**What’s New Presentation April 23, 2014**

Sofie’s Picks - A listing of plants presented at the Brooklin Horticultural Society meeting April 23, 2014, a combination of new and/or newer introductions and/or other interesting plants and tips and ideas. I live on a 10 acre property located in zone 5b in Whitby, Ontario, Canada (located about ½ hour drive east of Toronto) and I love to garden.

**SOME GARDEN PLACES I SHOP AT IN THE DURHAM REGION:**

***Please support our local nurseries so we don’t end up shopping at box stores!***

Here is a list of places I frequent. If you know of anyone in this area that you would like to add, please let me know. For anyone reading this blog out of area, these are located in Ontario, Canada, zone 5, 5b or thereabouts, most of them in the Durham region where I live.

***Below are websites of garden centres that list all the plants they sell at their nursery or by mail order.* Most allow you to pick up your order if you do not want to pay for shipping. I refer to these websites to see if they carry the plants in my presentations and include them in my “Where to Buy” column. I prefer to shop locally in the Durham region. You may find the plants I feature at many other nurseries as well.**

[**www.gardenimport.com**](http://www.gardenimport.com) Mail Order Company, Thornhill, Ont. 1-800-339-8314 Pick-up allowed – Bayview Highway 7 area.

[**www.goldenbrookhostas.com**](http://www.goldenbrookhostas.com) Blackstock, Ontario (located just east of Port Perry) Mail order (Canada only) + pick up. Great website listing a huge selection of hostas with photos, prices and latest varieties. Tour their garden to see many varieties for sale.

[**http://www.lamrockscountrygarden.com**](http://www.lamrockscountrygarden.com) – hostas, roses, heuchera’s, astilbe, some perennials. Varieties & prices listed on website – located in Port Perry, 1670 Coates Rd. W. phone 905-985-5462, cash or cheques only

[**www.masonhousegardens.com**](http://www.masonhousegardens.com) 3520 Durham Road #1(Brock Rd), RR 4 PO Box 886 Uxbridge, ON L9P 1R4, south of Goodwood Rd.
905-649-3532 – New introductions, unusual plants, perennials, grasses, vines, shrubs, tropicals, succulents, vegetables + a huge selection of heritage tomatoes. *All varieties listed on their website – this is a family owned specialty nursery. You can tour the gardens as well.*

[**http://pickeringnurseries.com**](http://pickeringnurseries.com) Mail order company specializing in roses – hundreds of varieties available. Located in Port Hope, you can pick up your order if you wish – call ahead. Bare root spring and fall delivery, plus potted roses once the delivery season is over.

[**www.richters.com**](http://www.richters.com) Goodwood, Ontario Located on Highway 47, west of Brock Road. Mail order & pick-up. For all things to do with herbs in a greenhouse setting – plants, seeds, books, & a huge selection of dried herbs & teas. Sample for free various tea mixes. Check under events on the website for free seminars presented by guest speakers in the greenhouse. All lectures are now taped & available on the website if you cannot attend. You can also order or pick up a printed catalogue.

***The following websites do not list their plants so I don’t know what varieties they have for sale.* Therefore, you won’t see them listed on my “where to buy” column even though they may stock the plant**s. I will include these nurseries if I have visited in person and know they have the plants for sale.

**Century Home & Garden Greenhouses** at 1431 Hwy 7a, Port Perry ON L9L 1B5, 905-985-2672.

**Country Market Garden Centre**, 2535 Taunton Rd. E., Bowmanville, L1C 3K2, 905-263-2090 – has a good selection of perennials, roses, trees, shrubs, conifers, annuals and tropical plants at very reasonable prices. Also local produce, baked items and giftware. He always has something unique every year. No website. Brugmansias sold here.

[**www.kingswaygreenhouse.com**](http://www.kingswaygreenhouse.com) Oshawa, Ontario 905-434-3851 A family run business – Plants are not listed on their website, but they have some great varieties – some of their staff are master gardeners!

**John’s Perennials,** [**http://johnsgarden.wordpress.com**](http://johnsgarden.wordpress.com) 905-862-8175, Uxbridge, ON Perennials, annuals, roses, shrubs, trees, rare conifers + more.

May not be open every day, call ahead

[h**ttp://www.ottergreenhouses.com**](http://www.ottergreenhouses.com) 315 Medd Road, Port Perry, Ontario, L9L 1B2 | (905) 852-4187 Annuals, hanging baskets, perennials, - a family owned business

**Peter Keeping**, Bowmanville, Ontario – sells unusual & hard to find **clematis** as well as perennials at very reasonable prices– Peter imports clematis from Europe/England. Phone 905-697-7842, e-mail peterkeeping@hotmail.com. Call or e-mail for his list of current clematis for sale. Peter and Sheila grow over 250 clematis on their property. They also have assorted perennials and other plants for sale. Does not have a website.

**Pineridge Garden Centre** 2215 Brock Rd, Pickering, ON L1V 2P8 905-683-5952 No website.

[**www.rekkers.com**](http://www.rekkers.com) Rekker's Garden Centre, 2258 Regional Highway 2, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7 905-623-2300

[**www.sheridannurseries.com**](http://www.sheridannurseries.com) Whitby location, 410 Taunton Road West, Whitby, ON L1P 2A9 905 686-0844

[**www.vandermeernursery.com**](http://www.vandermeernursery.com) 905-427-2525 588 Lakeridge Rd. S., Ajax, ON (corner of Lakeridge and Bayley). They carry a huge selection of various plants – trees, shrubs, roses, perennials, annuals, seeds, giftware, etc.

It is Wednesday, April 23, 2014

**Garden Quote**: ***Someone’s sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago. Les Brown***

**EVENTS:**

**LAVENDER: Laveanne.com** – I came across this nursery at the Peterborough garden show. They have a four acre property located north of Port Hope and south of Peterborough in Cambellcroft. They carry over 80 varieties of lavender, have lavender fields and a beautiful lavender labyrinth. This would be a great summer outing. Please check their website for open garden dates. There is a nominal entry fee.

**RICHTERS.COM – TWO FREE SEMINARS – check their events section for more information**

**BEER**: for beer lovers, a free seminar on Sunday, April 27, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Growing and Brewing Hops with Nicholas Schaut, Hop Farmer and president of the Ontario Hop Growers Association. Nicholas is owner and operater of [www.bigheadhops.com](http://www.bigheadhops.com) a certified organic farm that grows hops commercially for Ontario craft breweries.

**ARTEMESIA** – herb of the year: Sunday, May 4th, all about Artemisia’s – first presentation by Koidu Sulev from 2-3 followed by another with Carmen Lindt from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Note – if you have the Richter’s catalogue, the correct date for this seminar is May 4, not May 5th as indicated in the catalogue).

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The next four weeks will be busy ones for gardeners – annuals, vegetables, flowers, hanging pots, trees and shrubs to be planted. I will leave trees and shrubs and perennials for the next couple of meetings, as they can be planted anytime if they are in pots.

**TIMELY TIPS**

**Spring Clean-up:**  For an incredible timesaver, a battery powered hedge trimmer is an excellent investment for cleaning up dead flowering stems/stalks in the spring in a matter of minutes, not hours.  No fuss, no muss, just mow down the debris. Use it on perennials, grasses, roses, lavender, etc.  Just be careful around wire supports or cages left in the garden from last year. I have a black and decker, 24 inch blade – powerful enough to get through some tough grass stems.

**Pole Beans**: plant the seeds directly in the ground when it has completely warmed – usually early June- as the seeds may rot. I place a water bottle (top and bottom cut out) over each seed to protect from rabbits, chipmunks, voles and slugs. You only need about 6 plants for a good crop all summer.

**Cutworms:**  forget toilet paper rolls, aluminum wrap, etc.  I use inexpensive dollar store wooden shish-ka-bob sticks (100 in a pack for $1.00).  Using two sticks per plant (either cut in half or use a whole stick), push each in the ground on opposite sides of the stem, smack-dab next to the stem.  Works well for all newly planted seedlings, including flowers.  One package of sticks will do 50 plants or 100 plants if cut in half. Obviously this is not feasible with a huge planting, but I use them on all my transplants. Or, you can simply let the cutworms get a couple of plants, you decide if it is worth the effort. The sticks can be left in place all summer.

 **Recipe for Red Lily Beetle spray**: They are out there already. Although I still squish, many do not like to do so. Here is a simple way to avoid squishing! 1 tsp. (5 ml.) liquid dish soap (not dishwasher soap) such as Palmolive; 1 tbsp. (15 ml.) mouthwash (Scope or similar); 4 cups water (1 litre) in a spray bottle.  Add dish soap last to prevent bubbles.  Shake gently, spray beetles.  This is a contact spray - you must hit the beetles - it will take approx. 2-3 minutes for beetles to die.  Also effective for aphids, pear slugs, asparagus beetles.  Leave the bottle in your garden, it will not go bad. I counted 19 beetles on one lily last year that were easily dealt with my spray.

**Transplanting:** I take a big pail of water with me and dunk the cell pack in the water to thoroughly soak it. I also take a margarine container with me to water the hole before planting. Make a little well around the transplant to hold water until it takes hold. I don’t bother with transplant fertilizer.

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**SEEDZOO:** Richters.com located in Goodwood ON, has started a program called SEEDZOO. Their aim is to preserve traditional and indigenous food plants from around the world. They search for rare and endangered food plants that you can grow in your own garden. You can buy the seeds at their Goodwood location or order on-line. Here is the site <http://www.richters.com/show.cgi?page=./SeedZoo/seedzoo.html> I will be growing the following plants from seedzoo this year:

***Okra*** *– one of the rare seed zoo seeds offered this year is* ***Nombo Giant Philippine Okra.*** *OKRA IS LIKE COUNTRY MUSIC – YOU EITHER LOVE IT OR HATE!! Okra is also like zucchini – if you leave it one day, too late – it can get huge and inedible – you must harvest regularly and at around 3-4 inches. Keep a pair of scissors in the vegetable garden for harvesting.*

 *I first encountered okra seedlings for sale about 4 years ago at a nursery on Kennedy Road in Scarborough called Valleyview. I had no idea how it would grow or what to do with the okras. It grew very well, with tropical like foliage and hibiscus flowers, and I actually harvested okras! I decided to roast them whole in the oven sprinkled with a bit of oil & sea salt, along with some other vegetables and found them to be quite tasty. However, I have purchased seeds of* ***Nombo Giant Philippine Okra*** *and will be growing them in the garden, along with okra Clemson spineless and burgundy okra. The latter two okras germinated almost overnight but the Nombo has taken a considerable longer time to germinate. (more on okra in the vegetable section)*

***Sweet Russian Striped Melon –*** *another seed zoo rare melon – here is the description for the Richter’s website**This little orange and yellow striped melon from the former Soviet Union has an incredible aroma, and is very sweet if grown in the right conditions. It needs hot dry weather to bring out its full potential. Applying Epsom salts a couple times during the season will increase sweetness as well. A beautiful little melon perfect for one person. Very vigorous vines loaded with fruit.*

***Hibiscus acetosella – Cranberry Hibiscus*** *– from Africa, with copper and burgundy foliage and a popular veggie in Cameroon and the Congo. The seeds germinated within a couple of days of planting, and should be an interesting plant in my red garden this year.*

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Please check the archived presentation for April, 2013 for a list of favourite clematis that I grow, how to grow figs – information noted from a seminar at Richter’s herbs given by Steven Biggs, and an extensive list of garden themes using annuals.

**I am repeating the paragraphs below taken from last year’s Apr. 2013 presentation as I really can’t say it any better.**

***By the time we meet again in late May, most of you will have already purchased your annuals for the year. I therefore would like to focus my April presentation on annuals so you can get a heads up on some new and exciting plants for your pots, hanging baskets, garden beds and annual groundcovers.***

*Annuals – I know I keep harping about leaving room for annuals in your garden beds and I will continue to do so. The garden will be full of colour right into October/November – you can’t do that with perennials. You should include them for their beauty, their flower power, their colours, their ability to self-seed, their versatility, I just love them. As in fashion and home design, you can change the look of your garden every year by accessorizing with annuals. Many of the annuals will provide you with free plants the following year as they love to self-seed. Transplant them en masse for maximum impact. The look changes every year, and the addition of mass plantings of free annuals will create a magical look in your garden – think of a whole bed of cosmos (favourites of finches) or misty verbena bonariensis (loved by monarchs) or Love- lies-bleeding or sunflowers. I saw golden fields of sunflowers throughout Europe and, in England, a sight I will never forget, 50 acres of lavender (perennial) blooming at its peak in row upon row of purple mounds. We saw it just before it was harvested. Many of these annuals will continue to bloom until frost, attracting hummingbirds and butterflies throughout the summer and fall.*

*Leave some spots in your garden beds for tall plants (like kiss me over the garden gate), some for medium plants (like cosmos) and leave the entire section at the front of a bed for a short growing annual, like the “ordinary” fibrous begonias or angel wing begonias which are so gorgeous planted en masse. They will grow in full sun as well as shade. If you have the room, why not think of creating a new flower bed devoted to annuals only, just like they do in the parks, upscale apartment buildings, government offices, etc. It is so much fun to research, plan and find the annuals – from seeds, self-sown or purchased plants. For the “plant snobs” that don’t do annuals, they are missing out on some fascinating plants – like the new supertunia vista petunias that don’t require grooming and make great groundcovers under shrubs or roses. New “uncommon” petunias come in new colours like black, exquisite pink edged in green, lemon yellow, raspberry blast and bi-colours of green & lime – no two flowers look alike. Vinca ”jams ‘n jellies blackberry” is a very dark purple, sultry new variety; Rudbeckia chim chiminee has ragged, shaggy golden flowers; and salvia “black & blue” (paired with red geraniums) are some more examples.*

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| **ANNUALS & TROPICALS Some plants listed are repeats but worth mentioning again. The best petunias in my mind are the supertunias – especially the supertunia vista series. The majority of the following plants have been purchased at Mason House Gardens. These are just a few of the many exciting, unusual, florific annuals and tropical plants and bulbs currently available at this nursery. More on perennials and grasses next month.****So here I would like to briefly talk about how I decide which annuals to grow. Check archived presentation dated April 2013 for lots of ideas.**1. **Grow uncommon common plants. Example:**
2. **Petunias – an easy example – check out the many ones listed below.**
3. **Marigolds – a shaggy one called simba, lulu gem – dime sized flowers in huge numbers, la bamba – a rambling type, how about the double one called vanilla cream, readily available.**
4. **Geraniums – again, from Mason House quite a selection – appleblossom rosebud, orange ice, one that looks like clusters of orange berries (name escapes me), zonal ones with variegated foliage, etc.**
5. **Cosmos & zinnias – we now have beautiful cosmos doubles in cranberry, pink and white, whites edged in raspberry, shaggy cactus zinnias, spider zinnias, etc.**
6. **Grow common plants in an uncommon way. Example:**
7. **Petunias – common petunias jelly bean style – grow every colour in a bed, including must have black**
8. **Geraniums – instead of red geraniums with a dracaena in the centre of a pot, plant your red geraniums, but try the beautiful double ivy red with a purple salvia in the centre or salvia black & blue. Include some baby breath like euphorbia diamond frost, or white scaevola.**
9. **Use various food themes for unique colour combos – neopolitan ice cream – stripes of brown, white & pink, caramel latte – brown grasses with cream petunias, berrylicious – petunias in colours of blackberry, strawberry, raspberry, and blueberry.**
10. **Sink a 2 gallon pot upside down in the ground about ½ way, plant 5-7 marigolds around the perimeter of the pot – looks like a giant black eyed susan. Or try another common annual around the pot.**
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| Acalypha “Jungle Cloak” | Gorgeous foliage plant in red, green and bronze. Use as an upright thriller in pots. Up to 36” tall by 24” wide. <http://thomasorchardsandnursery.com/newplants.html>  | Mason House |
| Alyssum “Snow Princess” | I finally found snow princess last year and grew it in my white garden. I was very pleased with it considering it did not get any attention at all. It grew about 2 ½ feet in diameter. The following description bears repeating <http://www.dallasplanttrials.org/lobularia.htm> “Every so often a new plant comes along that completely surprises me, and this one really surprised me. What could possibly be new about alyssum? Well, let me tell you, this isn’t like any sweet alyssum you’ve ever grown. Think of it more like alyssum crossed with kudzu; this plant GROWS! Unlike other varieties, ‘Snow Princess’ will hang from a basket as much as 4 to 5 feet (Yes, I said *feet!*), and if planted in the ground, it will easily spread 2 to 3 feet across. ‘Snow Princess’ is also a sterile hybrid, so it never sets seed, which means it is in constant flower. Like all royalty, ‘Snow Princess’ doesn’t like to share her spotlight, so be careful when planting her near other plants. She’ll outshine them and smother them. Personally, I think this alyssum is best planted by itself in containers to show off its spreading habit. It is incredible in hanging baskets or large pots, where it will form large balls of pure white flowers. Did I mention that the flowers are incredibly scented, too? Make sure not to plant in small containers, though, because this one needs a good-sized root ball or you’ll have to water a couple of times per day.”Alyssum – I saw a combination of “ordinary” alyssum in a mixture of pink, purple and white on a Christmas house tour in Whitby – still blooming in November. I thought it looked very pretty and romantic. | Otter GreenhousesMason House 2014 |
| Anagallis Monellii | Great in pots or ground, it is a slight trailer, getting about 12-18 across, about 8 inches tall. It comes in two colours, orange and blue. I very much love the blue, it is the same shade as the blue links I am including here for reference <http://www.anniesannuals.com/plt_lst/lists/search/lst.srch.asp?prodid=42&srch_term=ana>  | Mason House |
| Asparagus Meyeri Foxtail Fern | Foxtail fern – a neat fern with plume like foliage. Easily overwintered in pots.<http://www.thegardenhelper.com/psd/asparagus_meyeri.jpg>  | Most nurseries |
| Begonia Angel Wings | I love this begonia – it can get quite tall depending on the fertilizer program, comes in pink, red and sometimes white if you can find it. I like it because it grows and flowers in both full shade and full sun, does well in pots or in the ground, has shiny leaves, and gets better and better as the season progresses. It is also very easy to overwinter in a pot, and you take as many cuttings as you want in mid-winter. So easy! | Most Nurseries |
| Biden’s “Pirates Pearl” | We are familiar with the aggressive yellow version that blooms all summer, this one is in white. Rarely available. | Mason House |
| Coleus | A wonderful collection of new coleus from Mason House this year. Gold anemone, Smallwood Driveway, Hermit Crab, Under the Sea Molten Coral, Sea Lagostino, Midnight Rambler, Sea King Crab, Sea Bonefish, Sea Lion fish, Red Sea Coral, Sea Electric Coral, Sea Lime Shrimp, Gnash Rambler, Grape Expectations, Juicy Luicy. Check this website for photos – all available at Mason House and then some. Scroll to coleus. <http://www.hortcoutureplants.com/products/avant-garde-annuals>  |  |
| Cosmos atrosanguineus “Choco Mocha” | I love this plant, and have at least one every year planted in the ground. I find it does better in ground. It produces deep burgundy flowers, about 2” across, that smell like chocolate at various times of the day. It will form a tuber, which sometimes can be successfully overwintered. I was able to get it to overwinter only one winter.<http://www.montereybaynsy.com/C/cosmos_atrosanguineus1.jpg>  | Most nurseries |
| Eupatorium copillifolium “Elegant Feather” | This is very new to me, a very tall – up to 5 feet, very upright with pillar like growth, lacy looking – grown more for its foliage rather than its insignificant flowers. I am quite excited about this plant.<http://plantlust.com/plants/eupatorium-capillifolium-elegant-feather/>  | Mason House |
| Geranium Appleblossom rosebud | An exquisite geranium with pink and white double rosebud shaped florets. Lovely!<http://www.fuchsia.be/en/product-details/pelargonium/rosebud/appleblossom-rosebud>  | Mason House |
| Hypoestes | I love hypoestes or polka dot plants – grown for their beautiful coloured foliage, covered in spots or splotches of colour – pink, white or red. I recently discovered that the pot I purchased of white hypoestes was in fact a communal pot of several plants jammed together in the centre. I removed the soil, gently pried each stem apart and got 7 plants for less than $2.00. I transplanted each seedling to their own individual pot and will put them in the white garden this year. <http://wimastergardener.org/?q=Hypoestes>  | Most nurseries |
| Ipomea “South of the Border chipotle” | A new sweet potato vine with green and black foliage, which I will be trying for the first time. It will go in the black garden this year, as the theme will be chili, black pepper and lime.<http://www.hortcoutureplants.com/products/avant-garde-annuals>  | Mason House |
| Oxalis “Plum Crazy” | Lovely pink and purple foliage, with yellow flowers. Not sure if I care for the yellow flowers but I think it will look fabulous in the yellow garden. Only about 6” tall, moderate spread. <http://avantgardensne.com/perennials/container-perennials/oxalis-vulcanicola-plum-crazy>  | Mason House |
| Oxypetalum “Heaven Born” | Tweedia – Can be grown as a short vine. The colour of the flowers will knock your socks off – a beautiful turquoise with little spots, a very rare colour in the plant world. <http://www.floristsreview.com/main/august2008/freshflower0808.html> | Grown mine from seed |
| Petunia “Debonair Black Cherry” | This is just about the blackest petunia flower I have ever seen. It looks wonderful with yellow or rose coloured petunias. I grew it in my jelly bean garden last year, representing the “black” jelly beans amongst all the mixed colours. | Mason House. Vandermeer |
| Petunia “Picasso in Pink” | Picasso in Pink is similar to Pretty Much Picasso, but not as aggressive and spreading less, and more mounding. Also, the colour is more subtle – pale pink with the same wonderful green edge – it is a beauty. Did you know that petunias are easy from cuttings – buy your plants early and take the cuttings to get free plants as they are more expensive than traditional 4 pack petunias. Also, these groundcover type petunias are self-cleaning and do not require cutting back half-way through the season. Just plant and enjoy. Grow them in the ground, large pots or hanging baskets. You only need one plant per pot – 10” or 16”, it doesn’t matter – if well fertilized, it will fill the whole container & drape over the edge. | Mason House Gardens |
| Petunia “Pretty Much Picasso” | Purply rose flower edged in chartreuse. I just love this petunia. The ones I grew in a pot fizzled out (I am not good with pots), but the 5 in the ground under my spindly roses filled the entire space – they each grew at least 4 ft. in diameter, required no deadheading and kept the area free of weeds for the entire summer.  | Mason House Gardens |
| Petunia supertunia “Royal Magenta” | Will be growing it for the first time this year – it is magenta with a black centre. Looks beautiful. | Mason House |
| Petunia supertunia vista“Bubblegum” | Bubblegum (pink), fuscia, and silverberry – I use them as groundcovers under my roses. They can grow up to 6 feet in diameter, no deadheading or fussing required. | Mason House, Vandermeer, Pineridge |
| Plectranthus “Mona Lavender” | **Plectranthus foliage plant 'Mona Lavender'**  I love this plant – the leaves on the upper surface are green, while the under surface are deep purple – almost black. It has light lavender flowers late in the season, but I grow it like I would coleus. It is very drought tolerant and looks great in my purple garden. Now to try to find someone that sells it! <http://www.montereybaynsy.com/P/plectranthus_mona_lavender1.jpg>  | Mason House it listed last year. |
| Scaevola Paper Doll | One of my new favourite plants – while not so new, I haven’t grown it much before. It blooms continuously until frost, spreads and is very easy to grow – very drought tolerant also. Great in pots. Try it, you will like it. Purple flowers, also comes in white and pink. <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/136163588703818792/>  | Mason House, most nurseries |
| Strobilanthes | Grow it for the beautiful, shiny leaves in various shades of purple. You might even get it to flower! <http://wimastergardener.org/?q=PersianShield>  | Mason House |

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| **BULBS Mason House lists over 20 varieties of colocasia – many cool ones with massive leaves, plus a huge assortment of various bulbs, including dahlias.** |
| Alocasia Mayan Mask | What an incredible alocasia for a real tropical look – hopefully available at Mason House this year.<http://www.briansbotanicals.net/products/full_eee4ea19eccddc75f4631aab5eb6b9b7.jpeg> | Mason House |
| Alocasia “sting ray” | **Elephant Ear ‘Stingray’ (Alocasia hybrid)** Resembling an aquatic stingray with a long pointed tail, this new and unusual alocasia adds a touch of the exotic to your garden or patio. The large, round green leaves have a long, thin green tail at the terminal end of each leaf. This unusual alocasia mutation is fast growing and can reach 5-6’ tall. Prefers a partially shady location with moist, fertile soil. <http://www.logees.com/Elephant-Ear-Stingray-Alocasiahybrid/productinfo/R1689-2/>  | Got one finally in 2013 from Mason House |
| Colocasia “Puckered Up” | Very dark heavily puckered leaves – a really cool looking colocasia. <http://www.briansbotanicals.net/Colocasia-Hybrids/Colocasia-Puckered-Up-ppaf>  | Mason House |

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| **HERBS – Last month I told you about a very interesting book called “The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth”** **by Jonny Bowden, and featured the best vegetables. This month, I have included best Herbs, Spices and Condiments. While the spices are not something we can grow here, I am including them anyway, as well as the only condiment made from apples. The ones followed by an asterisk are considered super herbs/spices.** |
| Cardamom |  |
| Cinnamon\* |  |
| Cloves |  |
| Cumin |  |
| Garlic\* | Many varieties available at Richter’s. Check their website or catalogue. Looking forward to our Garlic speaker in the fall. |
| Ginger\* |  |
| Mustard seeds |  |
| Oregano\* | Profusion Greek oregano is nice from Richter’s. I grew it in a pot and overwintered it in the garage. Check out their very interesting ornamental oregano’s including Zorba Red, Herrenhausen, Bristol Cross and golden oregano – all are edible but unusual. |
| Parsley | The Italian parsley is the tastiest. I don’t bother from seed, as it can be difficult. I purchase a pot of parsley for $3.00, gently pry apart the seedlings and plant directly in the garden. You will get dozens and dozens of seedlings in one pot! Parsley is quite frost tolerant, but not sure how seedlings would fare if planted this early. It freezes very well for a winter supply. |
| Rosemary | -Try foxtail rosemary – beautiful foxtail like plumes <http://www.richters.com/Web_store/web_store.cgi?product=X5033-800&show=&prodclass=F018&cart_id=2656069.9569> -and tall BBQ rosemary <http://www.richters.com/Web_store/web_store.cgi?product=X5031-700&show=&prodclass=F018&cart_id=2656069.9569> - for pots or groundcover, Huntington carpet is a ground cover type and wonderful in pots as it drapes over the edge, as does “Blue Rain” rosemary which flowers nicely as well. <http://www.richters.com/Web_store/web_store.cgi?product=X5034-700&show=&prodclass=F018&cart_id=2656069.9569> |
| Sage |  |
| Thyme | I love the plain one called vulgaris from Richter’s. Uniform, spreads and does very well in a pot, overwintered in the garage, drought tolerant. There are so many to choose from, including ornamental ones – all fragrant. |
| Turmeric\* |  |
| Vinegar – apple cider | Have some in your salad. I purchase only organic apple cider vinegar which includes the “mother”. |
| Black pepper | Runner up |

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| **A FEW MORE HERBS – check** [**www.laveanne.com**](http://www.laveanne.com) **for upcoming open garden dates this summer at this newly discovered lavender nursery. Located in Cambellcroft – north of Port Hope, south of Peterborough. 80 varieties grown, many for sale, plus fields of lavender in rows, and a wonderful lavender labyrinth (there is an admission fee).** |
| Lavender at Richter’s | [www.richters.com](http://www.richters.com) 39 named varieties of seeds and/or plants available at Richter’s. Here are 5 that I grow and like very much:-**Munstead** – most common in my garden and performs well-**Grosso** – can get 3’ by 3’ – has not become that big in my garden**-Gros bleu** – according to Richter’s, this one is better than Grosso.-**Phenomenal** – a new variety with superior performance over other hardy varieties. Tolerant to heat and humidity, and hardy to zone 4 and resistant to disease. Only $6.25 at Richter’s.**-Seal** – what attracted me to this variety was the flower stems, held high above the foliage – like butterflies.  | Richter’s |
| Lemon Verbena | Delightful lemon fragrance – I grow it only to rub the leaves as walk by. It can get big and bushy! | Richter’s, Vandermeer |
| Onion, Egyption or walking onion |   [young quarts](http://www.montereybaynsy.com/O/onion_egyptian_walking1.jpg)  These onions will give you nice greens very early in the season – right now as a matter of fact. No bulb is formed at the bottom, these topsetters have a cluster of small bulbs on top of the stalk, and sometimes the topsets get topsets too! If not harvested for pickling or salads, the weight of them makes the stalk fall to the ground and they will root, hence the 'walking onion!' They can become a nuisance so grow in pots or designate an out of the way section for them. They are perennial. | Richter’s |
| Pineapple sage | Rub the leaves to release the pineapple fragrance. I prefer the golden pineapple sage called aureum – it has beautiful gold leaves and gets quite bushy – you may be lucky and get some red flowers in the fall. | Mason House |

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| **CLEMATIS –** |
| Aromatica | This clematis is rarely available, so buy it while you can. The tiny purple 4-petaled flowers, each the size of a quarter, are produced in huge numbers. Your garden will be filled with fragrance. It is also a long bloomer. Pruning group 3 <https://www.gardenimport.com/spblvl3.php?lvl=Clematis&nm=x_AROMATICA&ref=CL5525>  | Garden Import |
| Inspiration | Just found this in 2013, it is a non-climbing type, so grow it in a tall tomato cage. It bloomed the entire summer, pink flowers, with disease free foliage. One of my new favourites. Pruning group 3 or C | Vandermeer in 2013 – this year?? |
| Mrs. Harvey | One of my favourites, it blooms all summer. Exquisite flowers! Pruning group 3 or C<https://www.gardenimport.com/spblvl3.php?lvl=Clematis&nm=MRS._HARVEY&ref=CL4025>  | Garden import |
| Sweet Summer Love | There is a white clematis called Sweet Autumn clematis, loaded with small white flowers in the fall. This is a new fragrant purple version which promises to be just as florific. Just planted mine in 2013 so don’t have any experience with it yet. <https://www.gardenimport.com/spblvl3.php?lvl=Clematis&nm=SWEET_SUMMER_LOVE&ref=CL4750>  | Garden Import |

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| **SHRUBS – I am only mentioning one shrub this month simply because it you see if for sale, buy it as it was sold out everywhere last year. It blooms one month before the rest, blooms on new wood so can be heavily pruned in the spring, has lacy white flowers that turn pink/red as the season progresses, and will continue to bloom all summer into the fall, with less colour fading if planted with some afternoon shade. Lots of interest by visitors for this shrub. Below is a description I found from this website worth repeating, for as if not enough to get the great blooms, it also has vibrant fall leaf colour! I would like to plant a hedgerow of Quickfires. One of my favourite shrubs!** [**http://gardenforeplay.avantgardensne.com/?page\_id=666&paged=2**](http://gardenforeplay.avantgardensne.com/?page_id=666&paged=2) |
| Hydrangea Quick Fire | *“We were walking through the nursery with a couple of friends, observing which plants displayed the most exciting autumn color, when this Hydrangea stopped us in our tracks. The fall foliage on the panicle Hydrangea,* ***‘Quickfire’****, was spectacular! Its chunky lace cap type blossoms were fading to a lovely shade of mauve rose, but it was the warm red to amber coloring of the leaves that stopped us in our tracks. Interestingly, blocks of* ***Hydrangea paniculata ‘’Limelight’’*** *were grouped nearby, and their foliage was just an ordinary shade of green. We checked online, but the literature on ‘****‘Quickfire’’*** *didn’t glorify its fall color. Hmm…was this due to the weather this season, or perhaps our magic touch? Upon further investigation we learned that indeed this selection was an autumn star.****‘’Quickfire’’*** *blooms on new wood, so there is little danger that you will be without blossoms after a severe winter. The large panicles (to 12”) of white sterile and fertile flowers form early in the season, and will develop rosy red tones as they age. The stems have a dark red tint, which further accentuates the blossoms. Plants grow 6-8’ tall and 8-10’ wide.  Pruning can be done in late winter or early spring.****‘Quickfire’*** *prefers full sun or partial shade and is not fussy about soil or moisture, although plants will be happier if irrigated .“* |  |

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| **VEGETABLES - try some in pots. Here are some suggestions. Grow in 3-4 gallon pots, place a heavy duty tomato cage over the pot for tomatoes and pole beans and cucumbers – try cherry tomato sungold or ilde, pole beans, any cucumber, or one called munchkin, swiss chard bright lights, a herb pot with rosemary, parsley, basil, lavender, a marigold like lulu gem for colour, even potatoes if you have a big pot. Try the Egyption onion in pots – they will survive the winter. To dazzle your friends, plant a few cloves of garlic really early in spring amongst your perennials. Plant 5, 7, 9 or more, in a group, about 4 inches apart. The stems will twist and turn as they grow, creating bizarre scenes in your garden. You may even get some garlic to harvest in the fall.** **I will be growing an heirloom climbing summer squash called “Trombetta di Albenga” that produce long, curvy squash that will hang down from my hopscotch arbour. Sweet corn Mirai is also on the menu, as are peanut pumpkins, peppers, beets, carrots, onions and more.** |
| Asparagus | **Asparagus** – this is a perennial vegetable that is so easy to grow. If you don’t have the room, consider including it in your perennial border. I would plant it at the back, or perhaps in a sunny corner – one plant in the corner, flanked by two on each side for a total of 5. Don’t buy asparagus without knowing which variety it is – you want to purchase a male variety. Two suggestions are Guelph Millennium and Jersey Knight – male asparagus varieties produce more spears and do not seed about. After you finish picking, you can look forward to a wonderful display of 6-7 foot tall ferny, lacy plants. Perennial | Most nurseries |
| Beans – PoleFasoldAsparagus Bean, Red Pod | **Beans:** I don’t bother with bush beans anymore and grow only pole beans, which take up much less space. They are quite ornamental trained up a large tomato cage or metal or wooden trellis. My favourite pole bean is one called “Fasold”. I got the seeds back in the 90’s from a BC company that no longer exists. However, they are available on line. They are a tasty green French filet type bean, very uniform in their growth habit, providing beans right until frost. Renee’s seeds sells a tri-colour package which includes 3 different pole bean varieties – purple peacock, yellow pole wax and blue lake. (See TIMELY TIPS ON BEANS AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS PRESENTATION ON HOW TO PREVENT HAVING YOUR BEAN SEEDLINGS CHOMPED BY “CREATURES” IT WORKS!)We have all seen those long yard long green beans in our grocery stores. They don’t always look that great. Have you ever tried to grow your own? It is very easy. Grow a new red variety called Asparagus Bean, Red Pod offered as seeds by Richter’s this year. They grow like a pole bean, so a trellis or tall tomato cage is required. They are very ornamental with their long red beans hanging on the trellis, even if you don’t want to eat them! Harvest before they get too long for the best flavour. <http://www.richters.com/Web_store/web_store.cgi?product=X8035-400&show=&prodclass=F101&cart_id=2656069.9569>  | Richter’s |
| Leeks | Use a dibber if you can find one. Poke a hole, drop in the seedling and leave it without putting soil over it. The deeper, the better. The farther apart, the bigger leek you will get. What to do about the leek moth – don’t plant in the same plot every year. I foolishly removed most of my “mothed” leeks but left some of the damaged plants in the garden until late fall – they recovered and I ended up with a small harvest. I should have left them all, damaged or not. My leeks are never too large nor do they look like the ones you get in the grocery stores. I think I plant them too close together. I am not sure leeks are worth growing! | Any nursery |
| Okra | *Okra is like country music – you either love it or hate it!* I first saw okra plants for sale at a Scarborough location called Valleyview Gardens. I always like to try something different so I bought a pot of plants, gently separated them and ended up planting about 1 dozen or so. They grew from 3 to 5 feet in height, produced pretty hibiscus like flowers and loads of okra. I decided I needed more plants the following year so grew my own from seed purchased at Richter’s Herbs. The following year, I even planted seeds **directly** in the garden and had great success, with loads of okra.  I had no idea how to cook okra, so I decided to roast it, along with several other vegetables like potatoes, parsnips, mushrooms, zucchini, peppers, etc. Drizzle all with oil, sprinkle with sea salt, and roast about 20 -30 minutes at 400 degrees on parchment lined rimmed cookie sheets, even better in a convection oven. Keep an eye, some vegetables will cook faster than others. | Seeds at Richter’sClemson Spineless, Burgundy, Nombo Giant Philippine Okra |
| Squash butternut | Squash – I only grow butternut squash – they are the meatiest and easy to peel. I grow the vines in one of my boxed beds. This helps to keep the vines contained within the bed. I am trying a new one this year called baby butternut squash “Honey Nut” producing 1 pound fruits – enough for one meal from Renee’s seeds. | Renee’s Garden seeds |
| Tomato | If you are going to grow only one tomato, I would suggest a cherry tomato variety called “Sungold”. Mason House Gardens.com had starter plants available last year, otherwise, you will have to order seeds online. By far the tastiest and most liked by visitors to the garden, it is a golden/orange colour, very prolific, producing until frost. Two other cherry tomatoes I highly recommend are “Yellow Pear” and Ilde, both with yellow pear shaped tomatoes. Ilde can have huge trusses of golden fruits until frost. I always grow various sizes & shapes and a rainbow of colours in red, yellow, gold, orange, white, pink, black, striped. Mason House Gardens will have 100 varieties this year, mostly heirloom – all labelled with great descriptions.***Tip:*** The easiest way to grow tomatoes is to use metal spiral poles – an investment at about $5.00 each from Lee Valley and other garden centres. I leave only one stem and gently wind it around the pole – no pesky tying required! Interplant your tomato patch with nasturtiums (also edible), marigolds and/or basil. I never have trouble with insects. However, tomato hornworms will occasionally visit. I just let them be – they turn into lovely hawk moths. | Mason House – 100 varieties,Faye Collins – Brooklin member– grown to order |