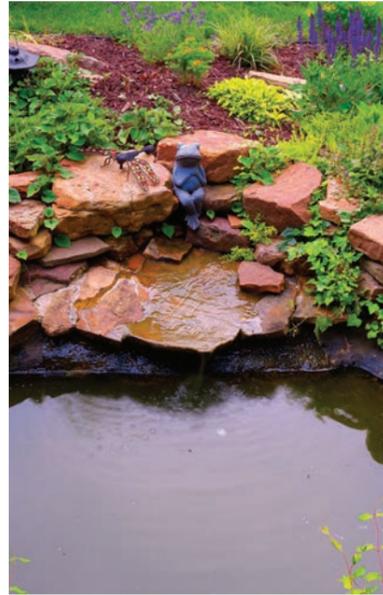


A REFUGE

for BIRDS AND FLOWERS,
FROGS, AND PEOPLE

THE SWANDER GARDEN



(above, right) The location of the front deck and the water feature, positioned near the front door, conveniently merge Paula and Chad Swander's indoor and outdoor living spaces. (right) Paula and Chad do most of their own garden maintenance.

Chad and Paula Swander can hardly remember a time when they didn't have a garden, and their current garden has undergone many revisions over the years. Their last major overhaul occurred around 2007 following the latest addition to their Edgewood Hills home. Their lot is surrounded by wooded areas, but the garden close to the front of the house is in full sun, which allows them to grow any sun-loving plant that the deer don't like. This takes some ingenuity, but Paula loves flowers, and Chad

is a photographer and ardent birdwatcher, so their passions coalesce in the vibrant, colorful garden.

Since birds are attracted to water, Chad built the water feature close to the house so he and Paula can watch the birds come and go while having lunch at the seating area nearby. There is also a ground-level stone birdbath that is a magnet for birds. "We love to sit outdoors in the summer listening to the waterfall in our pond," says Paula, who has chaired three of the Bloomington Garden Club's Garden Walks. The colors and textures of the plants in and near the pond, such as papyrus, water lilies, and purple iris, provide visual interest. And there is the sound of frogs and also many whimsical frog ornaments that amuse and delight visitors.

Chad also built the stone walls that enclose the home's parking areas, and Mother Nature Landscaping designed and built the patio at the entrance. This additional hardscape gave Paula the opportunity to artfully combine colorful plants that frame the benches on either side of the path leading up to the front door, creating an unusual and inviting approach to the home.

Paula enjoys combining colors and textures in unusual ways and uses strong

colors that remain vibrant even in the heat of high summer. She finds that chartreuse and golden foliage plants combine well with those with purple flowers such as meadow sage, salvia, veronica, verbena, and clematis. She also has sought out many shrubs with golden-hued foliage, such as some varieties of cyprus, spirea, and caryopteris, that hold up well through three seasons. She also uses plants with silver foliage for accents; some examples are artemesia, Russian sage, mounding lamb's ears, catmint, and lavender. And she enjoys using large clumps of vibrantly colored perennials to attract butterflies to the garden.

In her strategically placed containers close to the house, where the deer are less of a hazard, she uses annuals such as chartreuse coleus with begonias, petunias, and geraniums. Because her large perennial beds are surrounded by wooded areas where deer are plentiful, she has learned to substitute deer-resistant plants for those that deer find delectable: daffodils, for example, instead of tulips in the spring and chrysanthemums in profusion in the fall. In summer, instead of hostas she uses mounds of lamb's ears, and for Asiatic lilies she substitutes irises. Her favorite annuals to foil the deer are cleome,



lantana, and zinnias. To add repetitive touches of white in the more shaded areas she frequently uses astilbe, which is deer resistant. This allows her to coexist with Bambi and still have many flowers to cut and arrange indoors and as well as masses of vibrant color in the landscape through all the growing seasons.



(clockwise from top left) A clump of purple Japanese irises provides a contrast with the chartreuse foliage to the left. The water feature, which includes a waterfall, is home to many frogs that provide auditory interest in the garden. Clivia, native to southern Africa, is grown locally as an annual. The vivid foliage of

the Japanese maple creates an accent behind the birdbath, which is popular with birds and butterflies alike. This whimsical bench has a seat that's painted to pick up the chartreuse accents in the garden and supports that pay homage to the frogs in the pond.