooster  
Earthworm Castings

Chickity Doo Doo  
Chicken Manure

IT'S BACK!  
Black Lava Gravel

Dr. Earth  
Maker of the  
Original ProBiotic  
Fertilizers!

## NOOKS & CRANNIES

Have you ever thought about making those small spaces in your garden come to life? Well, now you can make that happen with a special product line: **Plants that Work in Nooks & Crannies!**

Find out more at [therockpile.com](http://therockpile.com)



## One bag...Many Uses!

We've sold it for years and it is just now catching the eye of some of our customers. It is the one bag that can do so much for your yard: **Garden Magic Compost and Manure**. Don't stop reading! This is not your typical manure. **Garden Magic Compost and Manure** is an odor-free blend of natural organic reed sedge peat and composted animal manure. It provides a natural nutrient content which promotes a healthier root growth, making it ideal for a wide range of plantings. Use it in nursery plantings, composting yard waste, top dressing lawns, and soil amending. This easy-to-use product has a great texture because it is screened for uniform consistency and it is naturally moist and fibrous. **A 40-pound bag costs only \$3.39!** We have a sample right inside our store so you too can see what everyone is talking about!

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