

Native plants popular for landscaping

LANCASTER — Ecology-minded Americans are showing an increased interest in native plants for their home landscaping. While native plants have the advantage of being well-adapted to climate and weather conditions, local soil and exposure conditions in which they grow best vary greatly.

The American holly, for example, does not normally grow in open fields, nor does the swamp magnolia inhabit dry, parched soils.

Many of our best native plants have been used in landscaping for years, including the flowering dogwood, American holly, and red swamp maple. However, many others are overlooked which could add interest and beauty to Pennsylvania home gardens.

One such plant is clethra, or summer sweet. It normally grows in wet shaded thickets along the edges of wooded areas, but will also grow in normal soil and full sun. Summer sweet blooms in midsummer with erect clusters of fragrant white flowers.

Another excellent native plant is bayberry. In fact, no other shrub will tolerate more varied soils and exposures.

The fringe tree forms a small tree or large, multi-stemmed shrub that, in full bloom, is as attractive as a flowering dogwood, although quite different. It grows to a height of about 15 feet, a size well suited to home landscapes.

The red choke cherry is one of the best shrubs for fall fruits. In the wild it is often found in wet thickets, but will do well in any ordinary soil.

Native plants can be dug up and transplanted from the wild, however, buying them from a nursery is easier and chances of success are much greater.

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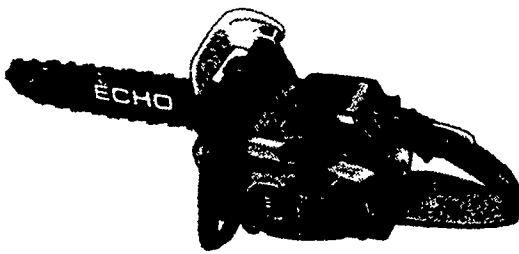
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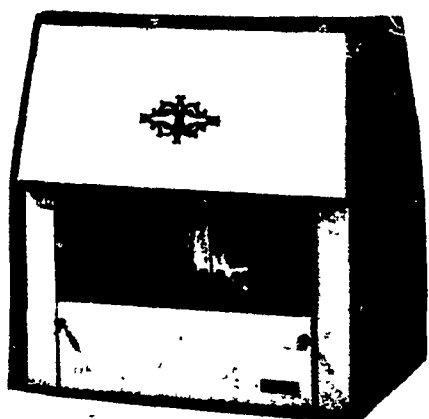
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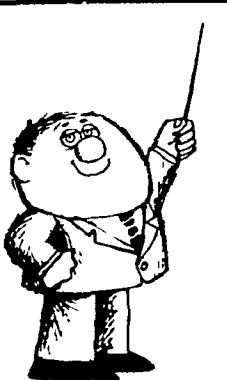
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