**Brooklin Horticultural Society Presentation for April 24, 2013 meeting**

What’s New by Sofie Bigham - A listing of plants presented at the Brooklin Horticultural Society meeting Wednesday, April 24, 2013 - a combination of new introductions, some uncommon common plants and other interesting plants you may have never heard of plus presented by an amateur, plant addicted gardener.

Sofie Bigham e-mail – bigham@sympatico.ca , 905-655-5929

Here is a description of my garden.

This is a private garden, not a nursery. Free open gardens are scheduled each year.

Located in zone 5b, Whitby, Ontario, about ½ hour drive from Toronto east. This 10 acre property was featured in the Feb. /Mar. 2012 special issue of Canadian Gardening magazine. Some visitors have described it as a virtual mini botanical garden. I am a plant collector with thousands of plants showcased in four main areas. First, a 100’dry stone wall surrounds a garden dedicated to roses & groundcover petunias. It leads to the woodland setting of the 300’ long Austrian Pine Allee, underplanted with hostas and groundcovers. Clematis flourish up the pine trees in the dappled shade. At the end of the Allee is the vegetable garden, enclosed with dry stone walls on three sides and an asparagus “wall” on the fourth side. Within the walls are hedges of Austin roses, lavender, boxwood, and chives. Flowers are always included for pollination. The last main garden is the maze-like circular 84’ diameter perennial garden , planted colour wheel style in 6 separate colours. Additional smaller beds for 2013 include the tropical garden, the hopscotch path, & themed gardens “pink panther” (black & pink), “jelly bean” (assorted colours of one cultivar), & “chocolate mint” (brown grasses with chocolate coleus). June is rose month (450+), July is primetime for daylilies – over 300 in bloom throughout + beautiful spider & UFO daylilies. The tropical & vegetable gardens are best in August. Fall is peak time for mums, asters and grasses, plus many annuals such as cosmos, unique perennial and annual grasses, kiss-me-over-the-garden-gate, love-lies-bleeding, zinnias, petunias, sunflowers, nicotiana, etc.

Some garden places I shop at in the Durham region:

**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, but you may find the plants 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> – hostas, roses, some perennials. Varieties & prices listed on website – they have not updated their website since 2012 so don’t know what is happening there – located in Port Perry

[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 not a mail order company – a family owned specialty nursery. You can tour the gardens as well.*

<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 are generic – they 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 plants.**

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.

[www.kingswaygreenhouse.com](http://www.kingswaygreenhouse.com) Oshawa, Ontario 905-434-3851 A family run business – Plants are not listed on their website

John’s Perennials, <http://johnsgarden.wordpress.com> 905-862-8175, Uxbridge, ON Perennials, annuals, roses, shrubs, trees, rare conifers + more. Open weekends only

<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). Plants not listed. They carry a huge selection of various plants – trees, shrubs, roses, perennials, annuals, seeds, etc.

**The best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago. The next best time to plant a tree is right now. *Proverb***

It is April 24th, 2013

Here are some announcements:

First, a free seminar at Richter’s Herbs on Sunday, April 28th, 2013, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Healing with Herbs, speaker Chad Cornell, master herbalist. On May 5th, from 1:00 to 4:00, an afternoon devoted to the 2013 Herb of the Year, all about Elderberry. Check the website under events [www.richters.com](http://www.richters.com) for more details. The seminars are now recorded so you can catch them on-line if you missed any. Richter’s greenhouse is looking spectacular right now, just filled with a huge assortment of herbs – lavender, mint, rosemary, basil, sages, and so many other unusual plants and herbs. They also sell a huge assortment of various dried herbs and teas, as well as seeds. Richter’s is located in Goodwood, on Highway 47, a couple of kilometres west of Brock Road.

A couple of interesting recent seminars at Richter’s:

Sea Buckthorn – a shrub that produces what is called a “miracle berry” – the growers on this website can’t keep up with the demand for the berries <http://www.thehealingarc.com/seabuckthorn.php> . Another interesting article on Sea Buckthorn is here <http://www.alive.com/articles/view/22622/guess_whats_coming_to_dinner> .

The other seminar I found fascinating was growing figs in our climate presented by Steven Biggs on April 21st. Check his website for more information. <http://www.grow-figs.com/fig-pig> Why not grow a fig on your patio? It is surprisingly easy and I learned a few things at this seminar. You can pick up a hardy fig at Richter’s – Chicago Fig, zone 5b, for the huge price of $6.25. While still fresh in my memory, I summarized the seminar for future reference in my quest to grow figs. You will find it at the end of this presentation.

(I have 4 figs currently growing in the ground in my vegetable garden. They behave like buddleias, die to the ground and come back from the base to grow about 5-6 feet tall in one season. They produced figs but only one ripe one. They are tropical looking & a conversation piece. I wish now that I know more that I had put them in pots instead of in the ground as I am missing out on the early crop every year. I have one growing in a pot, overwintered in the unheated garage one winter and it produced 8 ripe figs! ( I would advise to grow them in pots and overwinter in your garage.)

 On your way to Richter’s, why not drop in to Mason House Gardens, located on Brock Road north, just south of Goodwood Rd. Mason House will carry over 35 varieties of vegetables this year, including 35 varieties of peppers, 37 varieties of lettuce, 8 varieties of potatoes, dinosaur kale, wasabi arugula and over 100 varieties of tomatoes - most of them heirloom, plus the new grafted tomatoes called Mighty Matos. Mighty Mato’s are heirloom tomatoes grafted onto hardy rootstock, apparently producing more tomatoes with less disease. Super sweet golden yellow Sungold cherry tomato, usually only available as seed, will be offered this year along with Ilde, another tasty and heavy producer of yellow pear shaped cherry tomatoes. Besides vegetables, Mason House carries unusual shrubs & trees and perennials, plus a huge assortment of annuals and tropicals not sold at most nurseries for some reason. Please keep in mind that all these little plants growing in pots will go from ugly duckling to white swan in a matter of days and weeks, providing you with spectacular displays all summer. Check my recommendations in the presentation below\*\*.

**Fairy Gardens** are the current rage in gardening. So far, I have seen Fairy Garden plants, accessories & Fairies at Sheridan Nurseries and at Mason House Gardens. I am sure other nurseries are in as well. These little miniature gardens would be a great project or gift for yourself as a patio, for your kids or grandkids.

**Clematis** is a must for a lush tropical look. I grow dozens up my Austrian Pines. Mason House will be stocking over 80 clematis in 2013. Peter Keeping also sells many clematis – call him and he will e-mail you his extensive list - phone 905-697-7842, e-mail peterkeeping@hotmail.com. Check out Garden Import’s website also for a list of newer clematis. All the nurseries have clematis on their benches, but you will have to visit them in person to see what they are selling this year.

 So how does one choose from such a huge assortment of clematis? Peter Keeping is our guest speaker in June, so I am including a comprehensive list of beautiful uncommon varieties for you to try and if any are on Peter’s list, you can pre-order and I am sure he will bring them to the meeting or you can pick them up at his home. Most of the varieties on my list are available at Mason House as well. My list includes favourites of the ones I am currently growing in my garden, some new ones I am ordering this year, pruning information, photo links, and my personal description of each variety.

**PERENNIALS** – I will tell you about some new introductions next month – May 2013

**SHRUBS AND TREES AND TROPICALS** – again, I will leave these until May. Think about adding tropicals in pots on your patio – bananas, figs, palms, eucalyptus, cannas, plants from Australia, etc.

**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, 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 enmasse 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 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 enmasse. 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. **(Check out my garden themes at the end of this presentation\*.)** 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.

|  |
| --- |
| **ANNUALS & TROPICALS\*\*** |
| Petunia Pretty Much Picasso | Last year I told you about Petunia Pretty Much Picasso – a 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 Picasso in Pink | Picasso in Pink is similar to Pretty Much Picasso, but not as aggressive, and more mounding. Also, the colour is more subtle – paler pink with the same wonderful green edge. Looking forward to this petunia this year. 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 Debonair Black Cherry | This is just about the blackest petunia flower I have ever seen. Several Black Cherries will be included in my “Jelly Bean” garden this year. I am planning on growing numerous colours of petunias in a large area, and will include Black Cherry as the liquorice jelly beans. If you like lots of colour- why not create a jelly bean garden – choose a plant that comes in many colours and plant several – include no more than two additional different plants if you require additional colour. | Mason House |
| Pansy Cool Wave | We have all heard of wave petunias, well we now have wave pansies developed by the same people as the wave petunias. A new unique spreading and trailing type pansy called Cool Wave is an exciting breakthrough as we can have hanging baskets right now, we don’t have to wait until the last frost date!! You can also plant them in the ground; they will grow 2-3 feet in diameter. This is great news for those of us that are anxious to get growing in March & April. It is also said to overwinter in zone 5, making it a perennial that will take us from April to the fall – I will let you know how it fairs over the hot summer months. [www.msucares.com/news/print/sgnews/sg12/sg121126.html](http://www.msucares.com/news/print/sgnews/sg12/sg121126.html)  | Mason HouseHome DepotMost nurseries? |
| Viola Velocity | Violas are prolific bloomers. Most pansies & violas love the cold, hate the heat and we generally remove the scraggly plants when summer comes. Velocity is purported to bloom all summer – I will definitely try velocity this year to see if it is true.  | Mason House |
| Sunflowers | Folks, if you have a chain link fence, a barnyard wall, a tall wooden fence or just a plain piece of ground somewhere, why not grow a bunch of sunflowers. I would suggest at least 5 of each variety planted in rows. It will look incredible and you will attract many birds when the seeds form. I have found a great Canadian web site with fast delivery. [www.seedsandmore.net](http://www.seedsandmore.net) offers several collections at great prices. Check out the sunflower collections – the tall collection consists of 10 varieties for the incredible price of 9.95; the giant collection, 6 varieties for $6.95; the dwarf collection, 6 varieties for 7.95. Each variety is individually packed and labelled, with a very generous number of seeds. Sunflowers are so easy to grow - sow the large seeds after all danger of frost. Not picky about soil type, all they need is direct sun.  | [www.seedsandmore.net](http://www.seedsandmore.net) From seed at most nurseries |
| Alyssum **Snow Princess** | I have not grown Snow Princess yet but I found the report below very intriguing and will definitely grow it this year. Here is the description direct from this website. <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 GreenhousesOther nurseries?? |
| Annual Verbena Lanai Twister | I love the arrangement of colours on this verbena. It performed very well in my pink garden last year, blooming until the fall. Cut off dead blooms. <http://www.bobvila.com/vinca-jams-n-jellies-blackberry/2439-7-new-must-have-annuals/slideshows?s=2#!1>  | Mason HouseSuperstoreOtter |
| Vinca  | Vinca” Jams ‘n Jellies Blackberry” Here is a new colour for vinca, unique, velvety deep purple with white eye. In some settings, the deep purple flower petals appear almost black, making this color work beautifully in combination with blue, pink, white or lavender. I have grown annual vinca (not the spreading type), in rich soil in the vegetable garden. It grew into a lovely mound & was covered with flowers ‘til frost. It looks very much like impatiens but for full sun and will tolerate drought conditions. <http://www.bobvila.com/vinca-jams-n-jellies-blackberry/2439-7-new-must-have-annuals/slideshows?s=2#!2>  | Mason House |
| Zinnia Profusion Coral Pink | I love the Profusion zinnias. They are low growing plants with 1 ½ inch flowers. This new colour has profuse soft pink flowers that turn unique shades of pink as they age. The 12 to 18” tall plants bloom until frost. Very resistant to powdery mildew & in late fall you end up with perfect little brown flowers. Also comes in several other colours. <http://www.harrisseeds.com/storefront/p-12986-zinnia-profusion-coral-pink.aspx>  | Mason House |
| Zinnia Red Spider | An uncommon common plant. Another unusual zinnia, doesn’t grow too tall but has dainty bright red spidery flowers, about 1” across and blooms all until frost. Best planted in groups of 3, 5, 7 or more.http://www.seedsandmore store.com/catalog.php/seedsandmore/pd2022439  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| BULBS |
| Alocasia “sting ray” | **Elephant Ear ‘Stingray’ (Alocasia hybrid) Jeff Mason is trying to get this variety – stay tuned**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. I have never grown but love the above description.<http://www.logees.com/Elephant-Ear-Stingray-Alocasiahybrid/productinfo/R1689-2/>  | Stay tuned |

|  |
| --- |
| **ANNUAL GRASSES**Here is a list of grasses that are in the Royalty Collection that I have found for sale at Mason House Gardens. I have never seen them for sale anywhere else – perhaps this year?? Check this website for a summary of the Royalty Collection of Pennisetum grasses. <http://www.gpnmag.com/crop-culture-report-pennisetum-first-knight> I have grown all of them except Princess and Princess Caroline. They start green and get darker and darker as the season progresses. Prince grew 6-7 feet tall last year. Vertigo (Vertigo is not part of the series but is very similar) was very dark, as was Princess Molly, both shorter versions of Prince. First Knight is the latest addition. You can plant these in large pots but do not mix them with other plants; they will take over the pot. They will not survive our winters, but worth every penny as an annual.I am very excited about Pennisetum Fireworks and Cherry Sparkler. Unlike any grass I have seen before, the grass comes in shades of red/pink/rose/green/white, with Fireworks being more intense. Five of each variety will be going in the pink gardens this year. |
| Pennisetum “First Knight” | **New this year, part of the Royal Collection. Deepest, darkest, blackest, purple foliage, it grows 48-54” tall. A beauty!**[**http://www.ecgrowers.com/Pennisetum-First-Knight-38-p/2458.htm**](http://www.ecgrowers.com/Pennisetum-First-Knight-38-p/2458.htm) | Mason House |
| Pennisetum “Jade Princess” | One of the most unique and eye catching plants in the garden due to the large, fuzzy seed head. As the flower inflorescence emerges the color begins with a rich maroon and chartreuse coloring and maturing into a solid dark maroon plume. The large fluffy panicle flower emerging from the foliage brings to mind the image of a fox sneaking through tall grass. Foliage is a wide chartreuse leaf blade. Scroll to the very end of this website for photos of Jade Princess. I will be trialing this grass for the first time this year.<http://www.flowertrials.colostate.edu/trial_winners.php?year=2012&category=Annual>  | Mason House |
| Pennisetum Vertigo | **Height 38-48”, although it did not grow anywhere that tall in my garden last year – about 2 ½ feet. Very dark broad leaves, I grew it with hibiscus manihot – a tall plant with 6” pale yellow flowers with a black eye. Nice combo!** [**http://www.provenwinners.com/plants/pennisetum/graceful-grasses-vertigo-pearl-millet-pennisetum-purpureum**](http://www.provenwinners.com/plants/pennisetum/graceful-grasses-vertigo-pearl-millet-pennisetum-purpureum) | Mason House |
| Pennisetum “Fireworks” | Foliage colors are an amazing blend of red, pink, burgundy, green and a little white, deepening to burgundy flanked by hot pink margins. Purplish-pink plumes top the plant beginning midsummer. Foliage height is 24 inches with plumes up to 36 inches.<https://www.jungseed.com/dp.asp?pID=09186>  |  |
| Pennisetum “Cherry Sparkler” | Stripes of pink, burgundy, green and white explode in graceful arching foliage, topped by midsummer with a mix of reddish-purple seed plumes. Forms mounds of foliage 18 to 24 inches tall, up to 36 inches with the plumes.<https://www.jungseed.com/dp.asp?pID=09185>  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **HERBS** |
| Profusion Chives | I have thousands of chives planted hedge style in the vegetable beds and around the roses to define the beds. They bloom in June in rosy purple balls but do not seed about like regular chives. Trademarked by Richter’s, available only at Richter’s | Richter’s Herbs |
| Profusion Sorrel | Profusion sorrel does not set seed as well. Just lovely leaves for soup or salads. I have never made sorrel soup so will have to try this year. Trademarked by Richter’s, available only at Richter’s | Richter’s Herbs |
| Profusion Oregano | 25 years ago, Conrad Richter’s father Otto, planted a Greek oregano from seeds he got from Greece. They harvested the oregano in the fall and left the plants to die and never thought of again. In the summer of 2012, someone found hardy descendants of the original plants growing wild in the back fields behind the greenhouses. This hardy oregano was trademarked by Richter’s and is available for sale this year as Profusion Oregano, at $6.25 ea. | Richter’s Herbs |
| Salvia Elegans Aureum –  | Common name **Pineapple** Sage It comes with green leaves as well, available at some nurseries, but I just discovered this lovely variety two years ago with beautiful, disease free golden/lime green leaves at Mason House. If you are lucky, you might get red flowers in the fall, which attract hummingbirds. I grow it in my yellow garden. It grew about 2 ft. by 2 ft. Rub the leaves for a wonderful pineapple fragrance, good for tea as well.  | Mason House |
| Salvia GuaraniticaI would not eat this  | A beautiful salvia with crinkled leaves, midnight blue flowers with a black calyx. It will grow about 2 ½ feet tall and is easily overwintered indoors – cuttings are easy as well in the spring for more flowers. Try it with bright red or orange geraniums – use uncommon plants with common plants for a new look. It is becoming quite popular and is now available at a lot of nurseries.<http://www.plantdelights.com/Salvia-guaranitica-Black-and-Blue-Domestic-Violence-Anise-Sage/productinfo/2016/>  | Mason House, Otter’s, Vandermeer, Richter’s  |

|  |
| --- |
| **A ROSE FOR YOU:**  It is still not too late to order roses from the mail order rose nursery in Port Hope – [www.pickeringnurseries.com](http://www.pickeringnurseries.com) (minimum 3 for delivery, you can also pick-up as well). They ship bare-root roses in April, and with the cool weather, you can likely still order. Early spring & fall is an ideal time to plant roses. Brooklin is considered to be in zone 5b. I have over 450 roses, none of which are pampered or hilled for the winter. The secret in cold climates is to plant the rose so that the bud union is 4-6 inches below ground level (the bud union is the swollen part at the base of the plant where the rose is grafted to a hardy root stock). The colder the zone, the deeper to plant. Don’t prune roses in fall (unless the canes are whipped by the wind or are in the way), mulch with leaves if you have any. Climbers – do not prune in the fall or spring except to remove dead canes. Once bloomers, never cut back more than ½, don’t fertilize roses after August 1st in our climate. I have moved many roses in late fall before the ground freezes.Another tip: In the spring, the dead branches are mowed down indiscriminately with a battery-powered hedge trimmer – this method has not affected the plants adversely. A little more fine-tuning can be done later.  |
| RoseDistant Drums | One of the most beautiful roses, with unusual colour. Singles and clusters of very fragrant ruffled, double blooms, red in bud, the centre of the rose is a light caramel colour, surrounded by petals of pinky/mauve on the outside. The colour changes almost daily. Hardy, disease-resistant... | Vander-meer |
| Rose Tournament of Roses – grandiflora rose | Named in honor of the 100th anniversary of the New Year’s Day parade. The two-toned flowers in a hard to describe colour of salmon/pink, more pink, bloom profusely on an upright and vigorous plant. The glossy green leaves tinted burgundy on new growth, offer good disease resistance. I have grown this rose successfully in an east facing location, getting morning sun ‘til about 1:00 p.m. It is a beauty. <http://www.regannursery.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=plants.plantDetail&plant_ID=947&typeID=9>  | Vander-meer |
| Climber/pillar Sally Holmes  | Sally Holmes A show stopper- this rose that has bloom trusses of a size that are truly unbelievable! At least 40, 3 1/2 inch, single ivory/white flowers to each strong branch. And the bloom is continuous, dark green, shiny, disease resistant foliage. A shrub of large proportions, this is not for the small garden, however in my garden it gets killed back by our cold winters.  **It is no longer carried by** [**www.pickeringnurseries.com**](http://www.pickeringnurseries.com) **so if you find it somewhere, buy it.** | ?? |

|  |
| --- |
| **VEGETABLES - GARDEN OF EATIN’ Highlighting a vegetable or herb each month (I saw the “eatin” part on a sign I saw on Brock Rd. – I thought it was neat)**  |
| Asparagus | Most nurseries sell unnamed varieties or one called Viking. Don’t buy asparagus at the nursery unless it is named **Jersey Knight or Guelph Millennium**. These two are male varieties and are the best ones to get as they concentrate on producing bigger & more spears, instead of berries like female varieties. You will eat asparagus for the whole month of May, then let the spears grow for a lovely ferny ornamental the rest of the summer. They will reach 6-7 feet and will not seed about because they are male. The ferns become golden yellow in the fall. , instead of planting a grass like miscanthus, or panicum , which are impossible to move once established, try 5 plants in a corner of your yard – one in the corner, flanked with 2 on each side, about 2 feet apart. You should have enough asparagus to eat for two.  | Mason House will carry Jersey Knight in 2013 – you can purchase individual plants at a very reasonable cost. |
| Tomato | Ilde tomato Yellow grape, extra early, very sweet, highest yield, over 650 fruits per plant is possible on a well grown plant, long life on or off vine, indeterminate, 53 days. | Mason |
| Tomato | Sungold, a wonderful sweet golden orange cherry tomato, heavy yields , indeterminate | Mason |
| Tomato | Longkeeper tomato Yellow 8 oz. globe, great tasting, long keeper through winter, indet. 76 days. | Mason |

|  |
| --- |
| **GROWING UP! Try these annual vines while you wait for your clematis to establish. You only need one. If planting morning glories, plant only one per trellis – they are very aggressive and will self-seed for next year – perhaps too much**! |
| Annual Vine  | Asarina Joan Lorraine | Will grow 8 ft. in one season. Delicate foliage, purple trumpets all summer. Try it as a ground cover also. Will not overwhelm its position. Sprinkle the seeds in fall where you want it to grow, you may get lucky and get seedlings next year. | Mason House,Maybe John’s perennials |
| Annual Vine | Eccremecarpus – Chilean glory flower | Fern like foliage, fast growing, delicate tubular orange flowers with a hint of fuchsia at the base. I planted one with a deep rose climbing rose on the same trellis – made a nice tropical duo. | Mason House |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Learn some Latin | Alba – means white i.e. Centuarea Montana “alba”Lutea – means yellow – i.e. Corydalis “lutea”Caerulea – means dark blue i.e. Sambucus “caerulea” – blue elderberry |  |

Here are some theme ideas to get you thinking and planning for this gardening season.

**\*Theme gardens** – April is the perfect time to start planning your garden beds. While many people think theme gardens are “hokey”, I just love them. I have tried the following themes in my garden with great success. I plan my theme garden using colour associated with an occasion, a food, an animal – i.e. black panda, etc. By planting several plants of one variety or similar-looking species, you can make the whole creation look purposeful, connected, and a bit more natural. Plants can be repeated in a mass planting or in multiple, smaller groupings throughout an area or garden.

Here are some examples to get you started.

**Black garden bed**: I have created a garden bed using a core group of black leaved plants which can generate several themes for years to come. The core plants in this garden include 9 Sambucus “black lace” shrubs, eupatorium “chocolate”, cimicifuga “black negligee”, cimicifuga “chocoholic”, shrub weigela “wine and roses”, and black Mondo grass.

Black bed first year theme**: Liquorice all sorts** – annuals in colours of black, brown, pink, yellow, blue, white. The plants were arranged in squares and circles and stripes, like the candies, not just in rows like soldiers. I used yellow marigold “lemon gem” planted in cirlces, pink begonias and begonias with white flowers and brown leaves planted in squares, blue browalia “Americana”, again in circles, and 5 low growing black grasses pennisetum “Princess Molly”.

Black bed second year: **Hallowe’en** – with the core group of black plants, I included a river of orange cactus zinnias, orange double marigolds in circles, black violas, drooping white nicotiana Only the Lonely in a large circle, orange celosias, black potato vines, and 5 black pennisetum grasses Princess Molly.

**This year’s theme 2013: The Pink Panther**. There will be the core black plants with several hits of pink annuals - a long winding row of nicotiana whisper shades of pink, groundcover petunia vista bubble gum pink and black potato vines and three black phoriums. It will be amazing. All plants above from Mason House Gardens, black potato vines & begonias available at all nurseries.

**Blackcurrant swirl garden**: Try Jams ‘n jellies blackberry vinca, deepest darkest burgundy petunias and blackie potato vines.

**Caramel latte garden theme** – for brown, I used brown grasses carex bronzita, (or you can use carex red rooster, carex buchanii) and a wide swath of white frothy petunias called buttercream that I grew from seed (at least 25-35 plants planted closely together). I had to prune the petunias around end of July to refresh them. You don’t have to do this if you plant groundcover type petunias.

**Jelly bean garden** If you like to mix colours, stick to one cultivar that comes in several colours, i.e. petunias, impatiens, and always add a black plant for the liquorice, and one other plant if necessary for a colour that does not come in the main cultivar – e.g. in the case of petunias it is difficult to get orange so I used an orange salvia splendens. The impatiens in year 2011 was a disaster because of the downy mildew problem – 100 plants that I grew from seed died by mid-summer. This year I am using several colours of petunias and I have found orange petunias as well as the beautiful black ones so popular now – Debonair Black Cherry from Mason House.

**Neapolitan ice cream** -plant these in stripes, just like in the ice cream carton – a strip of chocolate, a strip of strawberry and a strip of vanilla. For chocolate – I used a brown grass called carex buchanii, strawberry was petunia pink morn and the vanilla was a white petunia. Don’t skimp – plant closely for a carpet effect. The regular petunias generally have to be pruned by half mid-way through the growing season which will result in a re-invigorated plant blooming until frost.

**Tropical Garden** – this is a really fun project and my favourite garden, one that does not have to include a colour theme, just use a bunch of tropical garden plants – you may have several in your home that can spend the summer outdoors. I always add a few annuals for colour, plus cannas which attract the hummingbirds. You can include hibiscus, dracaenas, bananas, tall annual grasses like Pennisetum Prince, cardoon, succulents, ferns like Kimberley which will grow in full sun, dahlias, tall nicotianas like Whisper shades of pink (from Mason House), palms, etc. Palms did not do well in full sun.

**Danger garden** – use thorny, spikey plants, bristly roses, thistles. I grow a rose called Wingthorn – grown for its huge translucent bright red thorns rather than its flowers (available at [www.PickeringNurseries.com](http://www.PickeringNurseries.com) ). Mason House has some wicked thorny plants – ask Jeff Mason to show them to you. The possibilities are endless.

Here is my clematis of unusual clematis, in my opinion. My aim is to have clematis growing up every Austrian Pine in the front allee garden (there are 55 pines in the allee). I have room for about 15-19 more clematis. Yikes!!! Most of the ones I have I purchased two and three years ago. It takes about 3 years for clematis to take off. My aim is to find clematis that are unusual and/or bloom a long time. Here are some of my favourites and some new ones being offered this year. I have indicated where I have seen them for sale this year. Mason House [www.masonhousegardens.com](http://www.masonhousegardens.com) is offering 83 varieties this year and Peter Keeping is offering a huge selection as well. Garden Import [www.gardenimport.com](http://www.gardenimport.com) is a mail order company located in the Toronto area (Markham) and arrangements can be made for pick up if you want. To access the links below to see a photograph, click your curser on the website, hold down the control button then click again on the website, or just copy it to your address bar.

It is important to keep your plant tags next to your newly planted clematis so you know how to prune. Use a permanent marker & indicate on the tag how to prune so you are not guessing in the spring and keep it with your clematis.

**Group “1” or “A”:** usually alpine type – do not prune in spring as they begin blooming in April. Pruning can then be done when they have finished blooming.

**Group “2” or “B”**: if the tag says blooms May, June, then Sept. it is a Group “2” or “B”. ***Do not prune these in spring or you will cut off the blooms – like lilacs.*** This group blooms on buds formed on last year’s wood in early spring, then again, if you are lucky, in late summer. The doubles seem to fall into this category. My recommendation is to establish these on an arbour to take advantage of that early bloom which formed on last year’s growth. Then grow an annual vine beside it for the rest of the summer – i.e. Asarina “Joan Lorraine”, Eccremecarpus, or one morning glory or passiflora vine (only one as they are aggressive). *Do not mix Group 2 & 3 together* on the same trellis/arbour as both have totally different pruning requirements.

**Group “3” or “C”**: easiest by far – hard prune in early spring close to the ground, above new shoots. (The viticella types are group 3 & seem to be resistant to clematis wilt. They usually bloom for several weeks in mid-summer with smaller flowers but in such profusion there could be hundreds of blooms.)

Integrifolias: generally Group 3 – hard prune in spring. They are non-climbing types that require support – obelisk or very tall tomato cages – let them drape over the edge – my favourite in this category is Durandii.

This is an amazing website where pretty well every clematis that exists is listed, along with photos.

<http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemalphasearch.cfm>

**Clematis 911** Gr. 2 <http://www.hollandbulbfarms.com/items.asp?cat=Clematis-Vines&Cc=clematis> This clematis has huge sky blue 6-8 inch blooms with long tepals – looks spectacular in the photos and I will be ordering one for sure. *MasonHouse2013*

**Avant Garde** Gr. 3 Viticella type <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=2983> This is the cutest little clematis. The flowers are really different. It is still a baby in my garden. Get it while you can. *MasonHouse2013*

**Cassis** Gr. 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=2977> So unusual and the flowers can be quite variable – doubles and singles. Still a baby in my garden. *MasonHouse2013*

**Crystal Fountain** Gr. 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=1843> This one has a shaggy central boss which remains after the tepals have fallen off extending the season. I actually like it better when this happens. They look like little sputniks! *MasonHouse2013*

**Betty Corning** Gr. 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=562> – a viticella type– puckered little lavender skirts – vigorous – cut back to 6-8” in spring. It blooms a very long time. *Mason House 2013*

**Blue Angel** Gr. 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=88> Also called BIekitny Angel. I love the colour of this one. A pale blue/lavender but it is the texture of the tepals that I really like. The small flowers in profusion in summer remind me of an old-fashioned fabric called seersucker, wrinkly and puckered. *MasonHouse2013*

**Durandii** Gr. 3 <http://www.gardenimport.com/spblvl3.php?lvl=Clematis&nm=DURANDII&ref=CL5530> Most admired by visitors. I have about 18 of these in my garden. I love the colour as it goes from dark purple to sky blue, with both colours at the same time. The flowers are so perfect they look like plastic. I grow them in double tomato cages – they can get 6-8 feet tall and are not the climbing type. The stems drape over the edge of the cage and bloom most of the summer. I trim them when they get scraggly and they re-bloom. I use a heavy wire 4’ tall cage from Home Depot and then place another 5-6’ tomato cage over the heavy duty one which I get at Lowe’s for about $5.99. I find the really tall cages a bit flimsy but found these fairly sturdy extra tall ones at Lowe’s. *Peter Keeping and Garden Import*

**Gillian Blades** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=185> This is an old one but it is so beautiful. The edges of the white tepals are extremely ruffled. I love this clematis. *MasonHouse2013*

**Mrs. Harvey** Gr. 3 <http://www.gardenimport.com/spblvl3.php?lvl=Clematis&nm=MRS._HARVEY&ref=CL4025> This is hard to find also so get it while you can. Little pale blue/purple twirling dancing skirts all summer. It blooms a very long time. One of my favourites as the drooping flowers are such an unusual shape. I have two – one each in my two asparagus beds. *Garden Import 2013, Peter Keeping*

**Omoshiro** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=1545> This one is exquisite. It is the palest pink verging on white, edged in raspberry. I got mine at Garden Import – not carrying it this year. Keep an eye out for this beauty, perhaps next year.

**Perle d’Azure** Group 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=365> A real beauty and an award winner. It is growing up my weeping cypress. *Mason House 2013*

**Picardy** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=2950> The photo here does not do it justice – it is very pretty and everyone loved it when I took one in to one of our hort. meetings. It is a beauty with the most unusual colour of purple red with a subtle red bar. *Peter Keeping*

**Piilu Group 2** [**http://www.waltersgardens.com/plants/Vine/2195\_ClematisPiilu.aspx**](http://www.waltersgardens.com/plants/Vine/2195_ClematisPiilu.aspx)Pink double blooms in spring and then again in late summer. A cute one. Just put it in last year. *Mason House, Peter Keeping*

**Purpura Plena Elegans** Gr. 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=580> The flowers on this clematis last a long time. They are small and cute. Many visitors asked about this clematis in my garden. It had a lot of blooms last year even though it is still very young. *Peter Keeping*

**Rebecca** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=3442> This one is a true red – not cherry red but real red with large beautiful flowers. This is also a new one for me in 2012 but I have seen the flowers and if you like red, this is the one to get. *Mason House 2013*

**Sprinkles** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=1857> A new one for me and I will definitely be getting one as it quite unusual. *MasonHouse2013*

**Suzanne** Group 2 <http://hummingbirdfarm.net/suzanne.htm> Just bought this one last year so haven’t seen the blooms yet. Another one with an unusual flower. Looks beautiful and can’t wait to see it in bloom. *MasonHouse2013*

**Tie Die**  Group 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=3205> This is a hard one to find so if you like it , buy it. This vine was loaded with flowers last year. The flowers are so unusual – the name aptly describes it – just like the 60’s tie dye T-shirts, but, it looks like velvet. People went crazy for it when they saw it at our meeting. It is growing nicely up one of the pine trees. *Mason House 2013*

**Tracy Lee** <http://www.springvalleygreenhouse.com/Documents/SPRING_VALLEY-2012.pdf> Can’t find much about this one other than it is a pale pink double. Looks interesting. This is the only website I could find – hope you can open it. *Mason House 2013*

**Vienetta** Group 3 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=2979> Another must have this year. The flowers are so unusual, however, **this is a tender clematis & will not survive our winters. Grow it in a pot and try overwintering in the garage or grow as an annual.** I have overwintered clematis in pots successfully in unheated garage. *MasonHouse2013*

**Violet Elizabeth** Group 2 <http://www.clematis.hull.ac.uk/new-clemdetail.cfm?dbkey=554> Another one I bought last year and have not seen it in bloom yet. Look at the number of tepals on each flower in the photo, outstanding! I can’t wait to see it in bloom. *MasonHouse2013, Peter Keeping*

Seminar I attended at Richter’s April 21, 2013 – presented by Steven Biggs . <http://www.grow-figs.com/fig-pig/>

**GROWING TIPS FOR FIGS**

Figs bear two crops

Figs prefer 8 hours of sun.

Figs like to be root bound and can stay in the same pot for several years.

Figs can be grown in pots, in the ground,as a bush or trained as a standard – your choice.

Figs require a cold dormant period to produce fruit

**CROPS:** figs bear two crops

-The first is called the *Breba Crop* – figs will form on last year’s wood, usually ripening in July. Real fig aficionados usually treat this crop with disdain. The rest of us could care less and gobble up any ripe figs formed on these branches.

-The second crop, on current growth, called the *Main Crop,* usually ripens in September, October. Everything of course depends on the variety. Some have better Breba yields and some produce more figs in the Main Crop.

**DORMANT PERIOD**: Figs need a dormant period to produce a crop.

In the fall, after a frost causes all the fruit and leaves to drop, the fig should be moved to its dormant location. Ideally, this is a very cold place without light. Complete darkness, ideal but not mandatory, will keep them dormant longer until they can be acclimatized to warmer temperatures in the spring. You can tell it is coming out of dormancy when the plant starts forming green buds on the branches. Once out of dormancy, do not allow the fig trees to freeze – keep an eye on frosty night temperatures and protect if necessary.

Figs can withstand temperatures as low as -5 degrees Celsius and even colder when dormant. Personally, I cannot handle more work in the fall with burying rose trees, fig trees, etc. as some people do. Many go to great lengths to overwinter their figs, devising various contraptions. Here are some “easy” scenarios for the dormant period for potted figs.

-Place potted fig in an unheated attached or unattached garage – the idea is to keep the current growth from freezing over the winter period to get that first crop. The soil ball in the pot can freeze. Check them occasionally and add a bit of water about once a month if the pot is not frozen. Too much water will cause the roots to rot.

-Stephen stores his potted figs in an insulated shed.

-One person at the seminar lives about an hour north of Richter’s. She stored hers in an unheated garage, laid the pot on its side and wrapped it in an old comforter. She checked the fig this week (April 20th, 2013) and was excited to find it had survived the winter with lots of green buds on its branches. She will likely get a Breba crop on this growth and another main crop on the new growth formed this summer. She will now acclimatize the plant gradually & keep an eye for freezing overnight temps by returning to a sheltered spot.

**DORMANT PERIOD FOR FIGS GROWING IN THE GROUND:**

I have four figs (hardier Chicago figs – zone 5b available at [www.Richters.com](http://www.Richters.com)) that are growing in the ground. I can uproot these and bend them in a trench beside them if I wanted to but this way too much work. Figs planted in the ground have a very aggressive root system. I learned today that the exposed growth produced over the summer will never survive our severe winters and therefore there will never be a Breba crop. However, the Chicago’s grow like buddleias; they die to the ground and sprout from the base in zone 5b. They will bear a main crop of figs on the new growth. Even though all the branches in my garden had loads of figs, because of their late ripening period, I only had one ripe fig. What I will do this year is prune the tip of each branch after fruiting, as you would sever a tomato in late fall, to allow the figs to ripen. Hopefully this will give me more ripe fruit. (The young fig that was stored in the unheated garage (with window) in a 10” pot had 7-8 ripe figs – and it was only 2 ½ feet tall.)

**IN GROUND OR POTS?**

In pots: a young fig in a 3-4 inch pot can be immediately re-potted to a gallon pot. The traditional way to re-pot is the use the next size up. The vigorous growth of figs can go to a pot two sizes up. Stephen has figs growing in 14-16” pots – some as long as 10 years. Figs like to be root bound – this directs the plant’s energy to producing more figs, not roots. He re-pots his figs with fresh soil every 5 years. I would assume there would be significant root pruning required. The fact that the roots would grow around and around the pot doesn’t seem to faze him. He prefers a standard format rather than a bush format, as it is easier for him to put them away for their dormant period. He keeps the standard at around 6 feet, and lops the leader. His soil formula is ½ soilless mix, ¼ sand (from the kids sandbox), ¼ garden soil (would assume compost would be good). He buries the pots ½ way in the garden to allow the roots to scrounge around for more nutrients in the soil, but this is not necessary. He plants annuals around the pots to soften the ugly black plastic pots, do not use clay. A mulch on top of the pot is good. These pots are then uprooted in the fall for their dormant period. Fertilizer is generally a balanced mix – 7-7-7 or 20-20-20 or 2-2-2. He does not believe in having several different types of fertilizer for different plants. A slow release in addition to a regular fertilizer program is a good thing.

**PRUNING:**

Pruning is always confusing for me. Figs develop fruit on old wood and new wood (similar to everbearing raspberries, but the old wood never dies). The new wood this year becomes old wood next year and so on year after year. So what to do? Eventually you will have to chop the lateral growth back to control the size. I have noticed that the figs in my garden tend to grow like a bush – sprouting several stems from the base. You can grow them as a bush or remove all but one branch and grow it as a standard, in pots or the ground. This will likely take a bit of time to get the main stem to get to the height you want. As mentioned earlier, I will prune the tips of each branch of my bush type figs growing in the ground to see if the fruit will ripen faster. I can use the tips as cuttings – figs are easy to root from cuttings. Because the exposed canes will die over the winter anyway, it doesn’t matter how I prune it – no sense wasting time growing it as a standard, although I might try one to experiment.

**SOFIE’S TIPS**

**Red Lily Beetle Spray**: This spray is good for those who don’t like to crush bugs with their fingers, or go through the tedious task of picking them off and crushing.

I discovered by accident a spray which was recommended for aphids, but which I ended up using on the red lily beetle as I had the spray bottle in my hand when I encountered several beetles on one lily (counted 20) on a walk-about in my garden. I sprayed the beetles several times, and low and behold, all of them succumbed within 1 -2 minutes. This spray is great as you can leave it in the garden – it won’t go bad but you must be persistent and hunt down the beetles every day or they will ruin your lilies. At this point in time, as there is no natural enemy, we can only control the numbers. The beetle larvae – covered in their own black excrement – look like black blobs usually hidden under the leaves. Brush them off with a brush – a long handled barbecue basting brush or paintbrush from the dollar store works well. Look for tiny orange eggs under the leaves and brush off or crush. The eggs will hatch in a few days, hence the need to be on the lookout every day. I found that this spray also worked on slimy pear slugs that were skeletonizing the leaves on my young pear tree, on asparagus beetles and aphids. Asparagus beetles are difficult to catch as they drop to the ground as soon as you approach. I hold a container underneath & try to catch them on the way down. Try the spray on the tiny black eggs attached to the asparagus fronds***. Always test on a small area before using any home-made spray to make sure there is no damage to the leaves.***

**Here is the formula** –

1 teaspoon (5 ml.) dish soap, (I used Palmolive – I think any brand will be fine)

1 Tablespoon (15 ml.) I used Scope

1 quart or 1 litre of water in a spray bottle.

Mix gently to avoid excessive bubbles. Hit the beetles several times with the spray. If the beetle drops to the ground, try spraying around the base of the stems. They will turn upside down so are hard to see once they drop. Try spraying the black blob larvae also.