

PRETTY IN PINK

Want to add colour to your garden? Think pink.

Sigrie Kendrick - Apr 10, 2024 / 11:00 am



Photo: Contributed

Phlox in bloom is pretty in pink.

If pink is your colour, we have multiple options for purchase at our upcoming plant sale.

I recently discussed my new-found appreciation for this colour while gardening with my master gardener mentor and she joked it was a reflection of ageing, a suggestion which, of course, I vehemently disputed.

Even as a young girl I was not partial to pink, but maybe it's a holdover from the depression and isolation of COVID, I'm now willing to include pink in my landscapes. It's a colour I associated during the pandemic with hope, joy and renewal.

If those of you out there share either a new-found appreciation or a traditional love for this hue, you will find much of interest available at our upcoming Okanagan Xeriscape Association Spring plant sale. We will have plants in a variety of shades of pink to include in your spring, summer and fall garden.

One of the early stars of the spring garden is Phlox hybrida 'Woodlander Pink'. This hybrid between Phlox subulata and Phlox stolonifera produces an exceptionally-colourful ground cover after months of dreary grey.

The flower production is large and abundant and although it is an excellent source of early nectar for pollinators it is seldom bothered by deer.

Phlox hybrida ("Woodlander Pink") is hardy in zones four to eight, so it is reliably winter-hardy even given our last two years of extreme winter weather events. This perennial is ideal for use in the front of a mixed border or cascading over a rock wall where it prefers a partial shade location.

Scabiosa columbaria ("Flutter Rose Pink") is one of those perennials that appeals to those of us who aren't bothered by a bit of unruliness as the blooms have a tendency to choose their own direction. Also known as "Pincushion Flower," this perennial blooms non-stop from spring through late summer on compact plants reaching a foot high by an equal spread.

The flowers, as the common name suggests, resemble pincushions and bloom in a delicate shade of pink with a tidy habit and refined leaf texture, even when this perennial isn't in bloom. These are best sited in a full-sun location for optimal bloom production and work wonderfully in the front of either perennial beds or rock gardens.

Continuing with the pink theme, and blooming from summer and well into fall, is Echinacea purpurea ("PowWow Wild Berry").

The Echinacea hybridizers have been going crazy producing new Echinacea cultivars and this is one you will certainly want to include in your garden. PowWow Wild Berry was an all-American gold medal winner for good reason. It thrives in full-sun locations and is drought-tolerant once established, featuring magenta blooms above sturdy two-foot tall stems.

The exceptional branching habit of this cultivar results in more blooms per plant and these blooms do not fade but retain their brilliant colour as they mature. It makes a beautiful cut flower and is favoured by a large variety of pollinators but not grazing deer.

Plant sale date set

We've set May 11 as the date for our annual spring plant sale to be held at Wild Bloom Nursery, 840 Old Vernon Road in Kelowna.

As in previous years, we will have a members-only pre-sale on the day prior to the sale. Consider becoming an OXA member for this benefit and many others listed on our website at www.okanaganxeriscape.org. 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 on the Make Water Work campaign.

Sigrie Kendrick is a master gardener and executive-director of the non-profit Okanagan Xeriscape Association.

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