

JUNE'S GARDEN

"And can all the flowers talk?" asked Alice. "As well as you can," said the Tiger Lily.
- Lewis Carroll

Blooms of bright blue hydranges and pink Apple Blossom ascallonia were mixed with Pine trees growing along the property's edge and framed a two story replica of an early 17th century colonial style house. Honey-suckle climbed the roofed gate and twined through the Pine trees. A small building with window boxes held red geraniums, greeting people as they walked by. The small building was originally built for cars but with added wooden decor and flowers, it looked more like a playhouse or garden shed. Behind the gate, a curved path leading to the front door was bordered by tall stalks of orange Tiger lilies. The lilies grew so thickly, shoulder high, visitors had to weave their way through the blossoms as they had been warned the pollen would stain their clothing. Earlier in the spring, the gate and path were surrounded by low growing buttercup-like flowers.

It was the early sixties when I met the lady who lived in that house. Her name was Dorothy Lindsey and she was a teacher and artist of beauty. Her home and garden reflected her talent.

Years later when I built my garden here at the coast, Dorothy shared the seeds of the Tiger lilies, buttercup-like flowers she called Meadowfoam, and cuttings of the hydranges and escallonia. Dorothy's flowers and a package of nastertium seeds were the first flowers in my garden and I have kept her tradition of sharing the plants and seeds with others. If you have visited Cannon Beach City Hall in the last month, Meadowfoam has been blooming in the planters at the entrance.

The Latin name for Meadowfoam is *Limnanthes douglasii*; it is also commonly called Poached Egg. It grows best in the crevices between paving stones or bordering a path where its roots are shaded. The Tiger lilies' Latin name is *Lilium lancifolium splendens*. They grow quite tall, 4 ft or more. The seeds are produced on the stem at the base of each leaf. When the seeds mature they drop to the ground and sprout at the base of the mother plant. They are easy to transplant. The new plants bloom in about 3 or 4 years.

In 1981, after Dorothy died, her son Peter brought me some calendula seeds from Dorothy's garden. I still have calendulas that have reseeded from Peter's gift. A gift that I cherish.

A few other flowers that grow in my garden that were given to me by friends are: Yellow flowering alstromeria from Carolyn Locke. She and Louise Lindsey had a weaving shop for many years in Cannon Beach.

Virginia Draper shared her mother's Japanese dark purple iris. Her mother's name was Edna Zaugg. Mrs. Zaugg was given the iris by her friend Kitty Kellogg. The Kelloggs bought their property and built their house around 1908-1910. The iris has quite a history.

Betty Gregg gave me seeds from her double flowered lavender poppies. She had received the seeds from a friend in Skykomish, WA. She carried the seeds with her for thirty years in a sealed package before she planted them in her garden. She didn't dream they would grow after all those years. The seeds from those flowers not only grow in her yard but in many more yards, including mine. They grow to about 2 or 3 ft. tall and some have double blooms.

A low growing perennial penstemon that blooms a violet blue, was given to me by Alice and Robbie Robinson. The penstemon had been dug from the hills around Cannon

Beach.

The "Mystery Plants", Giant Camas, from Judy Osburn's garden, are a mystery as Judy does not remember planting them. When Judy cultivated a perennial garden where a lawn had been, tall, green, sword-like leaves appeared in the spring and later bloomed tall stalks of deep blue flowers. Judy and I tried to dig out a clump. After many attempts, we could not find the bulbs. Her son finally dug some for me to transplant; they were 2 or 3 ft. deep. Since our Native Americans used camas bulbs for food, and since there is evidence that they had camped along the coast, one wonders if this was one of the areas where they gathered camas roots. It can be evasive to grow in a garden but the bloom is a beautiful blue colour.

When I moved here from Bainbridge, WA, I was given a plant, *Companola garganica*, from a neighbor, Mr. Taylor, a retired ferry Captain. This plant grows in the shady part of my yard and blooms blue star-like flowers around the 4th of July. When it blooms I think of Mr. Taylor and his ceramic seagull that he had on a stump in his vegetable garden and used as a scarecrow. Each season Mr. Taylor would adorn the seagull with different hats alerting us of the seasons. The 4th of July hat was a tall stovepipe style with streamers of red/white/blue ribbons tied to it. The ribbons would flutter in the breeze and I could see the seagull and hat from my kitchen window and watch the crows scatter when a breeze blew.

My memory garden and I have long conversations. The Tiger lilies were right, flowers do talk if you give them a chance. They can tell many stories.

Question: How do you keep plants in container pots healthy?

Answer: If your container pots are planted with evergreens or perennials, scratch out the surface soil and add compost and dried fertilizer or slow-release fertilizer mixed with potting soil. For planting annuals I empty all the last year's soil and mix it with compost and dried fertilizer. When I plant the annuals I also add slow-release fertilizer. During the summer's growth, be sure to keep the pots well watered as they tend to dry out from the winds and warmer weather.

Question: When do you fertilize roses?

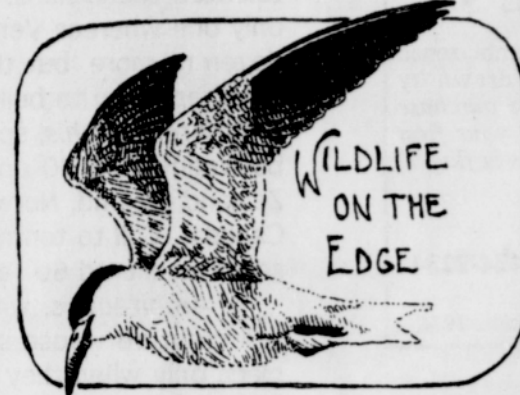
Answer: I wait until late spring as fertilizing too soon in the spring will produce new growth, which can be damaged by wind and hail. This spring is evidence of that. My roses sprouted too early this year and the cold storms caused the new leaves to turn brown and die. Roses need a balanced fertilizer of nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. There are many suitable commercial rose fertilizers. Be sure to follow the directions on the package. If well rotted manure is available, a dressing of about 3" or so is ideal for roses. Fertilize also after the first flush of blooms. Roses need lots of watering in the summer. Be sure to soak the soil around them thoroughly. A planned fertilizer and watering program to keep roses healthy is the best preventative for discouraging disease and harmful insects. If aphids are a problem, use a mild soap solution diluted with water to douse the plant. I've read that grass clippings used as mulch will ward off black spot. Don't fertilize too late in the summer as the stems need to harden off to get ready for winter's cold weather.

Organic Garden magazine advised how to confuse insect pests. They said not to plant rows of the same vegetables or flowers but to mix the seeds. I could just imagine the pesky insects running around saying, "Boy this is sure a mixed up mess!" and not knowing which way to go to attack the plants. The magazine also advised to use pine needles around plants to discourage

WILDLIFE ON THE EDGE will be on Sabbatical for a time. In its place we offer, here and scattered throughout this issue, a preview of cover drawings from the upcoming hand-bound books, which compile two years of columns. The volumes, bound with various recycled fabrics and hand-designed papers, also integrate natural elements such as feathers, sticks, and bones pertinent to the subject of the cover illustration.

Jupiter's Rare & Used Books will be hosting a limited viewing of 'Wildlife on the Edge; An Artist's Observations of Nature in and around the Upper Left Edge of Oregon', by Sally Lackaff, starting in May. Jupiter's is located at 244 N. Spruce in Cannon Beach, and is open daily 10-ish to 5-ish. Call (503) 436-2915 for more information.

WILDLIFE ON THE EDGE



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sow-bugs.

Whenever Mother's Day falls on the calendar, I use this date to start planting my annuals and sowing seeds. This year it falls on May the 14th. When buying annuals, it's best to buy plants that are compact and not blooming. When sowing fine seeds like godetia, cosmos, and poppies, one needs only to lightly rake the seeds into the soil.

Someone commented how nice it is to read poetry in this column. The following poem is by Anne Splane Phillips.

Crow eating. . .

Flutter of black wing catches my eye. Grey thicket of Pine. Ominous bird -- to be reckoned with. Used to scold me when the dog dish was empty. Swoop low past the window, bully me with outraged screams, and I, inside, tiptoed around for a while.

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