

TOPIC: "SUB-TROPICAL PERENNIALS"

GUEST SPEAKER : CAROL KERKIN

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 31 JANUARY, 2017 UNDER THE OLD WITTA SCHOOL TREES

- Annual plants that flower set seeds and die – life cycle short lived
- Perennial – Latin for perennis meaning 'lasts for many years' e.g. Cleome (Spider Flower)
- Statice is annual but perennial Statice will last three years
- Alyssum (Basket of Gold) is also a good perennial
- Important to read labels when buying plants as some perennial herbaceous specimens are only suited to cold climates - their underground root systems lie dormant to store strength
- Chinese Foxglove flowers and dies but from base foliage produces new growth
- Woody perennials – Rosemary with blue, white and pink flowers, also variegated leaves. Lavender – used to make perfume, soap, insect repellent. Grey leafed plants don't like humidity. Dry climate is good for Lavender. Canary Islands Lavender does well in South East Queensland – not as heavily perfumed. Lavandula Pinnata Sidonie– Australian Lavender bred for Australian conditions. When pruning don't cut into older Lavender wood as the plant will die
- Tuberos or rhizome Agapanthus – some become dormant so be careful when digging
- Daylilies - genus of perennial bulbs - any climate or type of soil - colourful and also edible
- Dahlias, Begonias – cut right down when finished flowering
- Geraniums grow better in Tasmania and Pelargoniums grow better in SE Queensland. Try them in your area mindful of your garden's microclimate. Highly perfumed foliage so plant where you are going to brush past to enjoy the scent of the released oils
- Wormwood Artemisia can be attacked by scale insects – grown for foliage and medicinal purposes – plant around house to deter snakes and keep fleas at bay
- Salvia – in the old days grown for culinary and medicinal purposes – now for variety of colour. Salvia Splendens – peach colour and easy to strike. Salmon one grows to 1 – 2 metres so cut back to knee height also into older wood. Salvia Waverly flowers for 10 months then shoots from very low so cut down to new shoots. Can be grown as hedge. Salvia Amistad grows to 2 metres. Grow dwarf varieties in front e.g. Dwarf Red
- Little family groups – (a) Daisies – Shasta, Michaelmas, Gerbera, Coreopsis, Marguerite (b) Verbena – wonderful cut flower – some self seed. Don't like heavy rain so keep striking cuttings. Angelonium 'Granny's Cap' new hybrid which doesn't have the strength of old varieties. Queen Mum is best plant in new range – nothing outdoes the old fashioned species - white, pink, purple plus purple and white. With die back cut down to 10 – 15 cm
- Golden Rod – use leaves to make as tea for depression and anxiety
- Perennials need work and attention – replace with new plants after 4 -5 years
- Ask Mud Brick Cottage which Lavender to grow in Maleny to use in scones, shortbread, fudge etc
- Don't buy plants e.g. roses whose root stock is not local

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