

## GARDEN NOTES

THANKS FOR STOPPING BY MY BLOG! I HOPE THAT YOU ENJOY READING ABOUT MY GARDENING EXPERIENCES, THINGS THAT ARE GOING ON IN MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE, COOL NEW PLANTS AND A WIDE RANGE OF OTHER THINGS. IF YOU ARRIVED HERE FROM MY WEBSITE, THANKS FOR VISITING! IF NOT, AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO VISIT THE MAIN SITE, SIMPLY GO TO [WWW.TROYBMARDEN.COM](http://WWW.TROYBMARDEN.COM) WHERE YOU WILL FIND WHAT I HOPE YOU WILL THINK IS A WEALTH OF GARDENING INFORMATION. THANKS FOR STOPPING BY AND I'LL SEE YOU IN THE GARDEN!

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2008

### Favorite Fall Flowers

(Originally Posted October 16, 2007 on MySpace)

Hello everyone! We've returned from our brief weekend in Branson, MO with my family and had a wonderful time. We were able to see a couple of good shows, spent a day at Silver Dollar City (which was made all the more fun by having my 10-year-old cousin with us, so we had a good excuse for riding every ride we could), and also were able to do some fun antiquing and shopping along the way. There wasn't much time for R&R, as my family is one of those who is up at the crack of dawn and goes until late at night and after all, we really only had 3 days. Needless to say, I needed a day of vacation after I got back from my vacation!

That said, some good things happened while I was away and being away for a few days always makes me appreciate the plants more when I return. There are several that are looking particularly well right now in the autumn garden and I thought I would mention a few of them. Begonia grandis, the hardy begonia, is stunning right now with its big "angelwing" leaves, red stems and fleshy pink flowers. It's one of my favorite shade plants and no garden should be without it. It spreads itself around the garden, but in a polite way by way of small bulbils that form in the leaf axils, fall off the plant and sprout wherever they land. They hardly have any roots at all, so if they come up where I don't want them I simply pull them out or dig them up and give them to friends.

The fall anemones have been flowering for the better part of a month now and no matter how much I swear at them for spreading a little too vigorously in some places, I can't bear the thought of being without them at this time of year. My absolute favorite is Anemone x hybrida 'Honorine Jobert' ( or 'Honorine Joubert' in some

BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ [2008 \(11\)](#)

▼ [March \(11\)](#)

[Yikes! It's A Yucca!](#)  
[A New Gardening Friend](#)  
[Greening Up The Indoors](#)  
[Aquatic Giants](#)  
[The Addict](#)  
[Begonias Aren't Just Bedding Plants](#)  
[Thanksgiving Cactus vs. Christmas Cactus](#)  
[Feathered Friends](#)  
[Favorite Fall Flowers](#)  
[Winter-flowering Hardy Cyclamen](#)  
[Germinating Giants](#)

ABOUT ME



TROY MARDEN  
[VIEW MY COMPLETE PROFILE](#)

references; I'm honestly not sure which is correct). This is saying something, because I am typically NOT a fan of white flowers. But the strong, sturdy stems, the excellent presentation and the cleanliness of the plant—the petals fall to the ground and don't turn brown while still hanging on the stalk—lead me to love this grand dame of the autumn flower garden. Others that I like almost as much are 'September Charm', which flowers a little earlier in the season and is pink, 'Whirlwind', a double-flowering white, and 'Prince Henry' ('Prinz Heinrich') with a fluffy, double pink flower. There are several other cultivars, as well and most are readily available through mailorder, if not at your local garden center. Truth be known, I have yet to meet a Japanese anemone I didn't like.

Chrysanthemums have gotten a bad rap over the past two decades. This is because they have been ruined by the hybridizers who have worked and worked to get them to form perfect little cupcakes covered in a bazillion unattractive, frumpy flowers in a horrific range of colors that Mother Nature never intended to exist. But if you'll get back to the true, old-fashioned perennial garden mums there are some lovely plants that will make your autumn garden sing! Cultivars like 'Clara Curtis', 'Sheffield Pink', 'Ryan's Yellow', 'Ryan's Pink', 'Mary Stoker' and others are truly perennial and put on a spectacular show in the garden every autumn. Yes, they can be floppy—so pinch them. Or better yet, just behead them with the hedge shears a couple of times between mid-May and mid-July and be done with it. Then let them grow and fill out from Mid-July onward to flower in October at a manageable height and without flopping all over their neighbors! My two favorites in this category, because I LOVE yellow, are 'Ryan's Yellow' and 'Mary Stoker'. 'Ryan's Yellow' is a stunning beauty because the buds are copper when the petals first begin to emerge and then turn soft, straw yellow upon opening. 'Mary Stoker' is a clear, buttery golden yellow throughout its display and she also has beautiful deep green, deeply cut foliage that adds to the plant's good looks.

A discussion on autumn flowers wouldn't be complete without mentioning Tricyrtis, the toad lilies. I have tried for many years to fall in love with these plants, but I have to be honest and say that our love affair has been a somewhat tepid one. I do like them. Don't get me wrong. They occupy places in almost every garden I work in. They flower at a time of year when little else is happening and I like the subtle beauty they impart to the garden. I have been most impressed, in my own garden, with a cultivar called 'Lightning

Strike', with boldly splotched and splashed yellow and green foliage. It looks good all through the season, even when it's not in flower. I tend to like the hybrids and cultivars of *Tricyrtis formosana* more so than those of *Tricyrtis hirta*. The *formosana*-types just seem to perform better here in the south and aren't so crispy looking by the end of the summer. There are some fairly obscure species that seem like they might have some potential and my friend Dan Heims at Terra Nova Nurseries is doing some really nice breeding with a number of them—especially the yellow-flowered forms. So I'm still waiting for this sort of tepid love affair to become a torrid romance. If it doesn't happen, I'm still not kicking them out of the bed entirely!

The other group of plants I must mention are the salvias. This refers specifically to the (mostly) annual or tender perennial types such as Mexican sage (*Salvia leucantha*), forsythia sage (*Salvia madrensis*), pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*), the Texas sages (*Salvia greggii*) and hybrids such as *Salvia* 'Anthony Parker' and others. I am not going to get into an exhaustive discussion about salvias—at least not now. I may devote a full spot to them later on. But the fall garden, especially the sunny garden, would be totally incomplete without these plants. Many of these will be annual in colder zones, but so be it. Many of them are annual for me in here in Tennessee and I grow them anyway. How many other plants will grow from a 4" pot to 3' x 3' shrub in one season and then go on to cover themselves in a profusion of flowers for anywhere from 2-3 months late in the season? Not that many! Salvias are definitely worth a little research and investment. Also, they are some of the last plants of the season that the hummingbirds will go berserk for as they begin their migration back south for the winter, so do it for the little hummers!

POSTED BY TROY AT 10:51 AM 

---

## 0 COMMENTS:

[Post a Comment](#)

## LINKS TO THIS POST

[Create a Link](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: Post Comments (Atom)