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1-1-2002

How Can I Put Color In My Garden In Late August?

Bill Varga

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Recommended Citation
Varga, Bill, "How Can I Put Color In My Garden In Late August?" (2002). *All Archived Publications.* Paper 365.
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A weekly question/answer column

How Can I Put Color In My Garden In Late August?

Bill Varga answers:*

Late August is a good time to purchase perennials since many garden centers are selling their stock at bargain prices. If the plants are a little leggy, they can be cut back to encourage branching. However, avoid buying plants that are wilted. Consider purchasing some of these perennials that bloom into the fall for late-season color.

- Chrysanthemum x morifolium (Cushion or Hardy Garden Mums): these perennials will give a showy burst of color in mid to late autumn when little else is blooming. Heliopsis (Daisy family - False Sunflower): the flowers may be single or semi-double and bloom from early July until frost. Helianthus decapetalus (Sunflowers): unlike many other sunflowers, the foliage usually stays attractive all season and can reach 4 to 5 feet high.
- Aster novae-angliae (Michaelmas Daisy) or novi-belgii: both are noted for their reliability and long blooming season. Hibiscus moscheutos (Rose Mallow): the flowers are red, pink or white and can be up to 12 inches across. They bloom from mid-July until frost. Rudbeckia echinacea (Purple Cone Flower): these bloom from midsummer to late fall.
- Sedum spectabile (Showy Stonecrop): the flowers can be pink, rose or white and will turn to bronze as they mature. They will flower until frost hits. Coreopsis lanceolata: these flowers will bloom continuously until frost if deadheaded consistently. Plumbago larpentae (Leadwort): this groundcover produces small blue flowers from midsummer to early autumn.

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* Bill Varga is Utah State University Extension Horticulturist