

## COLOURFUL GARDEN PLANTS

## Cheery, easy-to-grow plants for your garden

Sigrie Kendrick - Mar 27, 2024 / 11:00 am



Photo: Contributed

Coreopsis is a hit in a perennial border with its sunny flower faces and it will fill in any gaps but require very little water and survive heat and drought.

Well, it's that exciting time of year again when we begin to get ready for our Okanagan Xeriscape Association spring plant sale.

Last week, I picked up the first set of plant plugs from the wholesaler. Plugs are essentially baby plants that we then pot up to grow larger, in preparation for you to buy them at the sale. Depending on the size and strength of the plugs they are either potted up into four-inch pots or gallons.

This year we have three different types of Coreopsis available. Coreopsis, also known as Tickseed, is a genus of herbaceous perennials in the Asteraceae family.

Asteraceae or Compositae is the largest family of flowering plants and includes the daisy, sunflower, and aster families.

The genus name originated from the Greek words for 'bug-like' and refers to the seed heads which resemble a bug or tick.

Coreopsis is a stunning addition to your summer perennial border as they require little but provide a lot. Their reliable, long-blooming daisy-like flowers are produced from early summer through to fall if deadheaded after their initial bloom.

Coreopsis will provide the best show when sited in full sun, so at least six hours of direct sun, but they can tolerate partial sun but you'll simply see fewer blooms.

These perennials are not fussy about soil and will tolerate both poor and rocky soils. Coreopsis will welcome bees, butterflies and birds to your garden and over time will naturalize to provide you with years of beauty.

They do not suffer any serious pest or disease issues but may develop crown rot when over-irrigated in heavy clay soils.

It is increasingly difficult to label anything in the garden "deer-resistant" but generally Coreopsis is ignored by deer. All of the Coreopsis mentioned below will normally survive Okanagan winters.

- Coreopsis pubescens "Sunshine Superman" or Star Tickseed is a clump-forming perennial native wildflower in the Central and South Eastern U.S. where it is found in areas with rocky, dry soil.

Sunshine Superman is more compact and floriferous than the species Coreopsis, reaching a height of one foot and growing to eight inches wide. This herbaceous perennial features a profusion of one-inch golden yellow flowers with notched petals and an orange central disk. Sunshine Superman is ideal in a meadow planting or naturalized area.

- Coreopsis hybrida "Uptick Cream and Red" wows with an impressive display of large pale cream blooms with a deep burgundy central patch and a yellow eye. These pollen-rich flowers attract a wide variety of beneficial insects with the plant reaching the height and width of one foot. 'Uptick Cream and Red' is ideally situated at the front of your perennial border.

Over the past few years the Uptick series has won an impressive list of landscape industry awards.

- Due to my love of all shades of red, my personal favourite is Coreopsis verticillata "Sizzle and Spice Hot Paprika." Coreopsis verticillata or Threadleaf Coreopsis is native to Eastern North America and features thread-like, dainty foliage which provides a nice contrast to plants with heavier foliage even when not in bloom. The cultivar Sizzle and Spice Hot Paprika is diminutive enough to fit into smaller gardens reaching a height of 18 inches with a width of two feet with eye-catching 1.5-inch blooms of a rich deep red.

#### Date set for plant sale

We've set May 11th as the date for our annual spring plant sale to be held at Wild Bloom Nursery located at 840 Old Vernon Road. Membership to OXA has many benefits and as in years past we will be having a member-only presale on the Friday afternoon prior to the sale. Stay tuned to our social media accounts for all the upcoming details.

*The Okanagan Xeriscape Association is grateful for the ongoing financial support of the Okanagan Basin Water Board and is proud to be collaborating with them on their Make Water Work campaign.*

*This article is written by or on behalf of an outsourced columnist and does not necessarily reflect the views of Castanet.*