



# Bear Creek Press

*"A Spring Thing"*

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## It's New at the Bear

New trees, new planters, new hypertufa, new handmade baskets and new sale items are all part of our Spring Fling Thing. After fifteen years of growing for you, we think we know what you like: great plants, good merchandise and plenty of bargains. Be sure to stop in at the shop to check out the new pottery, an amazing book sale, new planters and a collection of one-of-a-kind woven baskets and useless weavings made by yours truly.

Out in the yard you will find new and rare trees and shrubs, redbuds galore, fruits and vegetables and greenhouses chock full of garden delights. Be sure to look for first-time local selection of Pauline Lily Redbud, Butterfly Japanese Maple, Red Dragon Contorted Filbert, Venus Dogwood and Red Rocket Maple. Many new and unusual plants will delight your senses, enhance your yard and thrill your dog. Here are a few new shrubs and trees.

**Sweetbay Magnolia-** An eastern U.S. native, Sweetbay Magnolia can be a moderate sized shrub or a large tree depending on its location. Lemony fragrant, white blossoms make this a delightful plant no matter what size. In mild winters it will hold its deep green foliage. Like many widely adapted native shrubs, it will tolerate a variety of soil conditions. Notably, it will do well in damp or boggy soils and tolerate part shade.

**Saskatoon Serviceberry-** From the opposite part of the U.S. comes another native shrub. Also known as Western Serviceberry, Saskatoon is tolerant of dry, heavy soils so will be perfect for the Ozarks. At 6-8' tall, this shrub can be grown alone or in groups as a screen. Fragrant white flowers in spring give way to dark, edible berries by fall. Do you think the birds might take note of that?

**Red Dragon Contorted Filbert-** Harry Lauder's Walking Stick is a twisted-branch wonder of a shrub that is an ornamental plant lover's dream. This variety adds some color to the texture. Maroon leaves and catkins adorn the shrub in the spring and summer. Leaves turn green during late summer and then wine colored in the fall. A rounded 5-8' height and spread make this plant a standout specimen.

**Venus Dogwood-** This lovely dogwood is a kousa hybrid and features a late bloom time with large pure white flowers. A disease resistant cultivar, Venus comes from the breeding program at Rutgers University. Growing to about 15'x 15', this small tree is a long lived dogwood that shares the stunning fall color of our native dogwood.

**Butterfly Japanese Maple-** A small scale Japanese Maple, Butterfly grows to about 8'x8' size. It has delicate variegated leaves with white and pink edges around a green leaf. Like all Japanese Maples, the rich crimson fall leaf color is stunning. Afternoon shade is helpful to protect the variegated leaves.

**Pauline Lily Redbud-** As spring emerges, the classic deep pink haze of the redbud is a familiar sight. Pauline Lily is different. A naturally occurring form from Virginia is aglow with light pink flowers in early spring. Similar in size to the native redbud, Pauline Lily can reach 20'x20'. For those of you who appreciate pure white, we also have the White Flowering Eastern Redbud.

## What Winter?

The Ozark's two and a half hour winter is over, leaving in its wake carnage and mayhem. The Midwest Union BSS (Brotherhood of Suburban Snowmen) was disbanded due to lack of activity. The Holiday Island Boy Scout Troop went bankrupt because there were no driveways to shovel. Piles of road salt sit unattended in towns throughout the heartland.

And yet, somehow we survived. Waiting for the temperature to rise one or two degrees, we remain at the starting gate, straining to burst forth down the straightaway. With shovels, rakes and trowels in hand, it is time for the Spring Thing. Amending and planting, feeding and mulching, seeding and hoeing, when will it all end? Or more importantly, when will it all begin?

Down at the Bear, we are busy preparing for this Spring Fling. Sally is transplanting another few thousand annuals, Rachel pokes, prods and primps until all the plants are happy, Amanda waters and straightens and organizes all day long. Anastasia and Lori visit on the weekends to make sure the rest of us are doing our jobs. And Tina is stocking, stocking, stocking. The shop is full of new pottery, vegetable and flower seeds, organic fertilizers, and cool new gadgets to make your gardening life easier.

The guys are busy, too. Sifting and mixing and bagging and loading and generally doing anything on a tractor to make your landscape chores more pleasant, these gents aim to please. Dusty, Johan and Zach are ready to turn some compost, dish up some dirt, plant a tree or mulch their way into your hearts and yard.

We all look forward to seeing you this spring, chatting up the landscape, helping you pick just the right shrub, finding your favorite tomato and generally yucking it up for the sake of your garden. Just start when you hear the Spring Ding. We hope to see you soon.

## Bear Creek Nursery ©

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## New Perennials

There is still some room for a few descriptions of new plants at the Bear this year. Tina is very creative when it comes to ordering. "I want this one, this one, this one and, oh, these ten also!"

So there are lots of new choices, new natives, new foliage and new ideas. And if the descriptions seem stale, that is because there are no words to do service to these fantastic selections.

**Gold Bullion Cornflower-** There is much value in this glittering perennial. With leaves as good as gold and flowers as blue as the sky, this hardy gem will light up your garden. It is drought tolerant and will grow one to two feet tall. Plant in full sun in well drained soil to cash in on the wealth of butterflies that will visit.

**Innocent Glance Clematis-** The name of this new clematis is a good example of the marketing department taking too long a coffee break. No one will take an innocent glance at this magnificent

flower. It should be named "Long Stare." Five inch double dahlia-like flowers in a pale pink with darker margins are followed later in the season with single flowers. This mid summer bloomer should climb to about six to seven feet. Plant in sun on a sturdy trellis and see what kind of looks it gets.

**Black Snakeroot-** Don't let the common or botanical name of this stunner scare you. Hillside Black Beauty Cimicifuga is a special plant that requires some space, topping out at five or more feet tall. Fragrant blush pink bottlebrush flowers adorn a mass of deep purple foliage. This is one of the few plants that will retain dark leaf color without being in full sun. Give it some shade, give it some space, just give it a home.

**Rock Candy Pink Penstemon-** An Internet search for this plant yielded advertising for real pink rock candy. It was hard to tell the difference between the candy and the flower. Short, dense stalks of flower clusters

arise from tight mounds of foliage. These twelve inch tall heavy bloomers will work well in the front of a perennial border. Plant in the full sun for summer flowers and trim the spent flowers for later reblooming. Penstemon is a native plant that is both heat and drought tolerant.

**Coral Bells and Foamy Bells-** Heuchera (coral bells) and Heucherella (foamy bells) must be two of the most satisfying plant groups to hybridize. The brilliant colors, leaf shapes and multiple overlays provide endless combinations of leaf hues. This year's choices are no exception. Here are a few descriptions:

Electric Plum's deep purple leaves with dark veins form mounds of foliage up to ten inches tall. Lava Lamp has coppery leaves with purple veining. Ruffles and Truffles features intensely wavy edges on dark mahogany leaves. Pumpkin Spice's leaves emerge in bronze red with darker centers and veins. Together on the bench, the combination is a dazzling display of plant prismaticism.



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

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