

Dreaming of spring

Catalogs, websites roll out new and favorite offerings for spring



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Are more gardeners in my shade-blocked predicament these days? To my joy, since I garden under very large trees, plants that get by on minimal sun seem more plentiful in this year's offerings.

Check out the elegant Heronswood.com, which is following another trend by being available only online this year.

Of course, the really showy beauties still soak up the solar power. You never know when you're going to need a spectacular zinnia because your neighbor lost an old parkway tree. And another neighbor doesn't complain when I sneak a rose bush onto the property line.

This is one of our favorite times of the year. We can sit with a catalog or fire up a warm computer and plan and dream what our garden will look like in the spring.

Here are some plants that attracted our attention.

Heronswood

We miss the glossy photos that used to come from this classic, but gorgeous plants are available online. heronswood.com, (877) 674-4714.

•Brunners are so much fun in the shade, and Jennifer, white flowers edged in blue, prom-

ises "luminosity."

•If you want showy and early in your shade garden, you can't beat hellebores. Stained Glass is a double bloom with blush and purple, shown at top of page.

•It's no good complaining about gardening in shade if you haven't tried carex. Appalachian Sedge grows in part to full sun in any moisture conditions except wet.

•Hardy geraniums are not as showy as the other flower that bears the name, but check out Double Jewel, which blooms all summer in sun to part shade. Dark Reiter is named for its burgundy leaves.

•Another flower that needs more sun but tolerates part shade is the 4-foot tall campanula Kent Belle. If you need a summer flower consider this bellflower.

Burpee

•Of course Burpee puts edibles on the cover of its catalog. This time it's the Boost collection, six packets of seeds that they promise will add yummy nutrition to your table. These are three tomatoes, a pepper, lettuce and cucumber. Did you know lettuce can provide luetin and beta-carotene, both important for eyesight? burpee.com, (800) 888-1447.



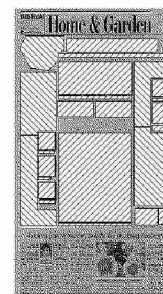
**Brunnera macrophylla
Jennifer**



**Geranium Double
Jewel**



PHOTOS COURTESY OF
HERNSWOOD.COM
Campanula Kent Belle



•First Yellow geranium might not be hardy in your garden, but if you grow bright red ones in your window over the winter, think what a few spots of yellow would add to the display!

•Zinnias are treasured for their midsummer-to-frost blooms. Pop Art Red and Yellow golden flowers are painted with red streaks.

•No one wants to see a Burpee catalog without a featured tomato. This year it's Big Daddy, bred from Big Boy. All the company promises is taste, size, disease resistance and yield. And oh, yes, they are ruby red.

•Here's a good idea for coneflower fans. Warm Summer is a mixture of different shades: orange, yellow, red, rose purple and cream. They all grow 26 to 28 inches tall.

High Country Gardens

High Country Garden specializes in plants that need sun but little water. The catalog does a good job of labeling the plants as to water tolerance so we don't plant a desert-lover in moist soil. highcountrygardens.com, (800) 925-9387.

•Kintzley's Ghost, which grows to a foot tall, is a recently discovered heirloom vining honeysuckle that originated in the Midwest. It has late spring yellow flowers, but you will probably grow it for the silver foliage.

•You have to be a little more careful not to overwater campsis radicans Red Sunset, a native trumpet vine, but these scarlet blooms are worth it.

•Don't overwater Carpeting Pin-cushion Flower, called pterocephalus depressus, either. Except for the fact that this needs sun, it seems like a perfect



Kintzley's Ghost vining honeysuckle



COURTESY OF HIGH-COUNTRYGARDEN.COM
Red Sunset native trumpet vine

groundcover around steppingstones.

Mauve pink flowers are followed by silvery-pink seed heads and dense evergreen foliage in gray green. It tolerates light foot traffic.

More companies to visit

•Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds specializes in edibles; if you have your heart set on purple tomatoes, this is your spot. rareseeds.com, (417) 924-8887.

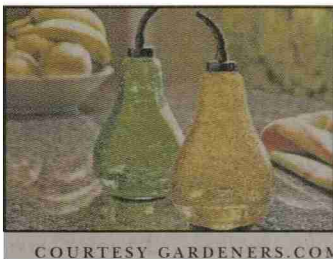
•Bluestone Perennials features its plantable pots this year. bluestoneperennials.com, (800) 852-5243.

•Comstock's also sells seeds from "old" plants, and like Baker Creek, it provides plenty of information. This Connecticut company celebrates its 201st anniversary this year. comstockferre.com, (860) 571-6590.

•Direct Gardening Association is a trade group that will give you lists of more companies where you can order seeds and plants as well as tips. One tip for beginners: Be sure you understand whether you are ordering seeds or small plants. directgardeningassociation.com, (410) 540-9830.

•Gardener's Supply offers choices in seed starters and planters. We found a showy planter and a glass pear-shaped indoor fruit fly trap so beautiful we can hardly believe it. gardeners.com, (800) 427-3363.

•Any shade gardener must get to know the charming people at Munchkin Nursery & Gardens. However, this year they are not printing a catalog, and the website is short on photos. You will have to use your imagination from the descriptions or find representative photos elsewhere. munchkinnursery.com, (812) 633-4858.

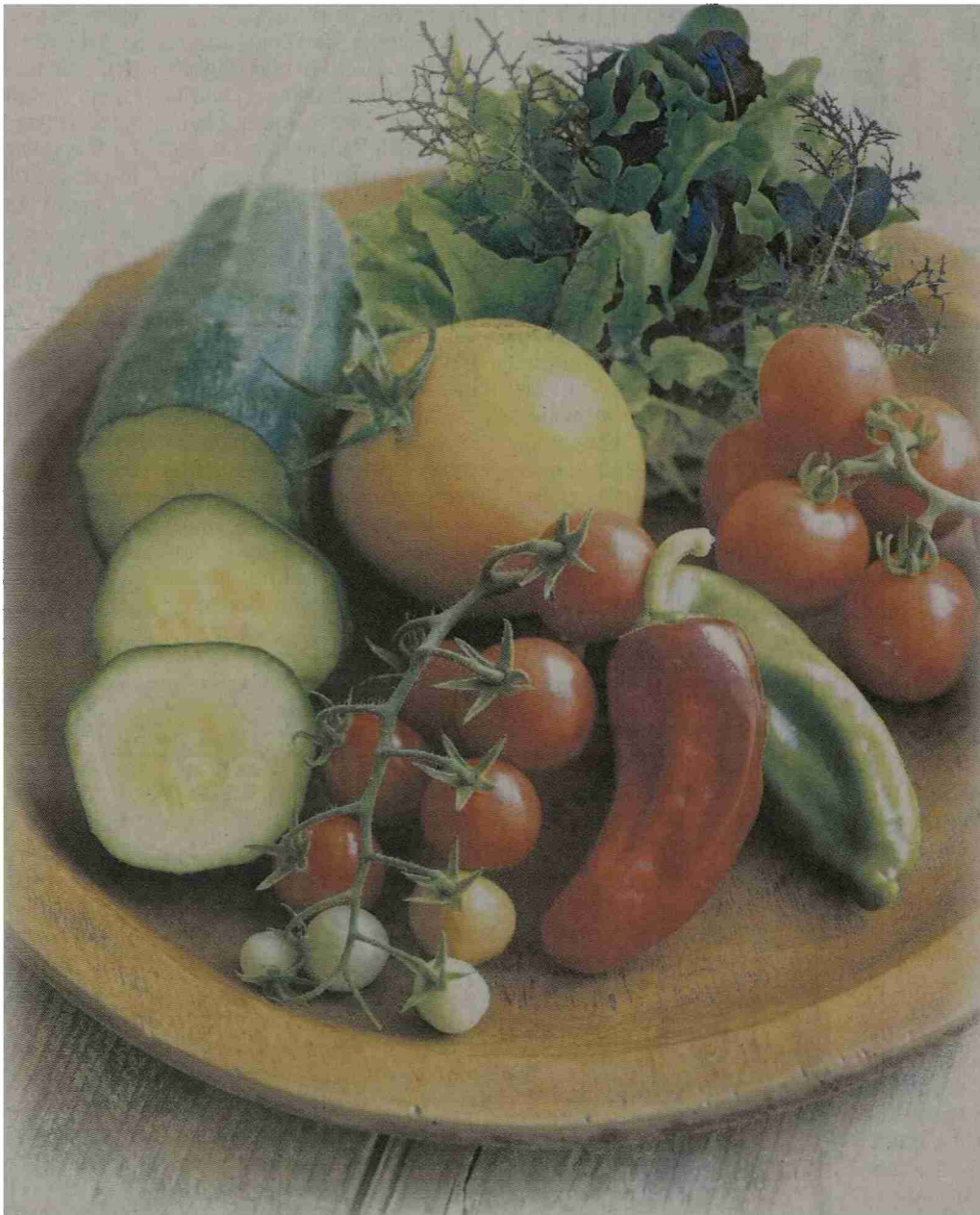


It's hard to imagine these beautiful pears are fruit fly traps — available from Gardener's Supply at gardeners.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BURPEE

From left, Zinnia Pop Art Red and Yellow, First Yellow Geranium and Warm Summer Echinacea



Burpee's **Boost** Vegetable Collection

COURTESY OF BURPEE