

gardener's book nook

Marty Figley

"Perfect Plant, Perfect Garden" (Summit Books \$24.95 hardcover, \$14.95 trade paper) contains thorough descriptions of 200 of the hardiest and most easily cultivated plants and how to grow them. The author, Anne Scott James, is a veteran British gardener who includes personal insights and even some history about the plants.

The book is divided into three basic garden conditions — sunny, shady and container — with each category subdivided for normal, moist and dry conditions. Therefore it is easy for the reader to determine the condition in his location and turn to the appropriate chapter in the book for reference.

Many times, along with growing conditions and requirements, design tips are included, such as: "The Venetian sumach or smoke tree in the variety 'Royal Purple' makes a good background to border flowers, especially white ones."

After the description of the smoke tree (Cotinus coggygria), the author continues, "The 'Royal Purple' variety enhances the whiteness of roses, lilies, delphiniums and, mallow and other tall border plants, the pale pinks and blues also look well against the sombre background."

There could be silver plants, like Santolina incana, in the foreground." This makes you want to go out and prepare an area for such an exquisite sounding planting.

IN THE pot garden section, James suggests Begonia semperflorens as a natural choice for a windowbox with white, pink or red flowers. She tells us that the white forms contrast well with heliotrope, petargoniums, fuchsias and other plants of vivid color.

She also warns that when using the red and pink forms, think out the color scheme carefully to avoid horrid color clashes. Ivy-leaved geraniums as suitable companions are suggested. After the begonias have finished blooming, early spring bulbs can be planted immediately in their place. This well-illustrated book gives good, sound advice with references to many plants, and makes the reader want to explore and expand the garden possibilities.

The use of botanical names may be confusing to the novice, but common names are often used, too. The cross-referencing in the index makes the "looking" a little easier.

ORTHO HAS done it again. Their new book, "Creative Home

Landscaping" (\$24.95), is a large, hardcover volume that will be a worthy addition to your garden library. The text, by professionals, is clearly written in a manner that will make you feel that the experts are with you every step of the way.

Landscape planning, engineering fundamentals and problem solving; construction ideas; selecting and installing ground covers, shrubs and trees; ideas for new sites and old ones that need sprucing up are all included.

How to begin to plan a design and how to install many of the structures you will be making, concerns for such things as for utility lines, and the smallest detail, are addressed in the informative book.

ALL KINDS of situations that are connected to landscaping are included — watering, lighting, paths and walkways, pets, play areas, even

how to cut a brick and other construction tips.

Formal gardens, low-maintenance gardens and many others are considered. Storage areas, most often overlooked, can be incorporated successfully into outdoor living plans.

As a follow-up to the installation of the "structures," a plant guide features color photographs, growing zone maps, habits and growing conditions for more than 400 ground covers, trees, shrubs, hedges, vines and lawn grasses, with instructions for planting and care.

This is a book that I believe will be used and loaned to friends to help and encourage them after they see what a fine job you have done with your property.

It is slightly larger than the traditional soft-cover Ortho books. "Creative Home Landscaping" is the most complete book of this kind that I have seen in a long time. I give it a four-star rating.



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olin for nine years in New York where she gave recitals in Carnegie Recital Hall and at Lincoln Center and Columbia University. Recently she has been organist and music director at area churches. She began her carillon studies with Beverly Buchanan in 1984.

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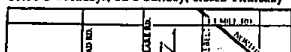
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