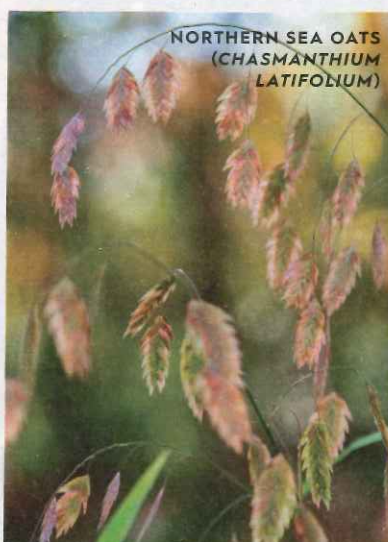




THE LATE SHOW



VIBURNUM
'MARIESII'



NORTHERN SEA OATS
(CHASMANTHIUM
LATIFOLIUM)



QUEEN OF THE
PRAIRIE
(FILIPENDULA
RUBRA
'VENUSTA')

FORGET GOURDS AND CORNSTALKS, THIS GARDEN'S AUTUMN SHOW STARS BERRIES AND SEED HEADS, ROSY HYDRANGEA PANICLES, AND FEATHERY PLUMES OF ORNAMENTAL GRASSES.



james Golden didn't set out to make a garden that hits a crescendo in the fall. He was looking for plants that would survive the heavy, wet clay of his New Jersey property and stand up to deer. "I loved the house, but it was a horrible place for a garden," he remembers.

James had no master plan, but he was going for a naturalistic prairie look and had observed that plants grow in generous groupings of the same variety in that habitat. So he began by planting large numbers of a few varieties of grasses and perennials. Some natives, such as Joe Pye weed, took off as soon as their roots hit the unimproved soil. However, when few of the native prairie grasses survived his soil conditions, he substituted similar-looking imports that were happy to grow in clay. James adds new plants each year, and self-seeders such as inula, solidago, and aster have become a handy design tool, adding to the naturalistic effect.

Crushed-stone paths cutting through the vegetation provide a strong backbone and hold the loose plant groupings together. By fall, the plants are 8 feet or taller, creating privacy and a sense of wildness.

James is more interested in line, form, and texture than fleeting flowers, but the garden is always colorful. Structural shrubs such as viburnums flower in spring then berry up and have good foliage color in fall. Perennials that flower late or have striking seed heads ensure beauty even into winter.

Unlike many gardens that limp into fall, James' carefully considered plantings finish the season at full gallop.



A CIRCLE OF
PAINTED TREE
TRUNKS ADDS
SCULPTURE TO A
GRASSY AREA.



CUTLEAF
STAGHORN
SUMAC



INULA MAGNIFICA
'SONNENSTRAHL'



LEYCESTERIA
FORMOSA
'NOTBRUCE'



'LIME LIGHT'
HYDRANGEA

GOLDEN RULES

James Golden shares his tips for creating a prairie-style garden that peaks in autumn.

■ **THINK AHEAD** In spring, buy at least one fall-blooming plant for every two spring or summer performers.

■ **RELY ON GRASSES** A natural prairie is at least 80 percent grasses; in a garden, strive for half or more. Fill gaps with native flowers.

■ **INCLUDE SHRUBS** Plant species with fall berries, such as viburnum, winterberry, and beautyberry.

■ **LEAVE PLANTS STANDING** They add sculptural silhouettes in winter. Seed heads feed and shelter birds. ■

Go natives They're super-tough plants. BHG.com/NativeBenefits



ROYAL FERN
(OSMUNDA
REGALIS)

A ROW OF
ADIRONDACK
CHAIRS SITS ON
THE TERRACE FOR
COMPANIONABLE
VIEWING.



SEVEN-SON FLOWER
(HEPTACODIUM
MICONIODES)

