

Hard season shows perennials' value

It was a short, compressed season, and the whole show was over much before it should have been. Perennials that normally bloom in August were gone in July, and I wanted to ask "What's the rush?"

Many gardeners agree that it wasn't a great year for annuals, either. The early heat waves of May and June caused us to plant the seedlings very early and under the least desirable conditions.

The high temperatures hit the newly planted, immature plants before they could adjust and harden off, let alone develop adequate root systems. The blasts of heat and strong sun rays not only gave them a real sunburn, but many were so dried up they never recovered at all.

FROM THIS experience, I have learned to value the well established perennials in my garden.

I also realize that for continual bloom one should look for a variety of perennials that bloom at different times and not count on annuals to pick up the responsibility of bloom at times when no perennials are bringing color to the garden.

The annuals that brought the greatest pleasure to me this summer were those stalwarts that even now in late summer and early fall are still in bloom — and got there sim-

ply by the entirely natural process of receding themselves, "in situ."

Cleome, the tall pink, white or orchid spider plant, reseeded and sent up a glorious mixed bouquet and also a dozen single plants throughout the entire garden.

This graceful, abundantly flowering plant is equally beautiful when cut and brought inside. I find, unfortunately, that it just plain does not smell good and I prefer it outside.

COSMOS is another vigorous "reseeded," regardless of heat or drought. This familiar, ferny, tall plant with pink-and-white flowers also makes a desirable cut flower.

Although orange is not a great favorite among most gardeners, the old-fashioned calendula, which has reseeded itself for many years in my garden, is always welcome here.

Each summer I try to remove most of the orange flowered plants so that now I just have a few sprinkled in with the various shades of yellow.

Calendulas can be trusted: They bloom into late fall, and regardless of conditions, they don't give up easily. That counts for a lot.

AFTER MANY years of denial, I am now accepting my total failure in bringing into bloom the much-sought "Nikko Blue" hydrangea.

The shrubs are big and beautiful, obviously healthy. But after having been moved three times in seven years, they still do not produce more than a slim scattering of blooms.

After inquiring around, I found out I'm not alone in my failure. Some of our best local nurseries will not even carry these plants because of customers' dissatisfactions.

Why bother with this plant when others in this group of woody ornamental shrubs are very cooperative and equally beautiful? Hydrangeas generally thrive in a rather rich, moist soil in partial shade. Perhaps the flowers may not be all that flashy or colorful, but they earn high marks for style.

HYDRANGEA QUERCIFOLIA, commonly called oakleaf hydrangea, is the exception to the usual cultural requirement, for it can tolerate dry shade conditions where very few plants of any kind will grow.

Although it prefers a more moist and lighter situation, the oakleaf hydrangea will cheerfully adapt to the most difficult areas.

This plant sends out suckers from the base. The suckers are easily dug up and replanted. Now from one original plant, I have six thriving specimens in some of the driest, darkest areas.

This sturdy shrub grows to about 5

feet tall as a large mounded plant with rich green foliage and interesting bark. It produces many white, cone-shaped clusters that fade to rose. The large, oak-shaped leaves turn to a deep purplish mahogany color in the fall, and the overall effect is very beautiful.

ANOTHER WELL-LOVED hydrangea is the clinging vine, Hydrangea petiolaris.

The lateral branches of this climbing vine may extend as much as three feet on the wall to which it clings by means of its small, rootlike holdfasts all along the stems. The flowers are large, flat clusters, and the vine has great dignity and beauty when mature.

Young plants may take several years to produce major growth. But it is worth the wait.

Hydrangea paniculata, the popular "Peegee" variety, also has large clusters of flowers. Although quite beautiful, it seems the plant is so hardy that it often is overgrown and neglected, giving the variety a bad name that it doesn't deserve. The standard or tree form is particularly attractive.

Marge Alpern is a Birmingham-based, freelance writer and avid gardener.

Cranbrook board elected

The Decent Council of the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum has elected its 1991-92 executive board.

Elected members include Laura Clark, council chairman; Sally McMillin, chairman of education; Sarah McNeal, chairman of external affairs; Jeanne Leichman, chairman of publicity; Pat Stuart, recording secretary/treasurer; Robin Greenberg, corresponding secretary; Mari Tischler, chairman of hospitality; and Molly Tehoy, historian.

The council currently has 33 members who volunteer to give tours to visitors of the Cranbrook Art Museum. Tours are available for groups of 10 or more at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday, and 10 a.m. Friday. Group rates are available. Call 645-3323 at least two weeks in advance.

THE Cranbrook Academy of Art

Museum offers temporary exhibitions focusing on contemporary trends in the visual arts. The permanent collection features work by Elie and Eero Saarinen, Harry Bertola, Maja Grotell, Charles Eames and other Cranbrook artists, architects and designers.

Museum hours are 1-5 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. Guided tours are available with advance notice. Call 645-3323.

The museum bookstore offers a selection of books on art, architecture and design, plus children's books, cards, posters and exhibition catalogs.

The Cranbrook Academy of Art, with its contemporary art museum, is a division of the Cranbrook Educational Community, which also includes the Cranbrook Institute of Science and Cranbrook Schools. Call 645-3312 for more information.

Architect topic of lecture

The life and career of Elie Saarinen, one of the leading figures of 20th century architecture, will be the topic of a slide-illustrated lecture at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 7, at the Cranbrook House Library, 380 Lone Pine Road in Bloomfield Hills.

Mark Coir, director of archives for Cranbrook Educational Community, will present the lecture. Fee is \$12.50. For information, call 645-3635.

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Event puts suburban designers in showcase

Suburban designers are among those featured in Symphony Showplace '91, a fund-raiser for Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall scheduled Oct. 5-20.

Participating are Sharon Chatham, Cynthia Chatham and Paul Wauldron of Birmingham; P. Karen Fields of Farmington; Thomas C. Grabowski, Anna Kenedi, Thom Makost and Donna Stevens of Southfield; Roy Hanks of Troy; Bonnie L. Meyer of West Bloomfield; Maxine Carson, Daniel Clancy and Susan Feinberg of Franklin; Laura Kaminsky of Livonia; and the Law-

rence Technological University student chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers.

Symphony Showplace '91 will open to the public a variety of River Place apartments, in the Stroh River Place campus on Detroit's waterfront. The units are examples of historic restoration.

"It's a pleasure for us to take part in Symphony Showplace '91, creating a dynamic living space to complement the architectural design of such a magnificent building," Chatham said.

IN ADDITION to tours of lavishly

decorated apartments, Symphony Showplace '91 will feature events such as cooking demonstrations and luncheons by Rattlesnake Club owner Chef Jimmy Schmidt, box lunches and fall color river tours aboard The Detroit box house.

Interior design seminars, sporting events at the River Place Athletic and Croquet Club, music, an expanded Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall boutique, art exhibits and overnight packages at the River Place Inn.

Tickets are \$15 per person. Advance tickets are \$30. Group tickets, 15 minimum, are \$10 each.

Fall color cruises with gourmet box lunch aboard The Detroit are \$35 per person. Cooking demonstrations/luncheons with Schmidt are \$60 per person, and River Place Inn getaway packages are \$300 per night.

For more information on group sales and additional events, call the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall Volunteer Council office at 982-1000.

Gala preview slated for antique show

The 16th annual Marian Calico Craft and Antique Show begins with a gala preview night 7-10 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 3, at Marian High School, 7225 Lahser at 14 1/2 Mile in Birmingham.

At the preview, honorary co-chairs Rich and Mary Kelo Fisher

and other patrons will enjoy preferred shopping at more than 120 booths, with music by pianist Greg Nichols and a festive array of foods, sweets and spirits prepared by area restaurants.

Tickets are available by calling 644-1750 or at the door for \$25 each.

The show will continue 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Oct. 4-5. Admission is \$3 each day.

Society plans mum show

The 31st annual chrysanthemum show of the Greater Detroit Chrysanthemum Society will take place 1-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 12 and 13, in the atrium of the Livonia Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile.

The show's theme will be "Melody of Mums." The public may attend. Admission is free.

Members will exhibit a large variety of mums in a variety of colors. The society's floral arrangements will interpret the theme of the show with artistic arrangements featuring chrysanthemums.

Art show to start Oct. 11

The Sholem Aleichem Institute has scheduled its annual art show Friday-Sunday, Oct. 11-13, at the Mercy Center, 28600 11 Mile, between Middlebelt and Inkster roads in Farmington Hills.

Hours are 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

More than 125 established and new artists, representing many media, will be featured at the show.

The institute is a local cultural and educational organization active in all facets of Jewish life related to literature, drama, philosophy, festivals, customs, art and music.

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