



## Book Review by Margaret Hodgson

***Heucheras and Heucherellas***, Coral Bells and Foamy Bells, by Dan Heims and Grahame Ware

Timber Press, Inc. Portland, Oregon, 2005.  
208 pages, approx. 49 pages of colour photos (116 plates), Nine chapters in total, followed by a very short section on Sources and then an Index of Heucheras and Heucherellas. \$37.95  
ISBN 0-88192-702-3

**Dan Heims** is president of Terra Nova Nurseries, a wholesale nursery specializing in choice perennials; he founded his nursery after a career as a horticultural educator, plant breeder, and owner of a “design and build” landscape business. His articles, photographs, and plant discussions have been featured in print, television, and radio throughout the world. Heims was the recipient of the Royal Horticultural Society’s Reginald Cory Memorial Cup in 2002, which recognized his achievement in Heuchera breeding. Terra Nova’s heucheras won nine Awards of Garden Merit from RHS in 2003. Dan Heims lives and gardens in Portland, Oregon.

**Grahame Ware** is a freelance writer and broadcaster for Canadian radio, television, and print media. A lifelong gardener, he is a trained horticulturist and has used heucheras extensively for over a decade in his, as well as his clients’,

gardens. He lives in a log and straw bale home that he designed outside of Vernon, British Columbia.

***Heucheras and Heucherellas***, or, as the subtitle calls them, coral bells, and their hybrids, foamy bells, have become transformed from diminutive forest-dwelling plants with tiny white flowers and unremarkable foliage to take their places amongst the most popular, colourful and award-winning plants in today’s gardens around the world.

The two authors not only provide background on the wild species of Heuchera; they also tell how these plants were developed into the garden stars that they are today, with an appreciative nod to the breeders who revolutionized the plants’ characteristics.

The book’s main feature is extensive listings of the hundreds of choice selections and hybrids available commercially; practical chapters on garden care, propagation, and design uses round out this fascinating account.

The colour plates occur right at the beginning of the book from page 7 through page 64, before the main chapters begin. In Chapter One, we discover the correct pronunciation for “Heuchera” is “HOY-ker-uh”, named Johann Heinrich von Heucher, (1677-1747), professor of medicine and botany at Wittenberg University in Germany. Such interesting detail is added about the early explorers and botanists who visited, as early as 1791, the northwest coast of what was finally named Vancouver Island, collecting various species of Heucheras.

As the book moves through the chapters describing the Heuchera cultivars and the Heucherellas, the colour plates are used for reference. Unfortunately, not all the descriptions have an accompanying photograph.

As is the description of the Heucheras, the authors also follow a very logical sequence in the treatment of the Heucherellas, starting in Chapter 6, some descriptions referring back to colour photographs in the colour plates. Chapters 7 and 8 of the book deal with culture and care of the plants, plus propagation of the plants by seed, division and cuttings, and tissue culture. The last chapter of the book suggests garden uses and combinations that are very pleasing with Heucheras, such as various bronze plants, silver combinations, yellow plants. There are also suggestions for Heucheras in floral design, the winter garden or the woodland garden or hanging basket.