

Plan Your Future Home Beauty With Perennials For Permanence

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By perennials we mean that group of flowers, the roots of which live through the years, and bloom each season at their appointed time without the necessity of planting each spring as do annual flowers. Many varieties are propagated from seed, others from divisions or cuttings. If seed is sown in early spring and had proper care, they should bloom the second year. But it is much easier to buy year old plants and divisions of roots which will bloom the first year than to attempt to raise them from seed.

Some perennials spread too much for their allotted space and must be divided from time to time and replanted, and right now is a good time to do this and re-arrange the perennial border so that the plants may become established before the ground freezes. The planting ground should be free of weeds and pulverized into a soft mulch. A liberal amount of well-rotted barnyard or commercial fertilizer may be mixed in the soil or sprinkled on top. However, be careful not to allow the fertilizer to come into direct contact with the roots as it may burn them.

PLAN CAREFULLY

In building a perennial border or flower garden, select your key plants for form, color, mass and dependability. Plant alternately spring, summer and fall blooming perennials in order to assure continuous blooming and a colorful border at all seasons of the year. Plant several items of a kind together to give mass effect. Place tall growing ones at the back, medium tall in center and low growing in the foreground. Good key plants of the tall growing variety of Delphinium, Foxglove, tall Phlox, Regal or Tiger Lilies and tall Chrysanthemums. For the medium tall use Peonies, Painted Daisies, Shasta Daisies, Iris, Oriental Poppies and Day Lilies, or any other dependable perennial you have at hand. For the low border there are many kinds, such as Dianthus, Pinks, Sweet William, spring flowering bulbs and numerous rock plants including Coral Bells, Virginia Bluebells, Bluebells of Scotland, Alpine Asters, European Pasque Flower, Basket of Gold and many others, as well as the sedums and mosses.

IRIS POPULAR

Iris is one of the largest and most important of the garden family and occupies a prominent place in the American garden. Their intrinsic beauty of blending colors, graceful form, early flowering, hardiness and easy culture make them a top item in anybody's garden. In our Grandmother's time there were relatively few varieties and were known as Flags or Flower-luces. Interbreeding with imported species has produced thousands of varieties in all the shades of the rainbow, many of which are sweet scented and named so that you may select the color you prefer.

The most important widely planted species are the bearded German Irises. They fall into three natural divisions: the dwarf, the earliest of all; the tall bearded; and an intermediate class developed from crossing the early

dwarf with the late tall bearded variety. Thus we have continuous blooms from early April to late June. Bearded Iris should be divided and planted soon after blooming, but if this has not already been done, it should be attended to at once so that the roots may become established before winter. When planting, reduce the roots to a single section of the rhizome with a single fan of leaves, cut to half their length, and place the rhizome horizontally, covering it with soil about one inch deep. This variety does best in dry, well drained soil. In planning the planting of iris, pay attention to the height and color tones so as to harmonize in combination with May and June perennials to produce some of the finest garden pictures of the year. Among the best perennials for this purpose are Painted Daisies, Oriental Poppies, Day Lilies and Columbine.

Then we have the beardless irises which prefer heavy, moist soil and make excellent cut flowers. Chief of these are the Siberian and Japanese types. Siberian Irises come in white and blue shades, bloom later than German Irises, and should be divided and planted in early spring. The Japanese Irises are more difficult to grow, require a moist location and a resting period in mid-summer. The bulbous species include Dutch, Spanish and English types, and because of their lasting qualities and intriguing forms and delicate coloring, are best of all for cutting. They must be planted in the fall to bloom in May and June.

OTHER STANDBYS

Some of the important perennials which come into bloom along with the irises are Oriental Poppies, Painted Daisies, Columbine and Yellow Day Lilies. They are medium tall and may be planted in either fall or spring. All will grow from seed planted in early spring or fall, but the uncertainty of bringing seedlings to a useful size is discouraging. It is safer to buy blooming size plants or divisions which will bloom, so as to have a beautiful garden the first year.

Oriental Poppies come in several colors: white, pink, salmon, rose

and red. The most useful is the brilliant red with black spots at the base of the petals. Planted in masses, their flaming color make the most striking spot in the garden. Painted Daisies or Pyrethrum belong to the chrysanthemum family. They have daisy-like flowers on long stems held well above the attractive cut-leaf foliage. The bloom from late spring until mid-summer and come in colors of light pink to dark red and are very fine for cut flowers. Columbine or Aquilegia is a valuable hardy perennial because of its exquisite durable foliage and its long spurred, gracefully hung, colorful blossoms which last from spring throughout the summer. They come in colors of white, yellow, blue, and pink shades to red. Day Lilies include not only the early yellow variety, but a new race of orange to bronze with reddish spots which bloom later in the summer.

Peonies and Bleeding Heart are both superior early flowering, dependable perennials. No garden is complete without them. The Bleeding Heart blooms first, and its lovely heart-shaped flowers, carried on slender bowing stems above the handsome cut-leaf foliage make it an exquisite item as a specimen in the border. Peonies are hardy and require a minimum of care. They may be had in all colors, double and single flowering, also in tree form. The different varieties bloom at different periods so that you may have early and later blooming kinds, which extends the blooming season over a long period. Peonies and Bleeding Heart are both propagated by divisions of roots, and the best time is late summer and fall but it

may be done in early spring. Anacharis is a hardy, easy to grow perennial. It has baby-blue forget-me-not-like flowers on stiff branched spikes of purple-blue color and is a good bedding plant for color as the blue varieties of perennials are scarce. Purple Sage is another blue flower of medium height, blooming from spring to early summer. Their large sage-shaped leaves, with branched spikes of purple-blue flowers in great abundance are most useful where blue color is needed to lend distance to the landscape.

Along with the blues we like to plant something yellow. Coreopsis and Anthemis both are medium without markings, and they are all summer bloomers. Coreopsis has daisy-like flowers on long straight stems held high above the foliage while the Anthemis grow in heavy bushes with dense clusters of golden-yellow flowers in great profusion, which are also daisy-like with large open centers. Gallardia is another important medium tall summer-to-fall blooming perennial, with daisy-like flowers on long stems springing from heavy coarse foliage. It comes in bronze and

yellow with beautiful markings of red. Shasta Daisies are most dependable; they are a prolific bloomer and the best medium tall white perennial. Planted in masses, or for tall edging, they can't be beat. The large daisy flowers are carried on long stiff stems of regular, even height which gives the illusion of a sea of white above green foliage. They live through the severest of winters, while their near relatives, the Esther Reed, Marconi and Griffin Daisies, are frequently killed by cold weather.

Hardy Phlox is the glory of the summer garden. Its brilliant display of color continues throughout the season and when planted in masses, its great clusters of

bloom on the tops of stiff stems lends a line of strength and beauty to the garden. Plant Regal Lilies with red or pink Phlox for a delightful spot in the garden. Physostegia or False-dragonhead may be classed with the tall perennials. The dragonhead-shaped lavender-pink flowers are hinged on to the tall spike-like stems in such a fashion that they may be moved to face in any direction and thus derived the name of False-dragonhead. Veronica Speedwell is the tall kind which grows in rounded clumps with the tall spike-like stalks standing very erect and covered with small florets of deep blue and purple. Dwarf Veronica is a low growing variety, about twelve inches, with bright blue

florets on slender spikes. They are very effective when planted with Snow-in-Summer, and their blooming period is from spring to late summer.

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