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Calling all gardeners

How to mix color

Green N' Growing

Elaine Gordon 475-0896



Dependable perennials, those flowering plants whose tops die in winter, are the backbone of our garden picture. They always give a glowing performance and return for curtain calls year after year.

These living bouquets that excite the eyes are adaptable, too. Nearly all of them can be moved should the flower language need changing or a sense of order or life be required.

Color harmony is important and lends a mood to the overall plan. Plants should be placed so that violent clashes don't occur. It is interesting to note that exuberant oranges and reds are accents for soft shades and are given sophisticated touches when mixed with

grey-green foliage.

Cool blues are enlivened by the contrast of refreshing white. The latter is classy, quiet and gives a feeling of spaciousness. It's often effective against a background of evergreens.

Warm yellow brings cheer to dull days and it not only enhances blue, but is ideal as a softener in combination with aggressive colors.

Delicate pinks look good with white and soft blues, while rosy-pinks team well with lavender, a serene color.

Think of yourself as an artist with a cornucopia of colors on your palette. With an eye to simplicity, take your time and carefully explore the possibilities for a spring to fall flower display. If you summer up north, enjoyment is increased if summer bloomers are at the cottage and spring and fall plants are at home.

Massed plantings of one variety have a spectacular effect and small clumps accent others. For the front of a bed, select those that retain nice foliage after flowering. Foliage texture influences the scheme, too.

Be daring — not shy — when using textures, shapes and colors and don't be vexed if the picture isn't perfect...after all, isn't the fun in the growing? So go ahead — put down some roots.

HELPFUL HINTS:

Normally, late blooming perennials are divided in spring and early bloomers in fall. But, Oriental Poppies, Peonies and Bleeding Hearts are a trifle fussy about being disturbed so only do so if absolutely necessary.

For fast cleanups after gardening, put soap slivers in an old pantyhose leg and tie on the outdoor faucet.

Make an inexpensive hose hanger by securely nailing three long spikes in the wall (place middle spike slightly higher) and cover each of them with pieces of old garden hose.

Gorgeous ground covers

Grass isn't the only lush rug for bare earth. When those blades of green show an air of malaise and knuckle under in brown surrender, carefree ground covers will "rise" to the challenge.

They'll also cover a steep slope that can't be mowed easily, or enhance a sterile base and add balance to the height around a tree trunk or nicely blanket monotonous or hard-to-get-at places.

Once established, their thickly spreading leaves will not only highlight gardens in a variety of colors and textures, but they'll inhibit and choke out weeds, too. What a dividend!

Ground huggers are useful for relieving starkness when tucked between stepping stones and patio slabs, or cascading over rocks, or providing a pleasant glow atop railway ties in a raised bed, or accenting the base of a mailbox or lamppost.

Large trees, especially Maples, have hungry roots and few plants can survive the battle for food beneath the deep shade of a leafy canopy. Pachysandra will make themselves at home and act as a textured carpet. It often triumphs where nothing else will.

Bugle Flowers (Ajuga) forms a tight mat and is fast growing in sun or shade. Dainty blue flower spikes in spring are a bonus. Periwinkle (Vinca) is hardy in full or part shade and the foliage is accented by mid-spring flowers.

Lily-of-the-Valley, Ferns and Plantain Lily (Hosta) will eventually conceal the ground to bring satisfying touches in shady nooks.

The luxurious tropical looks of Ferns are welcomed as contrast plants and are inviting on a pathway, shady bank and under trees. Hosta could quietly surround a pond and provide a maintenance free border in beds or a walkway. They are impressive when massed.

HINTS

A metal hook screwed into the end of a broom handle becomes a nifty tool for pulling down tall branches when pruning is required.

Not all garden bugs are bad. There's some good guys out there working to benefit nature and use, too. Praying Mantises (with their strong front legs held up as if in prayer) capture and devour beetles, caterpillars, and other harmful insects. Ladybugs dine on plant-eating aphids, mealybugs, scale, leafworms, etc.

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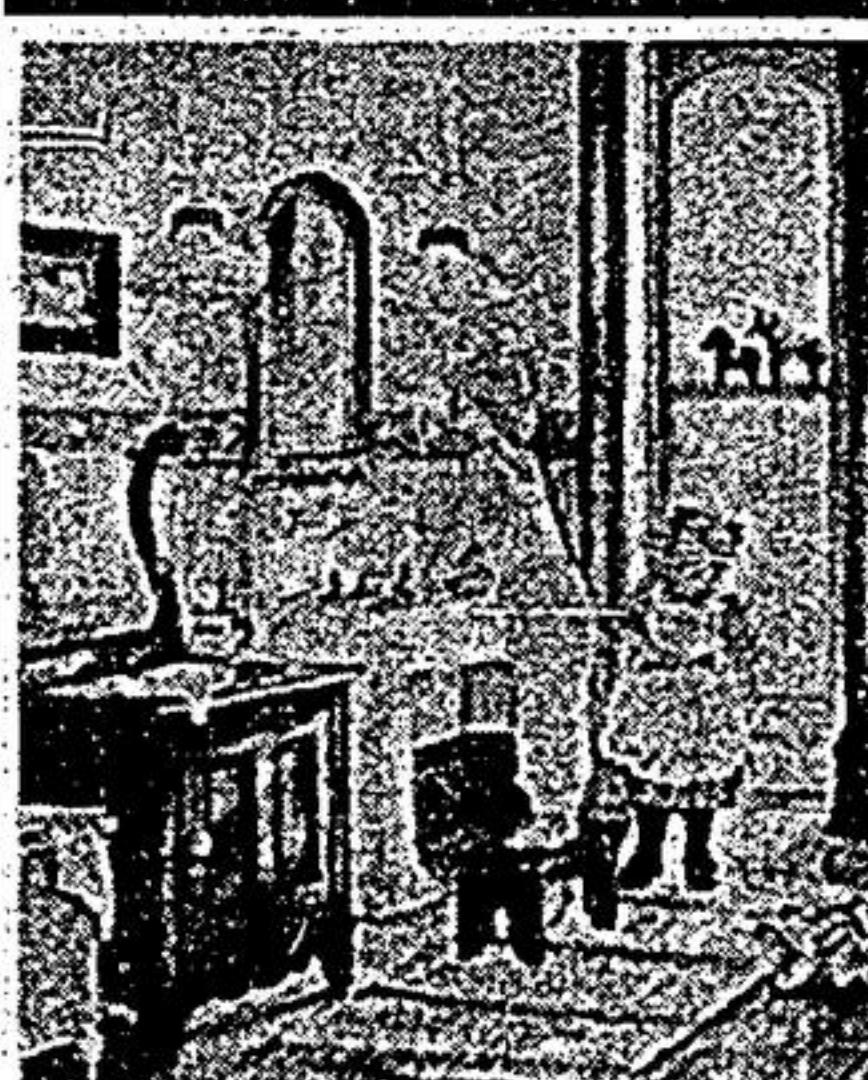
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CORRECTION NOTICE

Due to an error on part of the Markham Economist & Sun, the closing hours for JOHN GALLOWAY'S BAR-GAIN CENTRE'S 3 DAY SALE were incorrect.

They should have read:

Thurs. June 5th, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Friday June 6th, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and
Saturday June 7th, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun. & Monday closed

The Economist & Sun apologize for any inconvenience caused to John Galloway's and its valued customers.

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