PHS Annual Awards

FROM FEB 95

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has been giving annual awards (The Styer Awards) to woody plants for the last five years. These trees and shrubs are evaluated by a team of growers and landscape designers. They look for underused but available plants.

This year’s Gold Medals went to two native trees that sound wonderful:

Aesculus pavia, the red buckeye, is a horse chestnut resistant to those diseases that plague other varieties. This small tree does well in the sun or light shade.

Halesia diptera magniflora the second, is a large flowered silverbell: we have several of these at Lee Garden and their bloom in mid-May is a joy.

Hepacodium miconoides, the Seven Son flower tree from China, is on my spring “get list”. This is a small shrub with fragrant white flowers in the fall.

They also name Ilex verticillata, Winter Red, as their favorite member of this increasingly popular shrub. Don’t forget though that you need a pollinator nearby.

Joan Sargent, a longtime member and master gardener who passed away in August 2012; wrote about 24 gardening columns for NCBL through the years for our newsletter. We are reprinting them again.

Aesculus pavia, known as red buckeye or firecracker plant, is a species of deciduous flowering plant. The small tree or shrub is native to the southern and eastern parts of the United States.

Halesia diptera, commonly known as two-winged silverbell, is a small deciduous tree or large shrub that is native to floodplains, stream banks, wet woods and swampy areas.

Above: Hepacodium miconoides Temple of Bloom seven-son flower is a beautiful, easy to grow small tree which simply can’t be matched for year-round beauty. Blooms late summer to early fall.

At right: Ilex verticillata, commonly called winterberry, is a deciduous holly that is native to eastern North America where it typically occurs in swamps, damp thickets, low woods and along ponds and streams. It produces copious amounts of bright red berries ... that the birds love.