

Boerner Through the Seasons

2011 Garden Walks with Melinda Myers

Sponsored by:

Summer Blooms, Birds & Butterflies

1. **Bali Swiss Chard** – *Betula vulgaris* subsp. *cicla* ‘Bali’ - Colorful Swiss chard is good in the vegetable garden, as a vertical accent in a container or mixed with flowers. Leafy vegetables are more shade tolerant than those grown for fruits and flowers. Harvest the outer leaves when 8 to 10 inches tall for a continuous large harvest. Production may slow down or plants may need to be replaced in extreme heat.

2. **Ornamental Pepper** – *Capsicum annuum* - There are so many to choose from these days. Some have purple or variegated foliage and most have colorful small fruit. Pretty to look at but think twice before biting in. The small fruit are edible but most (NOT Chilly Chili the 2002 All-America Selection winner) are very hot. Watch for the hornworm caterpillars on this and other members of the tomato family.

3. **Extra Tripled Curled Parsley** – *Petroselinum crispum* ‘Extra Tripled Curled’ - Great in containers, the texture and color makes it a great accent for other herbs, with flowers and vegetables and its good for you. Parsley sweetens your breath, aids digestion and is high in vitamin C. Plus the swallowtail butterfly caterpillars love it. Biennial

4. **Signet Marigold** – *Tagetes tenuifolia* ‘Golden Gem’ - All marigolds are edible but most have a strong flavor to match their fragrance. The Gem series has a bit more citrusy flavor. Plus the small scale leaves and flowers make this an easy plant to blend with others in the garden or container. Annual

5. **Nasturtium** – *Tropaeolum majus* - Empress of India has blue-green leaves and long spurred red flowers. Hummingbirds and butterflies love sipping the nectar from the spurs of the nasturtium blooms. Both leaves and flowers are edible and provide a peppery zing to dishes. Renee’s Garden recommends checking the spurs for insects before serving them on a salad or dressing up a cupcake. Annual

6. **Staro Thick Leaved Chives** - *Allium schoenoprasum* - A wider leaf chives, Good performer and suited to container or in-ground cultivation. Both the leaves and flowers are edible. Chives reseed readily creating a steady supply to share with friends.



7. **Lemon Grass** – *Cymbopogon citratus* - A perennial in the tropics and subtropics this plant is more than ornamental. The leaves are used for flavoring drinks, in baking and the oils for fragrance in perfumes, soaps and cosmetics. Plant this 2-foot tall grass along walks for a bit of aromatherapy. The fragrance will be released when you brush against the leaves. Grow in full sun for best results. Can be overwintered indoors in colder climates. Frost sensitive (Zones 9 to 11?).

8. **Purple Baron Millet** – *Pennisetum glaucum* ‘Purple Baron’ - A smaller relative of Purple Majesty Millet. The purple foliage and bright growth habit make this a focal point in the garden or container. Grow in full sun for best foliage color. Birds love the seeds of this annual. Hardy in zones 8 to 11.

9. **Basil** – *Ocimum basilicum* (Sweet Basil, African Blue, Spicy Globe, Purple Ruffles, Dark Opal, Pesto Perpetuo Variegated Basil...) - Like ornamental peppers there are many varieties of basil to choose from. Color and form guide my decision while cooks and bartenders in the group may look for the flavor differences. Basil likes full sun to part shade and moist soils. A tender annual that does not tolerate frost. Take cuttings or grow new plants indoors for the winter.

10. **Lovage** – *Levisticum officinale* - A hardy giant perennial herb. This beauty grows 3 to 6 feet tall and benefits from regular pruning to encourage fresh new leaves. Otherwise you will need to stake it and the flavor is not quite as good. Grow in full sun to part shade and moist well-drained soil. The hollow celery flavored stems make great straw for your favorite tomato juice. Hardy in zones 4 to 8.

11. **Pot Marigold** – *Calendula officinalis* - A frost tender annual that prefers cool growing conditions, Prune back if needed during hot weather and continue to water until the weather cools. Grow in full sun to partial shade. Provide shelter from hot afternoon sun in warmer regions. The outer “petals” (ray flowers) are used for flavoring stews, soups, cheeses, and margarine. Thus it’s common name, pot marigold. You can easily and quickly grow it from seed to flower making it the perfect plants for eager and beginning gardeners, kids and those on a budget.

12. **Beebalm** – *Monarda didyma* - This perennial is loved by many; hummingbirds, butterflies, bees and of course gardeners. Look for powdery mildew resistant varieties or mask diseased leaves with nearby neighboring plants. The lemon scented leaves are used for tea and known for its calming and focus enhancing abilities. Deadhead for prolonged bloom. This beauty is a vigorous re-seeder. Thin plantings in spring to maintain good air flow and light penetration that helps reduce the risk of disease. Fortunately the fragrant leaves provide a bit of aromatherapy as you work. Grow in full sun and moist soil for best results. Bee balm spreads more rapidly and suffers more disease problems in shady locations. Hardy in zones 4 to 9.

Note purple monkshead (see #14)

13. **Betony** – *Stachys officinalis* - A quick look may trick you into thinking you are looking at a robust salvia. The spikey flowers and good-looking foliage make this a winner in both the herb and ornamental garden. This herb grows 1 ½ to 2 feet tall and has a long history of use for medicinal and magical purposes. Great for attracting bees and butterflies. Pink Cotton Candy is a new introduction with pink flowers. Grow in full sun to partial shade and moist well-drained soils for best results. Established plants will tolerate drought. Hardy in zones 4 to 8.

14. **White Monkshood** – *Aconitum napellus* ‘Album’ - A tall shade tolerant perennial that adds color to the mid summer and fall garden. A close look at the flowers reveals the source of its common name. It grows best in partial shade with moist organic soils. Provide plenty of water if you push this shade lover into the sun. The leaves and roots are poisonous so handle with care and do not plant these near Jerusalem artichokes where their poisonous roots might be mistaken for this edible plant. Flowers come in white, blue, purple, and bicolor. Hardy in zones 4 to 8

15. **Leopard Plant (Ligularia)** – *Ligularia dentata* ‘Britt Marie Crawford’ - The dark chocolate leaves of this ligularia make a bold statement in any garden. Teamed with the golden orange daisy like flowers on dark stems in late summer adds to its appeal. It grows 3 to 4 feet tall and 2 to 3 feet wide and prefers partial shade and moist soils. Attracts butterflies. Hardy in zones 4 to 9.

16. **Snow Princess Alyssum** – *Lobularia* ‘Snow Princess’ – More heat tolerant and vigorous than older varieties of sweet alyssum. I find the billowy growth habit adds an airy touch to gardens and containers. Plus the sweet fragrance of alyssum can’t be beat. Good nectar source for butterflies and beneficial insects. Grows 4 to 6 inches tall with a trailing growth habit and prefers full to part sun and will tolerate light frost.

17. **Coleus** – *Solenostemon scutellarioides* – Lots of sun and shade loving coleus on the market. Here the colorful leaves provide unity in the garden. Remove any flowers as they appear for neater more compact growth. Keep soil evening moist for best results. This annual is one of the first to succumb to frost so plan your fall garden accordingly.

18. **Flowering Tobacco** – *Nicotiana sylvestris* - The large leaves certainly show its family genealogy. A member of the tobacco family the fragrant flowers fill the evening garden with a sweet fragrance. The long tubular flowers attract butterflies and hummingbirds to the garden. Flowering tobacco varieties vary in size from 8 inches to 6 feet tall. This tall variety is topped with long narrow tubular flowers and is sure to be a show stopper in your garden. Annual that does reseed readily.

19. **Wendy’s Wish Salvia** – *Salvia* ‘Wendy’s Wish’ - A beauty in the garden and great for attracting hummingbirds and butterflies. A tall, 24 to 36” salvia, that is great as a focal point or allowed to intermingle with nearby flowers. Grow in full sun in the garden or a container. This heat tolerant salvia is an annual except in zones 9 to 11.

20. **Corydalis** – *Corydalis lutea* - Blooms from spring to frost, no deadheading needed and tolerates sun to part shade and well-drained soils. Sound too good to be true? Well, you will be weeding out unwanted seedlings. I opt for a bit more weeding so I can enjoy this beauty in my garden. Hardy in zone 5 to 8 (no luck with blue flowered varieties in colder climates).

21. **Polka Dot Plant** – *Hypoestes phyllostachya* – I first grew this as a houseplant. Like many it has found its way into the garden. Also known as Freckle-face it makes a great foliage plant for the garden and containers. It grows 1 to 2 feet tall and 12 inches wide. Pruning and growing in full sun can help encourage more compact growth. It performs well in full sun and moist soil.

22. **Big™ Rose with Bronze Leaf** – *Begonia benariensis* - Grow this begonia in sun and shade for equally stunning results. The bronze leaves make a nice backdrop for the pink flowers. These begonias grow 12 to 24 inches tall and work well in the garden or container. Performs best in well-drained soils and is frost sensitive. Annual except in zones 10 and 11.

23. **Gryphon Begonia** – *Begonia x hybrid* - It's all about the foliage with this begonia. It looks nice alone in a container or combined with other partial shade plants. Drought, heat and shade tolerance makes this a low maintenance plant. It grows about 14 to 16 inches tall and 16 to 18 inches wide. Hardy to 40 degrees

24. **Combo – New Guinea Impatiens** (*Impatiens hawkeri*)& **White Bacopa** (*Sutera*)

The larger flowers, nice foliage and hummingbird and butterfly appeal make the New Guinea impatiens a real plus. I find they do best in partial shade. Keep the roots cool and moist with proper watering and mulch to improve their full sun performance. The same goes with bacopa. Also known as water hyssop, this plant performs best in full to part sun in cooler temperatures with ample water. Newer varieties tend to be more heat tolerant.

25. **Disco Belle Hibiscus** – *Hibiscus moscheutos* 'Disco Belle' - A smaller scale (2 to 2 ½ feet tall) hardy hibiscus with very large flowers . Great for attracting butterflies to the garden. Grow in full sun or light shade and moist to wet soil. Prune back to 3 to 4" in late winter and wait. Hardy hibiscus are slow to emerge in spring so mark their location to avoid accidentally weeding them out in spring. Hardy in zones 4 to 9.

*For more information on these and other plants,
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