

# fine Gardening

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10 plants you can walk on

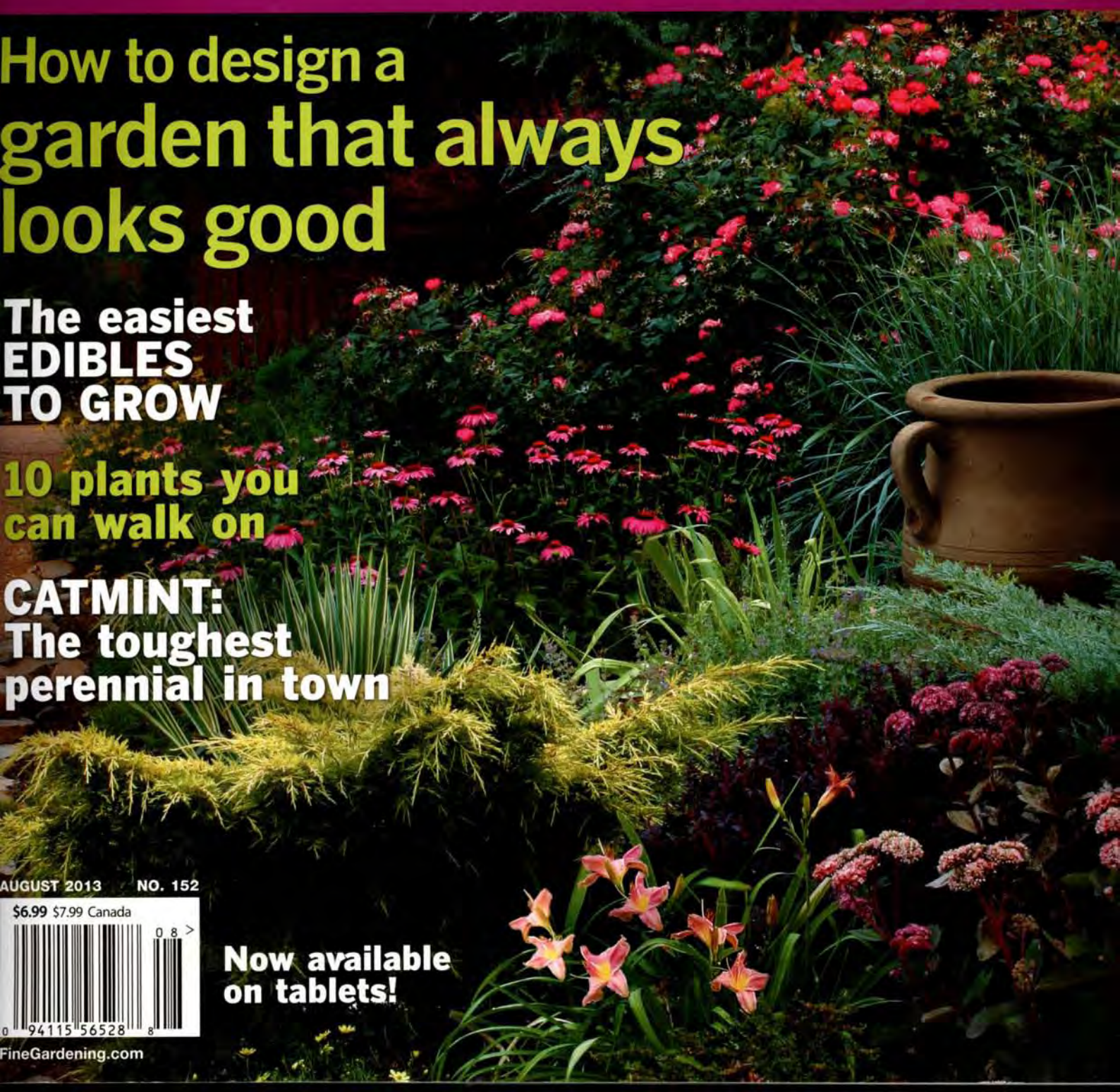
CATMINT: The toughest perennial in town

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## FEATURES

### 26 Peach goes with everything

When colors clash, this versatile hue can come to the rescue

by Susan Morrison

#### COVER STORY

### 32 Designing with conifers

Blend these four-season beauties into the landscape by taking a cue from their unique shape, color, and texture

by Susan Hamilton

### 40 An easy approach to espalier

Train a fruit tree into a beautiful and practical form with just a few simple steps

by Maile Arnold

### 44 Plants you can walk on

These tough little ground covers can withstand the occasional trampling

by Sandy McDougle

### 50 Containers as focal points

Is your garden missing something? A carefully placed pot can make it come alive

by Michelle Gervais

### 56 Catmint

Drought tolerance and never-ending blooms aren't the only reasons to love this perennial

by Richard Hawke

#### EDIBLES GROW-IT GUIDE

### 64 Ten foolproof veggies

These high-yield, low-care selections guarantee that this season will be an overwhelming success

by Danielle Sherry

### 69 Taming your tomatoes

For healthier plants, better fruit, and fewer headaches, choose a stake that suits your needs

by Steve Aitken

### 72 Demystifying compost

Get the real scoop on your common questions

by Holly L. Scoggins





50



## DEPARTMENTS

12 Readers' tips

16 Plant picks

'Shortwood' garden phlox; 'Mickie' rockrose; Byzantine gladiolus

20 Comborama

76 Regional picks

### PLANT THIS WITH THAT

Northeast • Southeast • Midwest  
Southern Plains • Northern Plains  
Northern California • Northwest

90 Design ideas

Pathway performance

91 Captivating combination



16



76



56

## In every issue

- 6 Editor's letter
- 8 FineGardening.com
- 10 Over the fence
- 84 Pronunciation guide
- 87 Advertisers' index
- 88 Zone map

### ON THE COVER

Photo by Danielle Sherry



# Southeast



Jay Sifford is a garden designer in Charlotte, North Carolina.

## PLANT THIS



### 'Antonow's Blue' honey bush

**NAME:** *Melianthus major* 'Antonow's Blue'

**USDA HARDINESS ZONES:** 7 to 11

**SIZE:** Up to 8 feet tall and wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; well-drained soil

I have a soft spot in my heart for blue foliage and for deeply textured foliage. This South African native delivers both. Its serrated, powder blue foliage grows well into winter, with new growth opening like an accordion and smelling like peanut butter. Although 'Antonow's Blue' honey bush pushes spikes of burgundy flowers in late spring, the foliage—generally evergreen to 20°F—is the star. In cool portions of the Southeast, apply a 3-inch-deep layer of mulch in fall. To keep this plant looking its best, you may want to prune it back to the ground in early spring, but this will inhibit flowering.

'Antonow's Blue' honey bush

'Midnight Rose' heuchera

Blue oat grass

'Wine and Roses' weigela

'Midnight Rose' heuchera

## WITH THAT:



### Blue oat grass

**NAME:** *Helictotrichon sempervirens* and cvs.

**ZONES:** 4 to 9

**SIZE:** Up to 2 feet tall and wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; well-drained soil

This beautiful and well-behaved evergreen grass is the perfect foil for the honey bush in this design. It pulls the color off the honey bush and carries it to ground level, then embellishes it with a clumping spiky form all its own. While not fussy, blue oat grass needs well-drained soil and a minimum of half a day of sun to live up to its potential.



### 'Wine and Roses' weigela

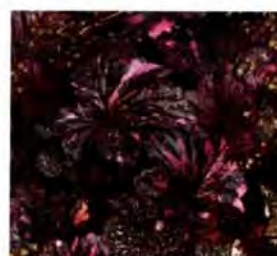
**NAME:** *Weigela florida* 'Wine and Roses'

**ZONES:** 5 to 8

**SIZE:** 4 to 5 feet tall and 4 feet wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; well-drained soil

Although this shrub is common throughout the Southeast, it earns its place in this designer combo. Dark, glossy burgundy leaves and bright tubular flowers that appear from spring into fall make 'Wine and Roses' weigela the perfect complement to honey bush and blue oat grass when placed in between the two. It attracts hummingbirds and is deer resistant.



### 'Midnight Rose' heuchera

**NAME:** *Heuchera* 'Midnight Rose'

**ZONES:** 4 to 9

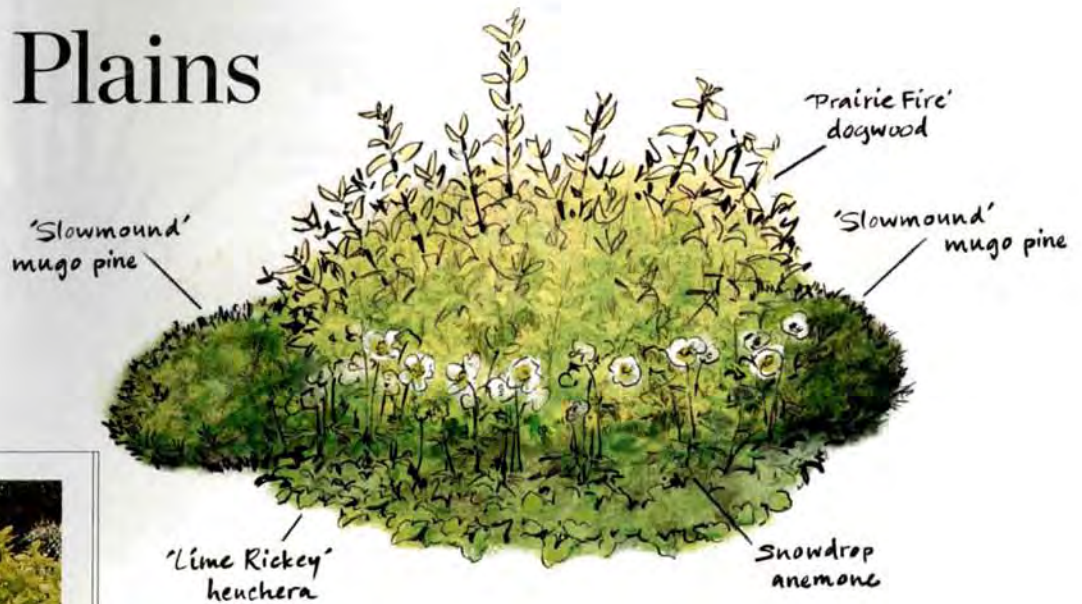
**SIZE:** 10 inches tall and 16 inches wide

**CONDITIONS:** Partial shade; moist, well-drained soil

'Midnight Rose' heuchera has burgundy leaves splashed with hot pink, making it a perfect match for our combo. The foliage repeats the colors of the weigela. In warm areas of the Southeast, give it some afternoon shade to prevent scorching.

# Northern Plains

**Katherine Kroeker** is the principal designer at Prairie Ridge Landscapes in Edmonton, Alberta.



## PLANT THIS



### 'Prairie Fire' dogwood

**NAME:** *Cornus alba* 'Prairie Fire'

**USDA HARDINESS ZONES:** 2 to 7

**SIZE:** 5 to 6 feet tall and wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; average soil

'Prairie Fire' dogwood is a low-maintenance shrub with great visual interest. I love its gorgeous chartreuse foliage, which pops against darker greens in a garden. The large heart-shaped leaves fill out nicely on the branches, giving it a fullness that still feels airy. 'Prairie Fire' provides a nice backdrop for conifers and other featured plants. I often use it to bring freshness to an otherwise dark corner of the garden. In late spring, small white flowers appear on 'Prairie Fire', followed by white berries in midsummer. Fall brings crimson leaves and bright red stalks.

## WITH THAT:



### Snowdrop anemone

**NAME:** *Anemone sylvestris*

**ZONES:** 3 to 9

**SIZE:** 12 to 18 inches tall and wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; average soil

This mountain flower is one of the first to bloom in spring, with its graceful blossom emerging from dense foliage on a single stem. In fall, the dark, glossy leaves turn burgundy, which often last beyond the first frost. I love the way snowdrop anemone fills in quickly to give an established feel to newly installed landscapes. In this combination, its green foliage allows its chartreuse companions to become a focal point.



### 'Lime Rickey' heuchera

**NAME:** *Heuchera* 'Lime Rickey'

**ZONES:** 4 to 9

**SIZE:** 8 inches tall and 1 foot wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun to partial shade; fertile, moist, well-drained soil

'Lime Rickey' heuchera instantly creates a focal point. It can tie in with other bright greens to lighten up a densely planted area. If planted en masse, it can add a modern feel to a naturalized garden. It has a ruffled texture and becomes full after a season or two. It pairs nicely with conifers and plants with dark foliage or white flowers, like snowdrop anemone.



### 'Slowmound' mugo pine

**NAME:** *Pinus mugo* 'Slowmound'

**ZONES:** 3 to 7

**SIZE:** 3 feet tall and 4 feet wide

**CONDITIONS:** Full sun; well-drained soil

This tough, versatile, drought-tolerant little pine does well in a naturalized alpine garden or a Mediterranean xeriscape and most styles in between. It is also tall enough to be a winter focal point, even after a foot or two of snow, but be sure to remove any heavy snow from its branches. Dense and pretty, 'Slowmound' mugo pine is also low maintenance.