



# Container Gardening

*Helen Muntz*

# Advantages of Container Gardens

- Portability
  - extending the season
    - Move to protected area in early spring weather
  - over wintering
- Small spaces
- Accessibility
  - Convenient herbs & Vegetables
- Creative Expression
- Outdoor Rooms
- Create Focal Points
- Vibrant long-season color
- Adds Texture, Color, & Accent to landscape



# Choosing a Container

- Weight and Size
  - Will pots need to be moved during growing season?
  - Is there enough soil to support plants?
  - Heat and sun exposure (more soil / less porous pot will hold moisture longer)
  - Weight to support strong winds
- Be creative
  - Anything that can hold soil
- **Drainage!**



# Soil Media

Drains well and holds moisture

Plant type (ex.-succulents do well with high drainage, sand mixtures)



- **“Potting Soil”** (do not use garden / native soil)

- Use only potting soil media
  - Potting Soil with fertilizer, up to 6 weeks
  - Peat, Perlite, Vermiculite, Coconut core
- Mix your own

Coconut coir + Perlite + Sunshine mix



# Designing Fabulous Containers

- ***Thriller, Filler, Spiller***



# Annuals -Sun



- Petunias
- Wave Petunias
- Zonal Geraniums
- Verbena
- Lantana
- Marigolds
- Zinnias (star, profusion)
- Dahlias
- Lobelia
- Trailing alyssum (Lobularia)
- Euphorbia Diamond Frost
- Sweet Potato Vine
- Purple Fountain Grass
- Dracaena
- Million Bells (calibrachoa)
- Salvia

# Thrillers

- Canna Lillies (many color options – flower & Foliage)
- Dracaena Grass (burgundy and green)
- Purple Fountain Grass



# Fillers

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- Star Zinnias
- Lantana
- Diamond Frost Euphorbia



# Spillers

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- Lobularia
- Dichondra
- Sweet Potato Vine



# Annuals -Shade



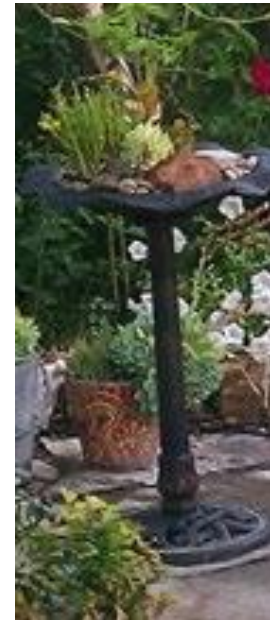
- Impatiens
- New Guinea Impatiens
- Begonias (Rex, Non-Stop, Tuberous, Fibrous)
- Fuchsia (upright and trailing)
- Lobelia
- Variegated Vinca vine
- Coleus
- Torenia (“Wish-bone Plant”)
- Asparagus fern
- Sweet potato vine

## (Perennial)

- Coral bells
- Hakonechloa (Japanese forest grass)
- Ostridge Fern
- Hosta
- Vinca Vine

# Succulents!

- Mix landscape sand with potting soil
- Very little soil & root space needed
- Very low water
- Great texture and color!
- Great indoor plants!



# Early Spring Care

- Take containers outside in the daytime when temperatures are above 55 degrees
- Bring inside at night OR cover with plastic, cloth or greenhouse
- Water as needed
  - Finger check
  - SoilMoisture Meters
- Fertilize



# Summer Care

- Water daily • Fertilize regularly
- Don't be afraid of the scissors!

- Plants that need trimming

- Wave petunias
- Lobelia
- Bacopa
- Geraniums (dead heading)
- Dahlias
- Coleus

USU Extension You Tube



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or Annals for Next Year

# Trimming and Dead-Heading

- Many plants benefit from light pruning or trimming to keep them full and bushy
- Dead-heading is the removal of spent blossoms for promoting new, fresh blossoms
- Annuals grown in containers perform best when regularly dead-headed



Photo Credit:

<http://aevashydrangea.blogspot.com/2013/08/rejuvenating-petunia.html>

# Watering Containers

## How often to water?

- Sun exposure and heat
  - Plant material-some plants need to dry down between watering
  - Check moisture with finger or soil moisture meter
  - **Sun**, 1-2 X per day
  - **Shade**, every day to every 3 days
- (depending on container size and location)



# Fertilizing Containers

**N P K** percentages (higher # = more concentrated)

**N**= Nitrogen-foilage growth and development

**P**= Phosphate-Root and Flower / Fruit Development

**K**= Potassium-Overall health and development

“Up – Down – All Around”

**Spring - 14:14:14 15:30:15**

**Summer - 15:30:15, Chelated Iron, Gradual Release Fertilizer**

Use chelated iron to avoid iron chlorosis



# Common Problems –Insect Pests



- Aphids
- Spider Mites
- Tobacco Bud Worms
- Earwigs

## Management

- Encourage beneficial insect populations
- Organic chemical control
  - Insecticidal soap
  - DE (Diatomaceous Earth)
  - Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt)
  - Spinosad

# Thank You

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