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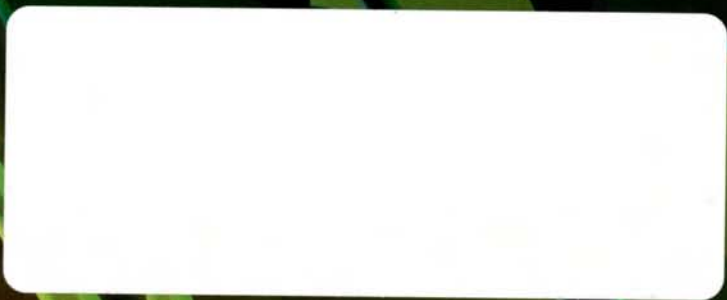
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SMART IDEAS FOR INDEPENDENT RETAILERS | MAGAZINE



11 for 2011

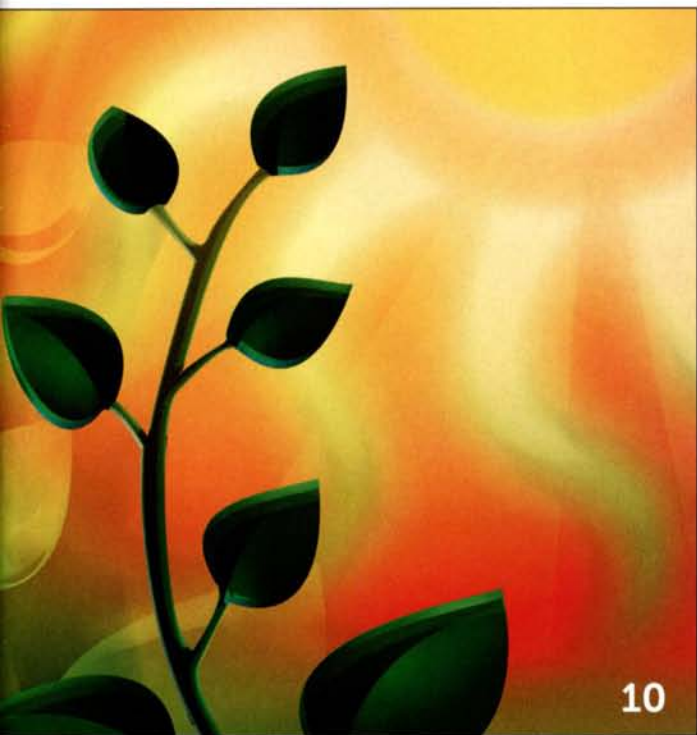
The year's hottest
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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT: Garden Center Products & Supplies

Get a head start on the fall buying season with GCP&S

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11 for 2011

The year's hottest product trends by region

BY YALE
YOUNGBLOOD,
EDITOR

While the recent selling season wasn't stellar in many parts of the country—thanks (but no thanks) to a still-wobbling economy and weather woes—garden retailers still found innovative items that were effective in attracting customers. In fact, between the plants and the products that complement them, 2011 became at the very least the Year of the Interesting Garden. And in some regions, where Ma Nature decided to move through unnoticed, hot plants and decorative items teamed to make a trip to the garden center a feast for the senses. As the summer season drew to a close, the *Garden Center* staff polled hundreds of retailers to see what product and plant trends emerged. What we discovered was that while the year as a whole wasn't hot, some items definitely were. For example ...

Hot plant: Succulents
Hot product: Rock art

Given that drought-tolerant plants were in high demand in many regions, plants such as *Sedum kamtschaticum* from Simply Succulents became garden mainstays.

This beautiful ground cover can span 6 feet, with masses of yellow flowers in July. It's also known for its unusual red and gold coloring in the fall. It makes a great addition to rock gardens. www.simplysucculents.com

Some decorative items, like this rock and metal rabbit from Green Piece Wire Art's new Set in Stone line, are so simple that you're tempted to say, "I wish I had thought of that!" www.greenpiecewireart.com



Hot plant: Heucherella 'Gold Zebra'
Hot product: Fairy Gardens

What had visitors' heads snapping at Terra Nova Nurseries' trials this year? It was *H. 'Gold Zebra'*—definitely a plant with a twist.

This plant's bright yellow, feathery leaves are boldly marked with dark-red. Its a standout in containers or "front and center" of the perennial border. www.terranovanurseries.com



Small was HUGE this year, as the fairy garden craze took over most of the country. This design by Echo Valley shows just how much punch a small garden can pack—when packed with the right fairy components. Magical indeed! www.echovalley.com



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