

A vibrant rooftop garden scene featuring a variety of potted plants. In the foreground, there are several large terracotta pots containing different types of trees and shrubs, including a tall, thin evergreen and a bushy plant with yellow-green foliage. A small Buddha head sculpture sits on a brick base among the plants. The garden is set on a wooden deck, and a body of water is visible in the background. The word "IMAGINE" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

IMAGINE

**...a year-round display that needs very little
care and gets better every year**



The challenge: Starting with a blank canvas, **design a deck or patio garden with winter structure and summer color.**



Inspiration: **an English gardening book**

Adapted **to your space**



🌳 How? Buy different kinds and shapes or even dig a few from your garden.

🌳 Repot them in an assortment of frost-proof containers.



Evergreens are categorized into broadleaf (holly, boxwood) and needled (pine, spruce, juniper) types. Shapes include conical/pyramidal, columnar, mounded, weeping, spreading.

- 🌿 Set up the containers in a space that deer can't reach, ideally outside a window so you can enjoy them year-round.
- 🌳 Add a watering can or sculpture.
- 🌲 Why not add a few more evergreens every year?

The result...

You can't stop adding to it!





Get started: **with five evergreens**

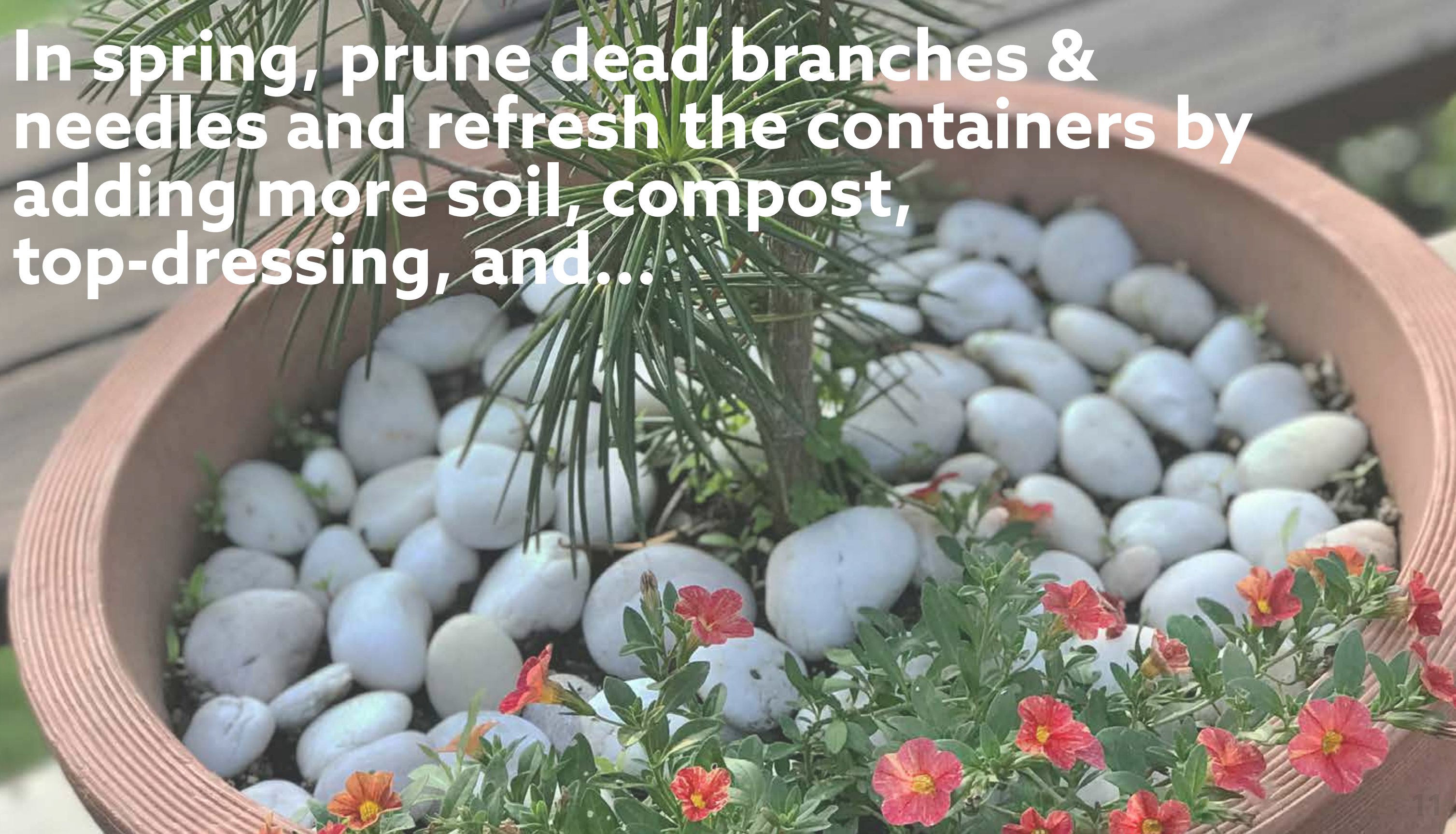
A photograph of a winter garden scene. In the foreground, several potted plants, including small evergreens and flowering branches, are covered in a thick layer of snow. The pots are in various colors, including blue and terracotta. In the background, a calm pond reflects the snowy landscape, with a wooden fence and snow-covered trees lining the far shore. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

**Wonderful
in winter.**



Still in good shape when the snow melts.

In spring, prune dead branches & needles and refresh the containers by adding more soil, compost, top-dressing, and...



A vibrant garden scene featuring a variety of potted plants and decorative containers. In the foreground, there's a large, light-colored ceramic pot with a Buddha head sculpture, a colorful ceramic pot with a floral design, and a blue pot with a succulent. Behind them, several large, rectangular, reddish-brown planters hold various green plants and small blue flowers. The background is filled with more greenery, including a tall, thin tree and a large, bushy plant. The overall atmosphere is lush and well-maintained.

**add
decorative
containers
planted
with
annuals
and
perennials.**



**Change it around.
Enjoy at night, too.**

More tips:

- 🌲 Put big containers on rolling stands so you can move them around easily.
- 🌲 Set small ones on pot feet.
- 🌲 Try using risers like bricks or cement blocks.
- 🌲 When the evergreens get too big, you can plant them in the garden (and spray for deer if necessary).

**Those containers
look huge.
What about for
a small patio or terrace?**

Our virtual demo begins in an area 36 x 12",
the size of many plant stands.





Keep container sizes at 12" or smaller.
Choose dwarf evergreens.
Add small-scale sculptures. Group tightly.
Have fun with ceramic containers and annuals.

**Get creative with
flowering annuals.**



Right after our Plant Sale is the perfect time to make the containers—including some with natives.

And our club has the talent to show you how!





Wait! Don't deer love native plants?

Yes, they're highly nutritious, tasty, packed with high water content, and easier to digest than many exotic species. A natural, year-round food source, natives provide necessary nutrients for deer survival, antler growth, and fawn rearing. **So...**

**Put them
in a pot!**



Benefits:

- 🌿 Better for the planet.
- 🌸 Will attract pollinators like butterflies to your deck or patio. Just remember to place where deer can't reach
- 🌳 Just like they do in the garden, will return every year.
- 🌲 Natural beauty.



**The pot
alone
can be
beautiful.**



Even more beautiful **with evergreens.**

Consider:

- ✿ **Shape and size of pot.** Tall pots hold more soil allowing for healthy root growth, better drainage and aeration, and longer life.
- 🌲 **Soil.** We like bagged organic potting soil, amended with vermiculite and compost.
- ✿ **Drainage.** Pots must have a drainage hole, which can be covered with mesh to keep the soil inside.
- 🌱 **Water.** Evergreens are happy with rainfall and snow in the winter, but in July-August you may need to water the containers with flowering plants daily.

 **Feeding.** Osmocote mixed with the potting soil can feed all year. Each spring, remove the top inch of soil and mix in a tablespoon of fresh Osmocote.

 **Pruning.** Lightly prune evergreens to desired (natural) shape. Cut away any dead needles. Deadhead flowering plants to keep blooms coming. Insect damage can be cut away and treated with organic spray such as Bon-Neem.

 **Color and Texture.** Do the plants harmonize with each other, the containers you've chosen, and with the other elements in the space?

Example #1:

More than one plant in a pot?

Evergreen: False Cypress

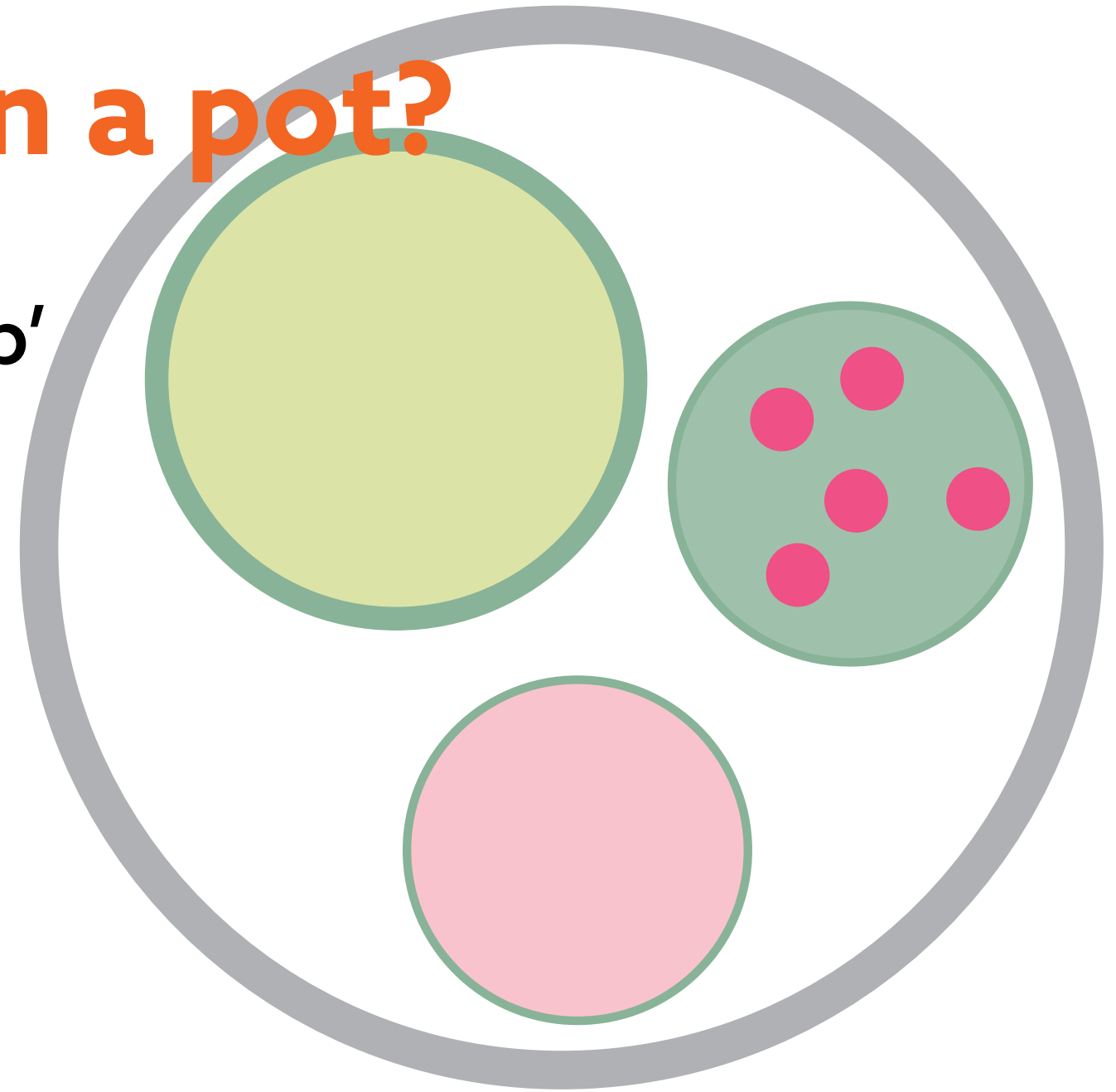
Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Golden Mop'

Perennial: English Daisy

Bellis perennis Habanera Red*

Perennial: Saxifrage

*Saxifraga x Arendsii**



*Not native but attracts pollinators



This container was inspired by the thriller, filler, spiller concept.

Example
#1:

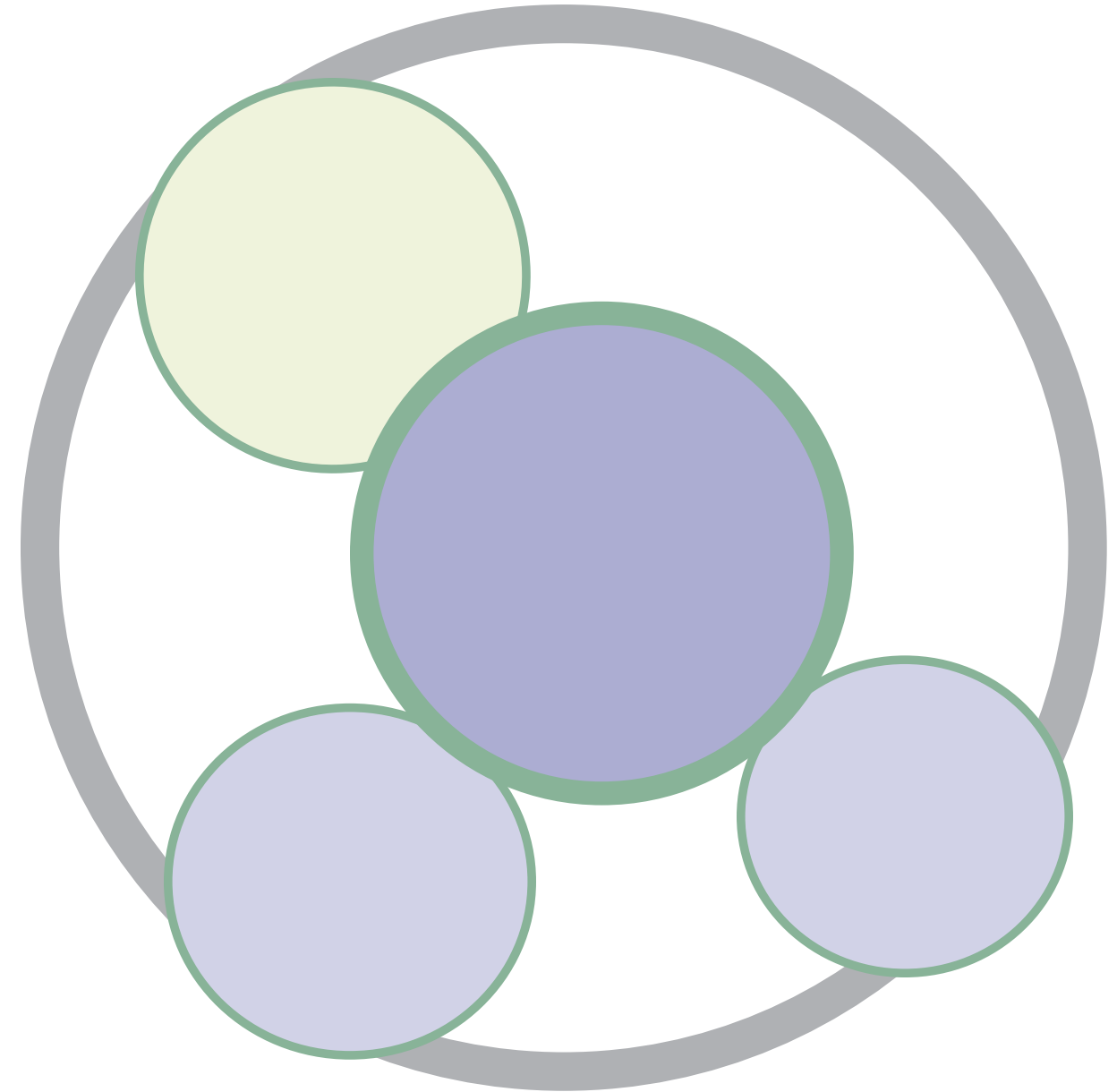
Example #2:

Natives for part shade

Thriller: Jacob's Ladder
polemonium 'Heaven Scent'

Filler: Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*) and/or Yarrow (*Achillea*)

Spiller: Creeping Speedwell
Veronica 'Waterperry Blue'





**Are you ready
to create *your* year-round deck-
patio-terrace garden?**

for more information:

 See the slide show on container gardening with native plants by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia

[https://mgnv.org/mg-virtual-classroom/
container-gardening-natives-video-2025](https://mgnv.org/mg-virtual-classroom/container-gardening-natives-video-2025)