

The late SHOW

Flowers and foliage create interest into autumn in this small suburban garden

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Orange cactus dahlias and pots of pink pelargoniums add splashes of colour to this narrow garden, which has a lovely view of the spire of the local church

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Ceratostigma plumbaginoides has red-tinted leaves in autumn, and pretty, bright blue flowers



Anne enjoys wandering through her low-maintenance garden

For many gardeners, outside space without a lawn is as unimaginable as autumn without leaves. But for Anne Godfrey, 47, it was the next natural step in the creation of a small, low-maintenance garden at her home in the Hertfordshire village of Bengoe. Instead she replaced the grass with gravel and widened the borders so vibrant colour sparkles well into autumn – and tricks the eye into seeing a much larger, abundantly lush plot.

GRASS-FREE ZONE

The garden was owned by my partner, Steven Machin's parents. It measures nine metres by 30.5 metres and when I moved in it was completely different, with a mix of climbing roses, an old apple tree, narrow borders and broken concrete paths. But beneath the rubble we discovered textbook soil – free-draining through the top half metre, above a band of clay that retains the moisture.

For a long time we'd been nibbling away at the lawn to widen the borders and what little was left was ruined by our terrier, Myrtle. Gradually we enlarged the flower borders and the lawn dwindled to such an extent that, finally, we got rid of it altogether. I laid a gravel path up the centre of the garden and it's much less work – I can just wander down it, a cup of tea in hand, and enjoy the planting.

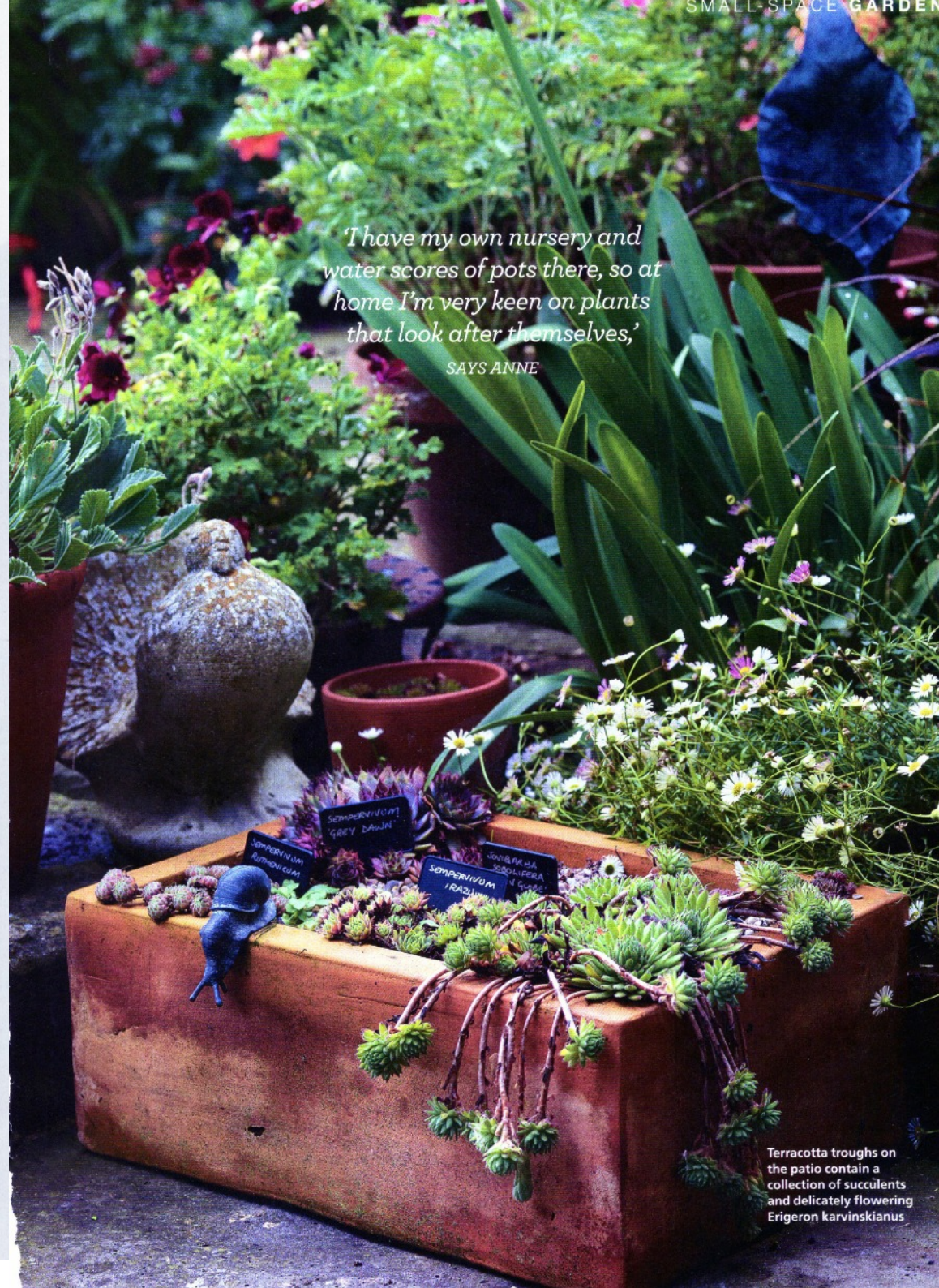
FLOWERING SEASON

At this time of year there's a lovely view from the patio, which is edged in vivid orange dahlias, pink salvias, pelargoniums and



The gravel path runs through deep autumnal borders of grasses and perennials

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'I have my own nursery and water scores of pots there, so at home I'm very keen on plants that look after themselves,'

SAYS ANNE

Terracotta troughs on the patio contain a collection of succulents and delicately flowering *Erigeron karvinskianus*