

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



American Gardens
America is a nation of gardeners. Yet, few native plants flourish in our home landscapes. Fortunately, landscape designers are rethinking the traditional home landscape of shade trees and clipped evergreens and shrubs.

One innovative and nationally recognized design team, Oehme Van Sweden and Associates is credited with starting a new wave of naturalism in landscape plantings. Wolfgang Oehme wrote in his book, *Bold Romantic Gardens*: "Sadly, many people prefer to tame nature, when nature is truly wild."

Instead he suggests gardeners use plants in their landscapes that do not require pruning, staking, dead heading or dividing. These 'utility' plants include many grasses, sedges, succulents, trees, shrubs, vines and wildflowers. Here are just a few:

•**Coreopsis "Moonbeam"**—This herbaceous perennial grows 1-2 feet, has small, lemon-yellow flowers and blooms constantly from early to late summer. It's used in mass plantings or as border plants for steps.

•**Joe-Pye Weed "Gateway"**—This showy, tall growing bushy-type, herbaceous perennial

attracts not only the passing eye but butterflies as well. Its purplish, fuzzy flowers look great in back borders, meadows, and wetlands.

•**Shadblow Serviceberry**—Choose from tree and multi-stemmed shrub forms that produce red-purple fruit attractive to wildlife. They grow 20-30 feet and bloom with a cloud of tiny white flowers in the spring. Use them at woodland edges or as specimen trees near a patio or pool.

Naturalized Landscaped

Make the most of your landscape's natural environment. This goal may be easier said than done. New home sites with either a pond, rock outcropping, wetlands or meadows are difficult to find. What can you do?

In the words of Eliza Penny-packer, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture at Penn State, "skillfully edit the landscape." Look at a landscape and see the characteristics that are initially obscured and then bring that character out, largely through the subtraction of elements from the site." To become an environmental artist, follow these principles:

•**Simplicity:** A landscape will

gently mimic nature. Use a fewer number of plant types and textures in planning the overall landscape design.

•**Scale:** Whether it be with a building or a sunset, with good scale; plants will complement their background.

•**Balance:** Choose plants that echo the texture of existing plants in the landscape.

•**Rhythm and Line:** A landscape scene will repeat plant types, textures and color.

•**Focalization of Interest:** People want to focus on a simple design element. In most home settings, a single flower color works to achieve this goal.

Non-Plant Garden Project Ideas

•Build a frame for molding concrete stepping stones or landscape edging. Or, construct wood planters of all types: window boxes, raised garden beds or wood deck accessories. For information on

designing and constructing wheelchair gardens, raised beds or garden boxes, contact your Extension Office.

•Make tomato supports out of scraps of wire mesh that is commonly used for reinforced concrete or make a plant hanger out of horseshoes.

•Recycle a 2 liter plastic bottle by removing its plastic base-cutting off the bottle top and using it as a terrarium or seed starting container. Or, use a 1 gallon clear plastic milk jug as a seed starting planter.

•Get your lawn mower ready for summer by sharpening the blade and putting on a new air filter. Look into adding a mulching mower attachment if available by the manufacturer. If you have a garden project idea, write to Tom Becker at Penn State Cooperative Extension, 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York, PA 17402.

York Plans Coronation

BAIR (York Co.) — York County's 1995 dairy princess will be named during coronation ceremonies on Saturday, June 17, at the 4-H Center, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Dairy princess nominee is Angela Mummert, 17, daughter of Diane and Dennis Mummert, Glen Rock. She is a senior at Dalls-town Area High School and was

the 1994 alternate York County Dairy Princess.

Three young women will participate in Dairy Maid competition during the coronation program. Dairy Maid contenders are Sarah Greek, daughter of Bonnie and Leonard Greek, Delta, Heather Crowl, daughter of Joyce and Ellis Crowl, Airville, and Tanya Thoman, daughter of Gail and Gary Thoman, Dallsstown.

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