



Bear Creek Press

"Ducky Days"

Volume 15, Issue 1

March 2016

A Few Newbies

Here is a random sample of new items that Carl is trying to find room to display at the bear. Come see us if you are looking for that special plant to light up your landscape or merely fill in an empty spot in the yard.

Chardonnay Pearls Deutzia

Would you like some gold or pearls in your garden? Fluffy mounds of slender golden leaves are the thrill of this small shrub. The color holds well through the summer. It's 2 x 2 foot size fits well in a mixed border in a partly shaded locale. In mid spring, after the foliage has developed, the pearls appear in delicious sprays. Many strings of pearls open to lightly fragrant white flowers and delight the staunchest flower denier.

Serious Black Bush Clematis

This is a very serious plant. A bush Clematis (pronounced Climb-at-us) is a non-vining type that forms a mass of foliage that is less rampant than the vining forms. Even so, at 4-6' tall, this is not a shy plant. Some light support might be desired for the mass of intertwining stems. If I may steal the term in the catalog, the foliage is "extraordinary." By the look of the emerging leaves in the greenhouse, the catalog is correct. The deep purple new foliage is, well, extraordinary, maturing to olive green as the season progresses. Clusters of white flowers top this mound in early to mid summer.

Wine Spritzer Beautyberry

This speckled beauty is a Japanese introduction related to the common beautyberry. In a small studio in southern Tokyo, an airbrush artist perfectly decorated the leaves of this shrub. Small lavender flowers will attract butterflies and develop into small berries by autumn. Sun or part shade exposure and a massing of several plants will encourage the violet fall fruit. The four foot height can be controlled by a severe shearing in the late winter. The resulting new foliage will be larger, bright green and impressively speckled.

Ballerina Ruffles Hellebores

In late February, the porch display at the bear consists of the only flowering perennial of the season, Hellebores. The glossy, evergreen, umbrella-shaped, deer resistant foliage is handsome by itself. But when they flower, the deep green leaves become a mere background for stunning dappled blooms. The multi-petaled, multi-hued, speckled flowers stand above the foliage reaching out to grab anyone's attention. And, best of all, by the time this newsletter finally reaches you, and you finally have a chance to rush on over to see, these flowers will still be standing proud, over one month later.

Gold Thread Spirea

This fine leaved spirea is so cute you will want to groom it and tie tiny bows on its branches. Delicate looking golden leaves hold up well to the heat of the summer and mature to orange and red in fall. Gold Thread will form a 3' x 3' loose mound of foliage in sun or part shade. White flowers cover the golden leaves in late spring. A light shearing in late winter will help the spring flush of foliage. Just remember to go easy on the bows.

Cinderella Swamp Milkweed

The lesser known native milkweed is quite an adaptable perennial. It will tolerate wet or dry soils, heavy clay or loam and boasts a milky sap that helps resist deer. Growing to 2-4 feet tall, dark pink flowers are borne in umbels and have a pleasant vanilla fragrance. Most important, Swamp milkweed is a nectar and host plant for the Monarch Butterfly. Cut it, bring it in, put it in a vase, put on your glass slippers and dance with the scent of Cinderella in the house.

Ducks in the Garden

We have a small hobby farm at home. For those of you who are wondering, the definition of a "hobby farm" is a farm that costs way more to maintain than it produces. Come to think of it, that is the definition of most farms. The main distinction is our farm is much, much smaller than a real farm.

The principle livestock are two horses who cannot even maintain their own pasture. They sub contract the brush hogging to us, complaining about the knee high weeds. They do keep us on schedule when it comes to feeding. They eat a bagged horse feed (fancy name, fancy price) and the highest quality hay from the fall harvest. Eating is all they do.

There are chickens, too. They must be penned up as it turns out they are faster at transplanting shrubbery than I am. We cannot eat the chickens, but they are not as worthless as the horses. The chickens lay eggs. However they do cost us about three times in feed what we can sell them for. They are great at consuming leftovers from the kitchen and vegetable garden and make lots of contributions for the compost piles. Lot and lots of aromatic contributions.

But the highlight of this little homestead is the ducks. These are bantam ducks, weighing in at about half of a standard duck. There are Spots, Silkies, Calls with the occasional East Indian thrown in, all cute and quacking and waddling to and fro. The advantage of the bantam duck is their particular contributions are only half the size of a standard duck. One must get used to contributions on a small farm.

Ducks are not nearly as destructive to the landscape as chickens. So naturally, the ducks own the yard. From the moment the coop door is open and they burst forth with the speed of shotgun pellets, they own the place. Their morning greetings fill the ears. They fly or waddle to the pond, dibble the grass, police the puddles and generally make themselves at home in the garden. If they were to come inside, we would have to flush them out of the pantry twice a day.

So what does this have to do with plants? Not much, really. The nature, texture and content of the home garden has changed. The quaint soft annuals of summer have given way to stouter annuals and larger shrubbery. You might say we are developing an arsenal of duck resistant plants. But we wouldn't want it any other way. It is time to start collecting the new eggs for incubation and soon new little peeps will melt our hearts. You see, fifty ducks is just not enough ducks in the yard so, this spring, we are going to try for

Bear Creek Nursery ©

2798 Highway 23 North, Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72631
(479) 253-7466

bearcreeknursery@yahoo.com »-« www.bearcreeknursery.net

What's New at the Bear

It has been a warm and busy winter at the nursery with lots of to see both inside and out. Tina found some beautiful locally made pottery created by David Johnson, owner of Bear Hollow Pottery. The stunning glazes and motifs on these simple forms will make you want to look closer. The shapes and colors of the Four Season Malaysian pottery will also catch your eye and are safe for year round use. While you are inside, be sure to check out the new sizes and colors of our own Hypertufa Pots. Hypertufa is a lightweight concrete made for outdoor use and available in many different shapes.

Tina has also been playing with some new topiary and terrarium plantings. Add a focal point of elegance or whimsy to a special place in the garden with her creations. A new batch of orchids will be here soon with all their spectacular forms and flowers.

We are now exclusively (for this area) offering High Mowing Organic Seeds. These are the first certified Non-GMO and fully organic garden seeds available in the US. Start your own flowers, herbs and vegetables and be proud.

There are a few new views outside, too. Anastasia has designed and hand painted a series of signs for the greenhouses to insure you will not mix

up the annuals with the herbs. Speaking of herbs, there is a new house dedicated to herbs. Those of you who hate all the other plants but want some herbs will have your own herb display house.

Oh, yes, there are some new plants also. New perennials include a milkweed for the Monarchs, new fancy climbers and a few fast runners. The new herbs are in the new herb house with a new sign. And a few new vegetables can grace your garden including some heirlooms, melons and the Jolokia, the tear inducing ghost pepper. Stay tuned to the Bear Creek Press New Plant Issue coming soon to your local newsstand or sneaking onto your computer.



Spring Hours: Monday ~ Saturday, 9 to 5 Open Sundays in April

How About That?

Bear Creek Nursery is turning fifteen years old this spring. Like any adolescent, we are probably going to act obnoxious and belligerent and think we know everything. Come to think of it, some of the folks who have known us awhile may think we have always acted that way. But don't worry, this stage may not last longer than five or ten years.

In the meantime, we will continue to help with your garden concerns, plant queries and landscape issues. And thank you for your continued support for all these years.

**Now Available:
Spring Vegetables
Go Grow Compost
Potting Soil
Mulch
in bags or bulk**



Bear Creek Nursery
2798 Highway 23 North
Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72631

Presorted
Standard
US Postage Paid
72613
Bear Creek Nursery

Address Service Requested