



Bear Creek Press

'Perennial Dreams Come True'

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What's New at the Bear

Ken & Melanie are working together to provide up-to-date information and photographs on something called "Facebook". I don't know what that is, but evidently you can say you like us (didn't you already like us?) and receive pictures & announcements about the latest happenings at the Bear. Thanks to both of them for bringing the nursery into the 21st century.

Speaking of the latest happenings, be sure to check out our new pond supplies in the shop. Pond liner, pumps, filters, clarifiers, aquatic fertilizers, fish and fish food are now available in one convenient location. See us first for all your pond needs.

Tina brought in some neat new pottery and birdbaths. She has also brought in some of her own embroidered tote bags. For the garden or home, these totes are a beautiful way to organize your odds and ends. Dusty has been making so many hypertufa pots, he can now do them in his sleep. Be sure to check out the new selection of larger, sturdier and more colorful containers and fountains for your patio and porch.

Sally and Carl have been locked in the greenhouses preparing annuals and perennials, herbs and flowers, trees and shrubs for your gardens. We'll let them out and feed and water 'em a little to be sure they are ready for your many questions about all the new plants.

Speaking of new plants, in an attempt to tell you about all the new offerings as soon as possible, we are sending the "What's New" newsletter out before all those plants are actually sold out. So come visit, say hello to everybody and be sure to check the new and unusual plants for Spring.

New Perennials

Agastache – 'Raspberry Daiquiri', 'Tango', 'Bolero' and 'Astello Indigo'. It is fitting to start with one of our favorite perennials. And- Ali Baba's britches!- we have not one new favorite, but four. Don't bother to take care of these perennials. The best ones we have seen are in a garden with no irrigation and, in fact, no care. The huge plants have been flowering through three years of drought and are still happy. I won't bother you with all the details of these four new introductions. Just come by the nursery and see for yourself. Oh, and just between you and the garden gate, all one quart agastaches are featured in our spring special.

Astilbe- 'Delft Lace', 'Fanal', and 'Sugarberry'. A favorite shade perennial, Astilbe's ferny foliage is a garden picker-upper. Pronounced Ah-still-be, as in, Ah still be your friend even if you mispronounce this name, these perennials look terrific in drifts in dappled morning sun. Delft Lace features red stems, salmon buds and apricot pink flowers. Is that colorful enough for you? Fanal is a vigorous grower with early red flowers growing to 20" tall. For a shorter, lacey flower, Sugarberry features a dense soft pink cluster that grows ten inches tall.

Campanula 'Dickson's Gold'. The shocking gold foliage on this bellflower is exciting enough. Add lavender blue star shaped flowers and you have a psychedelic combination that even Jimi would play a chord for. This low growing (4-6" tall), clump forming, weed suppressing perennial will dazzle in the garden or in a container.

Coreopsis 'Sterntaler'. Now we couldn't go a whole year without trying another coreopsis, could we? Ok, so this is not a brand new tickseed, but we still think you should give it a try. Large flowers with burgundy centers measure over two inches across. This is a long flowering variety, continuing to bloom into the summer if deadheaded occasionally. Coreopsis are native plants and will tolerate the challenged soil in all of our gardens.

Dicentra 'Gold Heart'. More golden foliage takes this old fashioned bleeding heart to the next garden level. A mature 2 foot by 2 foot clump makes a dazzling display in the shade garden. Flower spikes of nodding pink and white hearts seal the award for a springtime, show-stopping exhibit. Enjoy this brilliant twist on your mother's garden standard.

Gaillardia 'Bijou'. What a perfect flower for the home and garden! Its compact size means it will fit anywhere in full sun, even in a container on the porch. The brightly colored flowers- red and yellow bicolor- are easy to see to impress your neighbors. The foliage is deer resistant and the flowers form a mini helipad for visiting butterflies. As a native, the blanket flower is well adapted to the local soils. Bijou is the latest of many varieties of successful blanket flowers introduced through the years into the gardens of the Ozarks.

New Red Bud Cultivars

We continue to try (and occasionally reject) a few new redbud cultivars each year. Is there any tree that better exclaims "It's Spring!" than the redbud? They are not a finicky tree, rooting freely and blooming more quickly than some other flowering native jewels. The many different sizes and shapes allows easier selection for that special spot in the yard. Here are a few of our favorites.

The Rising Sun Redbud. Bright golden orange new foliage is the feature of this recent introduction from Jackson Nursery in Tennessee. With a mature size of 12' to 15' tall and wide, The Rising Sun will fit easily in any yard. Even at a small size, these new trees are well branched and will grow quickly.

Avondale Redbud. The Chinese form of the Eastern Redbud has been available for many years. We have had a few at the nursery in the years past, but as soon as we opened our mouths to brag about them, they were gone. If you received an email announcement a couple of weeks back, you saw one in full bloom. (if you didn't, sign up for email messages at the Bear or at bearcreeknursery.net) A shrub form of redbud, Avondale is a multi-trunk variety that grows to about ten feet. The floral display virtually hides the trunks, looking like a candied tree for several weeks in spring.

Don Egolf Redbud. A close relative of the Avondale Redbud, Don Egolf Chinese redbud is also a multi-stem cultivar. The trunks and stems are smothered in lighter pink flowers on a more compact version of Avondale. Growing to about 8 feet tall and wide, this diminutive tree will fit in smaller spaces in the yard or make an impressive accent tree.

Ruby Falls Redbud. This stunning variety of redbud was developed at North Carolina State University and reflects desirable traits from both of its parents. It fills out to 6-8 feet tall by 4-6 feet wide and boasts the typical spring flowers. But it is the weeping form and bold purple leaves that will stop you in your tracks. Cascading branches cloaked with cascading leaves is a combination that is irresistible. The shape and color of Ruby Falls allow it to stand alone or be combined with flowering perennials.

Traveller Redbud. Another special redbud cultivar was developed almost 25 years ago at Madrone Nursery in Texas. The seedling chosen from thousands was an offspring of the Texas redbud which boasts heavier, glossier leaves than the Eastern Redbud. The happy result is a weeping form that holds up to the heat of the south in grand fashion. These can be staked to grow between 5 to 8 feet tall and will grow wider each year. The specimen we have at home is about seven feet tall and has spread to 5 feet wide after just a few years.

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Hellebores 'Ballard Strain'. Doesn't it just bug you, that in the middle of February, when you're poking around the Hellebores looking for early flowers, all the flowers are nodding and facing the ground? You have to crawl on your back, in the snow, to see the pretty little devils. With the new Ballard Strain, you won't have to crawl in the mulch to look at the anthers. Upright facing flowers in shades of red, pink, white, yellow and purple will thrill you, even while you are standing.

Heuchera- 'Berry Smoothie', 'Christa', 'Marvelous Marble' and 'Melting Fire'. As always, the Coral Bells will be the most sought after and talked about perennials this spring. Dense mounds of bright colored foliage make the Heuchera so darned popular. Pink-purplish 'Berry Smoothie', orange 'Christa', green & purple 'Marvelous Marble' and bright maroon 'Melting Fire' must be seen to be believed. These colors deepen in the fall and are accentuated by a rim of frost- the time of year one wonders why they didn't try more of them last spring.

Heucherella 'Gold Zebra'. This diminutive Foamy Bell is another great example of tinkering with botany. By combining Coral Bells with Foam Flowers, Dan Heims of Terra Nova Nurseries has waved his magic wand over another special plant. Heavily dissected red & yellow leaves are dazzling, shade tolerant, short and showy. Small clusters of white flowers stand above a ten inch mound, careful not to interfere with the foliar expose.

Penstemon strictus and 'Electric Blue'. These native selections are tough, drought tolerant and long blooming perennials. Strictus is a bit taller and will grow 20" tall and about as wide. 'Electric Blue' will top out at about 12". Both sport clusters of tubular flowers in blue to violet blue hues.

Penstemon 'Iron Maiden'. A taller, spikier form of beardtongue, Iron Maiden represents the red side of the family. Deep red tubular flowers are born on sturdy three foot tall stems. All of the family of beardtongue will tolerate the mean, cruel, dry, puny weather that has visited the last few years. A few of

ours have sneered at the heat and merely re-flowered in the fall.

Perovskia 'Peek-a-Blue'. Those of you who love Russian Sage- and that should include everyone- will enjoy this new shorter version. Peek-a-Blue features, along with its silly name, a long flowering period, deer resistance, heat and drought tolerance all in a compact plant reaching two feet tall. Finely cut leaves are lacier than its cousins' and add to the visual excitement of this brand new Russian Sage. As they say....be the first on your block....

Sedum 'Xenon'. Out of the Netherlands comes this exciting new sedum. A fall bloomer, this sedum starts pretty and just gets better and better as the year progresses. Green and mauve leaves darken to burgundy as summer matures. Red velvet flower buds open to masses of rose blooms late in the season, welcoming the last wave of butterflies. Growing to a height of 24", Xenon will fit anywhere in the garden.

March Hours: Monday ~ Saturday, 9 to 5. Open 7 days a week in April.

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