

JUNE'S GARDEN

Being influenced by the spring garden magazines to use this year's suggested color combinations when buying annuals to fill the container plantings, and to reshape my garden in a more defined style, I made long lists for this summer's garden.

These plans were forgotten the minute I visited the garden store. My cart was soon filled with a full pallet of color. In the garden last year's plants had already sprouted. They could not be disturbed. Alas, another year of wild-like disorder.

I was relieved when reading a garden magazine that my garden did have a 'named style'. The magazine called it an "American Cottage Garden". The writer described it as an informal style of gardening which produces a glorious potpourri that reflects the owner's joy in the variety of flowers and colors of plants.

The term "Cottage Garden" originated in England. The book titled "English Country Gardens", by Ethone Clarke and Clay Perry, described this style as, Quote; "These gardeners are 'mad enthusiasts', and we give them that appellation with special affection; they grow anything they can get their hands on, 'just to see what sprouts', and they can turn any space into a garden." Unquote.

Since I live in America, and my garden surrounds a cottage-like house, and I inherited the desire to enthusiastically 'see what sprouts', from my English ancestors, I decided to call my garden an "American English Cottage Garden". I'll also be content and quit making planned lists, but, the other morning, as I was looking at my Pine tree, with clippers in my hand, contemplating whether to start trimming the fast growing candles, my neighbor stopped to talk. She asked, "Did you take lessons on how to trim your Pine tree from the gardeners that take care of Portland's Japanese Gardens? Your Pine tree resembles some trees I saw there."

I thanked her and confessed, "No, I just planted the tree too close to the house, and I have to prune it so I can see out the window," and thought, I have an idea, I'll build a small pond, plant grasses and weeping Cherry trees, add a few moss covered rocks and a pagoda and. . .

Our weather here on the coast has usually no prolonged extremes of heat or cold. Moist air and strong winds, and poor drainage are primarily the problems we have to solve.

When I first started my garden I had all the above problems, and I lived 175 ft. from the ocean front. I had drainage tile installed. To shelter the yard from prevailing winds I mounded the soil around the perimeter and planted trees and shrubs and built a fence. This helped to baffle the winds. In the rest of the yard I built raised beds.

Unless you live on a slope, the easiest solution for poor drainage is to build raised beds. The soil in them also heats up faster for earlier planting.

It is wise to have a plan, particularly if you are planting trees or shrubs. Research the height and width of their full growth, and if they are suitable to withstand the salt air and winds. Our local nurseries will help you to select the best plants to use for your location, whether you live 25 ft. from the ocean front or blocks East.

To give my summer flower garden the untamed appearance of a cottage garden, I scatter seeds of Calendula, Godetia, Cosmos, Alysum, varieties of Poppies, Forget-Me-Nots, and Dill, to name a few, among the perennials. To tone down the brilliance I add white leaved plants or Artemisias, Santalina, Stachy's lantana (Lamb's Tongue),

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WILDLIFE ON THE EDGE

APRIL 1995
SPRING MIGRATIONS

April marks the migratory return of many varieties of species to the Upper Oregon Coast. Two prime examples are the Tufted Puffin (left) and the Summer Tourist (right). Though to the layman telling many of the arrivals apart may prove a daunting task, in fact there are subtle differences apparent to the careful observer. The S. Tourist for instance, often appears earlier in the season and will remain longer. The T. Puffin lives mainly off fish and squid, while the S. Tourist dines on these as well as an assortment of sweet, sugary foodstuffs, flat sausage- and tomato-Paste-laden breads, and double tall espresso drinks. The Summer Tourist spends much of its time in clumps in the middle of the sidewalk.

The breeding habits among different species differ considerably from type to type also. While many scientists believe that often entire flocks of the Summer Tourist may be sprung of only one breeding pair, the Tufted Puffin and Pigeon Guillemot (left) lay usually one and never more than two eggs in a season; devote their energies to raising the chick(s) in a seemly fashion and resign themselves to the near-certainty of losing one or more of their babies to natural causes as well.

Spring also proves itself to be the season of the shiftings of such huge entities as the Wapiti* and Winnebago.* One has wheels; however either may sport antlers. The difference will be the disappearance of the former back up into the (soon to be shorn) hills, and the insinuation of the latter into the no-parking zones.

* Sometimes erroneously known as Elk * People of the Filthy Waters

Sage and other herbs.

I added Lady's Mantle and the grey leaved Lychnis that blooms bright pink. Both these plants have scattered their seed throughout my garden and paths, but they are easy to control.

If all fails, there is always Montbretia. You would be surprised how many visitors ask about this plant and even stop on their way home to buy them at Raintree Nursery. I do like the more fragile bright red flowered Crocosmia curtonus 'Lucifer' (Montbretia). It grows to about 2 1/2 ft. tall and should be used as a background plant. Then there are always Nasturtiums.

I would like to thank some unknown admirers of my garden who left a poem and message in my paperbox and share the card with you readers.

People who love flowers are a strange and crazy lot. Instead of going shopping they'd rather fill a pot.

They'd rather dig and plant they'd rather pinch back buds, instead of velveteen or lace, they'd choose their garden gloves.

Signed, P.

The message read;

Hurry. . .

I'm anticipating hanging over your backyard fence again soon.

Signed, An Admirer

To the unknown admirers;

Thank you admirers of my garden full of flowers, come forth and show your faces so together we can learn about Foxgloves, Forget-Me-Nots, Freesias, and Ferns.

It's time to plan and plant. Good luck, I hope you have more discipline than I do. I'm off to the garden store again. . . .

Please send your gardening experiences, comments or questions about coastal gardening to;

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