

Stratford Garden Club - October 2020



...Well, I did wonder if it is an 'age thing'----- colour, I mean.

I remember that years ago, as a new gardener, red and orange dahlias, begonias and red roses were the 'must have' plants. Those colours were stunning. However, as the years passed, gentle cottage garden colours seemed more to my liking. Purple, blue, pink and white flowers were restful, even more tasteful. The odd splash of yellow in the flower border was permissible, it highlights the blue and purple flowers.

Then, suddenly, last summer, 2019, I had got to have **ORANGE**. I was desperately trying to buy plants which had orange coloured flowers, I even bought some that have been a disaster on my poor soil. What is going on?

I know that we all have colours that we prefer, my favourite colour is turquoise. Guess what though, I don't know a single turquoise coloured flower, they don't seem to exist. Does anyone know why? This desire for splashes of orange around the garden, is it just that I fancy something different for a change and have gone for the colour orange or am I now perceiving colours differently? Is it the ageing of cells in the eye or something in the brain going on the blink or even some psychological cause? (I tend not to do psychological things, most worrying problems are solved by cooking the dinner. I am at my most creative whilst peeling potatoes.) If you have any thoughts on this subject of colour do let me know, especially if a similar thing has happened to you.

Which plants have supplied my orange flowers this year? My first choice is Alstromeria 'Indian Summer' because it has flowered all summer and is still going strong in mid – October. Alstromeria are a fairly recent additions to our gardens (global warming?) but they have long been for sale in supermarkets, £5.00 each bunch. Florists love them because they last for ages in a vase.



My second choice is Canna 'Wyoming'. If you are not familiar with this plant, imagine a Gladiolus on steroids and the flower shape will be about right. If that is no help then just try to imagine something that is totally opposite to a 'Forget me not'. Two metres tall, this canna has enormous paddle shaped leaves in shades of burgundy which clash disgustingly with the orange flower colour.

My third choice is Coltness hybrid dahlias. The only reason I have put them third is because you cannot buy these as plants, you need to grow them from seed. They are wonderful. The seed packets always have mixed colours but there are always some orange ones amongst them. They flower in the first year from seed and then when frost takes the leaves and flowers in November, you can just dig up a tuber which you can store, frost free, and replant the following year.

The good thing about being a gardener is that there is always something that you want to get on with, outside. Lots of magazines and internet sites will list the jobs that you need to do in Autumn

but this can seem a bit remote. At the moment, I am moving raspberry canes to a different part of the garden to see if they grow better and also enlarging flower beds because I can't get everything in. I am re-organising the front garden borders and making my plant tubs ready for a winter display and oh! I have just filled a bed with yellow wallflowers and the smell is delicious.

You can see from all of this that I recommend gardens, gardening and Garden Clubs. Roll on the time when we can get together again, listen to enthusiastic speakers and swop plants.

Dorothy Richards
October 2020

PS! If you have any information about turquoise flowers then please let me know. Alternatively, if you just want to chat gardening or swop plants – I have *Campanula persicifolia alba* spare, then get in touch. My e-mail is dorothy.richards@btinternet.com and my Tel no. is 01722 321431.