

SHOPPING WITH
ANN SULLIVAN

Try to Contain Yourself

Organization Starts With Interesting Boxes

FOR many professional organizers, the end of summer is a time for visiting clients' homes to switch out summer clothes for fall wardrobes and to pack up pool toys and outdoor cushions.

Whether or not you have a professional organizer, though, storing out-of-season clothing and gear with care is something Ann Sullivan, a professional organizer in Manhattan, recommends as an alternative to creating "a black hole" in the back of a closet or under a bed.

"People need to be responsible for what they own," said Ms. Sullivan, who recently began a blog offering organizing tips on her Web site, annsullivan.com. "If you don't know what you have and where it is, you end up buying duplicates or not using your things, which is nuts."

During a shopping trip in Lower Manhattan and online, Ms. Sullivan offered some basic advice on storage: containers don't have to cost a lot, she said, and stacking labeled plastic bins on shelves is a practical system, no matter the budget. "Even our gazillion-dollar clients use the same stuff," she said.

Another tip: attractive containers can help motivate you to keep using them.

"Organizing should be fun," she said. "The more inviting you make the system, the more people are likely to use it."

At the Surprise! Surprise! home-organization store in the East Village, Ms. Sullivan found Yaffa Bubble crates, brightly colored plastic milk crates with playful bubble-like cut-outs on the sides. They're ideal, she said, for storing beach gear. "Using the same containers year-round simplifies the organizing process," she said.

She also liked a collapsible barrel-shaped hamper that she thought would be "really great for balls."

Across town at the Container Store in Chelsea, she chose the tinted stacking drawers, plastic lidded bins in fruity colors. They could be used in an entry closet, she said, to keep track of small items like sunglasses, swim caps or sunscreen.

A more elegant option, she said, would be



G. PAUL BURNETT/THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGGING IT Ann Sullivan admires a collapsible barrel-shaped nylon hamper with a mesh lid; \$15.99 at Surprise! Surprise!, (212) 777-0990, surprisesurprise.com.

the store's Baroque fabric storage boxes, in a brown-and-white floral design. The bins, with zippered and Velcro openings, are attractive enough to be kept on display year-round for easy access, she said. "Some people travel a lot during winter, and they want to be able to grab their snorkel stuff."

A few blocks away at Paragon Sports in Union Square, Ms. Sullivan turned her attention to a bigger storage problem: what to do with a bicycle. She recommended lifting it off the floor with the Leonardo wall-mounted bike storage hook and Da Vinci tire tray, a kit that hangs a bicycle.

A metal hook-shaped attachment secures the base of the front tire to the wall, while a plastic tray holds the rear wheel in place below it, "so it's not angling out," she said — freeing up floor space and, of course, more room for storage.

JULIE SCELFO

Leonardo wall-mounted bike storage hook and Da Vinci tire tray; \$19.95 at Paragon Sports, (800) 961-3030, paragonsports.com.



Large tinted stacking drawers; \$16.99 each at the Container Store, (888) 266-8246, containerstore.com.



Large teak storage trunk with solid brass hardware; \$899 at Frontgate, (888) 263-9850, frontgate.com.



Baroque fabric storage boxes with zipper and Velcro closures; from \$12.99 each at the Container Store.



Stackable Bubble crate by Yaffa; \$6 at Surprise! Surprise!



Smart Store recycled plastic series with handle by Snapware; from \$5.99 at Snapware, (951) 361-3100, snapware.com.



Large canvas storage chest; \$10.99 at Gracious Home.



Clear storage cube; \$7.99 at Gracious Home, (800) 338-7809, gracioushome.com.

IN THE GARDEN

Restoring Manhattan As It Once Was



ABOVE, EVAN SUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF MERTZ LIBRARY, THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

By ANNE RAVER

IN 1609, when the English explorer Henry Hudson sailed the river that would be named after him, he looked out on an island of hilly forest and wetlands teeming with wildlife.

Four hundred years later, that paradise has been crushed by steel and concrete, with pockets of green made up mostly of exotic plants like Norway maples and English ivy.

But a patch of that lost landscape, so eloquently described by the Mannahatta Project (themannahattaproject.org), is evoked by a 2,200-square-foot native woodland garden being planted at Schwartz Plaza next to the Bobst Library on the New York University campus, just south of Washington Square.

There, beneath the lindens and Japanese pagoda trees, are sweeps of native ferns, columbine and wild ginger. Young beech seedlings are barely taller than the mayapples.

"We're not trying to recreate a woodland, it's a stylized version of a woodland," said George Reis,

N.Y.U.'s supervisor of sustainable landscapes, who became a gardener at the university in 1995. He knew nothing about gardening, but the job included free tuition. "I couldn't identify English ivy," he said. "I came to study Portuguese literature."

Nevertheless, he took a few classes at the New York Botanical Garden. And one day he heard Darrel Morrison, a landscape architect renowned for his use of native plants, speak at Columbia University.

"It was all about making a design suited for a specific place," said Mr. Reis, 42. "How can we evoke the natural history and even the social history of that place through design?"

He started changing a few areas around campus, replacing the English ivy and leggy boxwoods in front of the admissions building with native azaleas that bloomed at graduation, and filling the

sunny expanse around the sports center with swamp mallows and sea oats.

The Mannahatta Project also inspired him to imagine Manhattan before the rest of the world landed here with its seeds and its culture. And when the class of 2008 put out a call for a worthy project for its \$25,000 legacy gift, Mr. Reis submitted a proposal — for a native woodland garden designed by Mr. Morrison.

The idea won hand's down over a proposal for plasma TV's for the gym.



ROOTS George Reis, far left, checks out specimens planted at New York University as part of a project to reintroduce native plants that once thrived in Manhattan. They include, clockwise from below: interrupted fern, wild columbine, mayapple, American beech and bloodroot.



So this spring, Mr. Reis and Mr. Morrison, with the help of a small student crew, began planting 2,000 plants that were all thriving on Manhattan in the 17th century.

Beneath the lindens and a Japanese maple, sweeps of hay-scented ferns undulate against waves of New York ferns, interrupted ferns and Christmas ferns, each species planted en masse to accentuate subtle differences in shape, texture and color.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), a shrub that once turned the Eastern woods white with its blossoms in early spring, signaling that it was safe to journey into the mountains to hold services for those who had died in the winter, will bloom next spring over wild columbine and bloodroot.

A handful of American beech seedlings, grown from local seed by the Greenbelt Native Plant Center, on Staten Island, were only a foot tall. But those little trees are a sign that this urban native landscape is already taking hold.

Why not put a little Mannahatta in your own shady backyard, terrace or tiny front yard that faces the street? Columbine, wood phlox and wild geranium would do well in a small yard, in light to full shade, Mr. Morrison said, and would also work in large pots.

Bearberry, a low, rambling evergreen with pink or white flowers in the spring and red berries in summer, is a good ground cover for a sunny, sandy space. Partridge berry, another low-growing evergreen with red berries, prefers fertile soil and shade.