

Tips On Planning A Perennial Garden

By BETTY FRANKEL
Special Writer

create a truly delightful garden scene.

One way to plan a perennial garden is to choose one of these dominant types and use it lavishly in large clumps throughout the length of the flower border. This will become the major theme for the garden.

By choosing several colors or shades of this main plant you establish variations on

the major theme and get variety and interest in the garden.

Then select an assortment of the smaller, daintier, less dominant perennials that will complement your dominant plants. Choose ones that will enable you to work out a special color scheme.

That will provide contrast of form and texture.

Among the June-blooming perennials that can be used with iris, peonies or poppies are coral bells, columbines, lupines, gas plant, meadow rue, false indigo, rocket, Veronica, Liatris and lemon lily.

Coral bells have dainty bell-like flowers on wand-like spikes that arise from a low cluster of basal leaves. These spikes, which are 12 to 18 inches in length, have an airy grace. They can be used in the rock garden, in front of evergreens, or along a garden path or walk, as well as in the foreground of the perennial border.

They are also good in bouquets. In addition to light coral color, there are also white coral bells and varieties with rose-red and bright pink flowers.

Columbine also has dainty blooms on slender stalks. These blooms have a unique form. There are five rounded petals backed by five longer pointed outer sepals and streaming back from these five long tubular "spurs." They come in an array of pastel hues which include many shades of blue, pink, lavender, yellow, red and white. There are many attractive two-tone and bicolor combinations.

They complement iris, which also are available in many of the same shades. The light green finely cut foliage is as dainty as the blooms. Since the foliage fades and dies back when the blooming season ends, columbine should be planted where overhanging leaves of other plants can fill the gap.

Lupines have spikes thickly clustered with pea-like flowers in many beautiful, glowing colors including

blue, purple, yellow, red, pink and white. Some blossoms are two-toned. These flower spikes can be two feet long and the stems they are on can be three to five feet tall. The handsome foliage is palmately divided into many segments or leaflets. The strain known as Russel lupines is especially attractive.

Baptisia, or false indigo, are plants that are closely related to lupines. They, too, have pea-like flowers, but the spikes are less compact. Figure is a species with purple-blue flowers and another with yellow flowers. Its leaves are three-parted like clover leaves. The plants are sturdy, bushy plants that grow from two to four feet in height.

Gas plant, or Dictamnus, is a wonderful old-fashioned plant that can be a joy in modern gardens. They form handsome bushy plants two feet tall with foot-long spikes of orchid, pink or pure white

flowers rising above the glossy green leaves. Plants are best started from seeds because this plant does not transplant easily.

If an established clump is not disturbed, it can grow and bloom for several generations of gardeners. Incidentally, the plant is named for the gas given off by the plant. A pastime on summer evenings in Victorian times was to ignite this gas for a brief display.

Veronica is another plant with slender spikes of bloom. These spikes provide good contrast for round flower heads. There are several Veronicas that bloom in early June.

One known as spike speedwell has 12 inch spikes of tiny purple flowers. Bastard speedwell has 18 inch spikes of violet flowers.

Hesperis, or dame's rocket, is another old-fashioned plant that can be used to fill in between other more domi-

nant plants in the perennial garden. It has clusters of small four-petaled flowers in shades of white, lavender or purple. The rather coarse, large leaved plants grow up to three feet tall.

The lemon lily is the first of the daylilies to come into bloom. It has canary yellow bell-shaped fragrant flowers on two-foot stems that rise above the clump of narrow grass-like leaves. It is beautiful with blue or dark purple iris and makes a bright combination with flame colored poppies.

Several biennials which bloom in June can be used to add interest to the perennial garden. Sweet William has small pink, red, or white disc-like flowers that are striped or spotted or laced with a contrasting shade. These plants seed freely and although classed as biennials, often persist for numerous years.

Lunaria is another interesting biennial. This plant, also known as honesty, silver dollars or money plant, has clusters of small attractive purple flowers on branching stems up to three feet tall.

The flowers are attractive in the garden and can be used for cut flowers. The chief fascination, though, comes after the flowers have faded and the seed pods have ripened. These are flat and disc-shaped. When the outer covering and seeds are gently rubbed off a translucent silver disc remains. These make beautiful and long-lasting dried bouquets.

Many garden centers have container-grown or potted perennial plants. It is easy to move these into the garden at any time during the growing season.

Also, most perennials can be dug and transplanted even when in bloom if they are handled carefully and watered well until they have become established.

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Meadow Brook Rose Gardens Bloom Again

Rose lovers can look forward to a real treat when 1,600 newly planted varieties bloom in the Meadow Brook Hall rose garden toward the end of June.

Restoration of the once famed garden of Matilda Dodge Wilson was made possible by a gift from the Cranbrook Chapter of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Assn. for new plantings and maintenance.

A formal dedication ceremony, including unveiling of a bronze plaque at the entrance to the garden, will be held at the end of June to coincide with the first full bloom of the roses.

"We are most grateful to the Cranbrook Chapter for restoring the rose garden and appreciate the chapter's intention to be a source of continuing support so that many in the years to come may enjoy the peace and beauty of this lovely garden setting," said Lowell Eklund, dean of Oakland University's division of continuing education, who administers the hall.

For information about house and garden tours during the peak bloom, call the division of continuing education at OU.

The new planting includes 35 varieties of roses: 16 new patented hybrid teas, 13 old-favorite hybrid teas that are no longer on the patent list, six floribundas, and two patented climbers.

"It takes 10-12 man hours per week to spray with fungicides and insecticide and do the necessary pruning," said Frederick Duranseau, director of grounds and landscaping.

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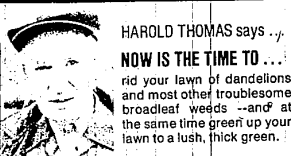
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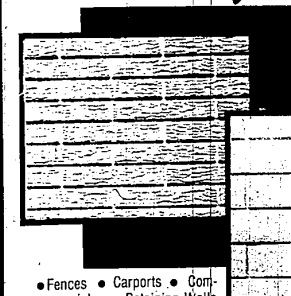
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