

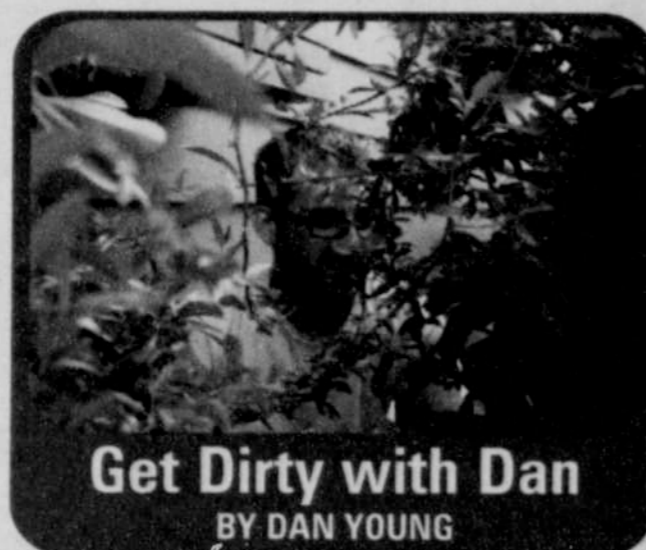
# Sustainable Gardening

Dan shows growers how to maintain without being a drain

It's been a while since I've had the pleasure of watching my garden hit its second year. I am having so much fun watching all the tiny plants I put in last year really start to fluff up and start looking like, well, a real garden. My vision of having a beautiful garden using less water, less chemicals and less time to maintain it is starting to come into its own. When I started planting last year, I wanted to have something blooming almost all the time, and when the plants weren't in bloom, they had to look good, too. As you have probably put together in the past year or so, I am not the kind of gardener who tries to save everything. If it doesn't cut it, it's gone.

I won't call myself a hardcore environmentalist, but I am not the kind of person who will water a lawn all summer to keep it green. I am all for people making wise planting choices because every little bit can help. For instance, why plant a tree from an area with summer rainfall, like a red maple, and have to water it all summer or have it think it's autumn in the beginning of August? I would love to see more trees being planted around Portland that are adapted to our climate—one without summer water.

There are so many great plants out there that thrive here and look great all summer with very little, if any, extra summer watering. I personally have taken it to one extreme and planted cacti and succulents, which I realize isn't everyone's taste. But



cobalt blue flowers. It grows fast—really fast—so stand back. It takes to tip pruning well to help control its size.

- **Ozothamnus "Silver Jubilee":** This is another plant that I can't live without. It has a soft, silver texture that combines so well with so many other plants. In May, dusty rosebuds open up to small white flowers in clusters. It can easily be kept pruned to 4 or so feet tall and wide.

- **Arctostaphylos "Louis Edmonds":** Of all the dozen or so manzanitas I planted last year, this guy has really stolen my heart. Soft, gray leaves are held on dark, reddish-brown, smooth stems. Its small, early blooming flowers are a first stop for hummingbirds.

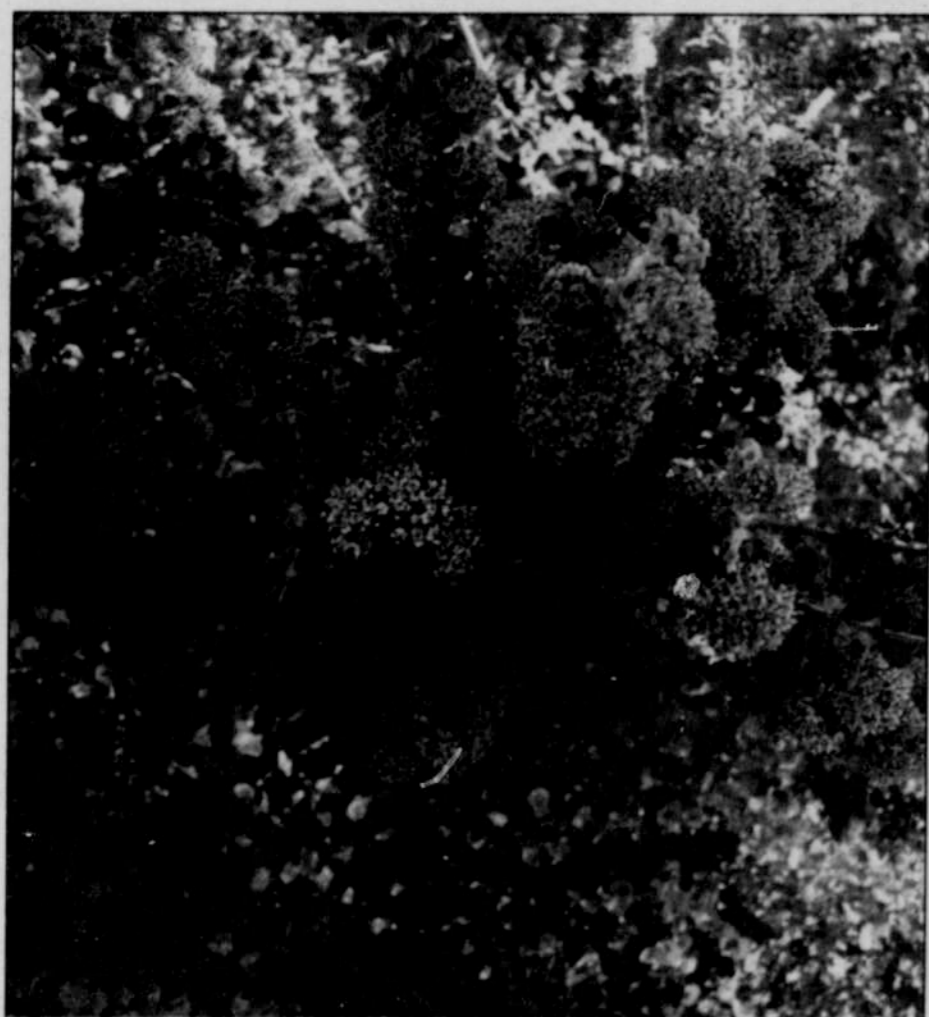
- **Anisacanthus wrightii:** There is one Texas native I can't stand, and I think you might have an idea who I'm talking about, but this one I really like. A new addition to my garden, this one has really pleased me. This woody perennial grows to about 3 feet tall and wide and in late summer is covered in red-orange trumpet-shaped flowers. Full sun, please.

- **Salvia x jamensis "Sierra San Antonio":** This perennial salvia just loves to bloom, from June until frost. There is never a shortage of its cute salmon and soft yellow flowers.

- **Erodium chrysanthum:** I never would have thought at first glance that I would like this plant, but I tried it anyway, and it made my list, right? A ferny ball of foliage is the perfect complement to its pale yellow flowers, which keep on coming.

- **Delosperma "Mesa Verde":** I have planted a number of ice plants through the years, but this one is my favorite. Inch-wide apricot flowers poke up from its oh-so-squeezable leaves from March well into the fall. In 2006, the last flower opened Dec. 1, which I thought was a bit strange, but boosted its cred in my low-maintenance garden. ☐

To reach DIRTY DAN, who will answer any and all of your gardening questions, simply e-mail [dirtydthegardener@yahoo.com](mailto:dirtydthegardener@yahoo.com).



Build a low-maintenance relationship with the *Ceanothus* "Dark Star."

I haven't forgotten about the pretty things, too. I have helped out a few of my friends with planting their gardens, and they always ask me, "How much do I need to water all this?" When I tell them very little or just until you see it start to grow, they are always happy.

I'm making up my own version of a sustainable (everyone's favorite word) landscape, which doesn't include planting only natives and a vegetable garden. Here is a list of some of favorite plants that do great in Portland with only what mother nature gives them.

- **Ceanothus "Dark Star":** For the month of April, this 8-foot by 8-foot shrub covers itself with

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