

Green 'n Growing

Your guide for planting springtime annuals

By ELAINE GORDON
Gardens filled with glorious colour, are beckoning: places to be aren't they? Quiet times spent there allow us to sort out problems, to mull over ideas, to get in touch with ourselves. Indeed, they are food for the soul.

And ever obliging annuals can help provide a banquet of fooms to ignite the senses. They give opportunities to mix and match in sun or shade and focal points are changed at whim because of their impermanence.

Annuals make the most out of limited space in containers or in-ground and are welcomed when sandwiched in crevices of retaining walls and rocks.

Empty pockets are relieved of doldrums the first year perennials are set; spring blooming rockeries receive a summer pick-me-up and withering bulb leaves are given a boisterous camouflage.

They are indispensable as a constant cutting supply. And vining annuals are ideal for a trellis, fence, mailbox post, or at the base of legs on a swing set.

Some have a delicate fragrance and the scent association may well be evocative of past pleasures. Perhaps one memory may focus in on another with special meaning.

For me, my mind frames a distinct picture from childhood when my Grandad pinched off a Snapdragon's head from among his flower beds and showed me how to open and close its jaws.

After sharing that snappy delight with other eight-year-olds, many dragons were reduced in number that day. Needless to say, I've always had a spot in our garden for this one.

Their glut of colours creates moods, too. Orange and red send signals of excitement; pale blues, pinks and mauves are refreshing yet serene; coral is calming.

The simplicity of white blooms make blue ones bluer; gentle yellow acts as a buffer for aggressive colours.

To encourage a "budding relationship" pinch tired blooms and monitor moisture requirements. don't rely on Mother Nature to satisfy the needs of thirty roots.

And, so they don't get "anemic", make sure a water soluble fertilizer like RX-15 is given every few weeks. They'll welcome the meal and respond accordingly. Keep those ruthless weeds down, too, for they'll steal moisture and nourishment if allowed to stay.

Why not take a turn around your garden and let their colours surround you as you dream and plan a little. It's the bloomin' end.



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