



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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Yards & Neighborhoods



FYN TOPIC: Sun-Loving Plants for Late Summer Color

Question: I'd like to add color to my garden right now. What flowering annuals or perennials should I plant? What would keep them blooming? Vince, Cape Coral

Answer: There are several sun-loving choices for late summer planting. All have some heat tolerance and establish quickly. Several are native. Most will keep blooming continuously through this year and next. African blue basil is an attractive annual herb with purple and pale green leaves and purplish flower spikes. *Lantana camara* 'New gold' has a mounding habit, produces abundant flowers and nearly sterile seeds. A similar looking Florida native, *Lantana depressa* blooms with a profusion of cream colored flowers on mounding plants. Other summer planting choices include several with daisy-like flowers. Gallardia and Dune sunflower are natives, the later a vine. Plants for both drop seeds now for blooming in the fall and for next year's display. Globe amaranth is a long-lasting summer and fall bloomer. Pentas, tropical sage, scarlet milkweed and blue porterweed are all good summer starters. All these choices have significant heat tolerance. And, they prefer less irrigation than most other annuals commonly used once established.

Turn off your flower bed's sprinklers to save water. Rely on summer and fall rainfall only. Collect rain water in barrels or cisterns and hand water or use a drip irrigation system. Use transplants grown locally. Keep the distance between each new transplant the same. Proper spacing reduces the chance of fungal diseases becoming established causing premature plant death. Lastly, keep weeded. Obtain native plants at Rotary Park during Cape Coral's summer native plant sale and rain barrel workshop.



Lantana camara 'New Gold'



Lantana depressa



Dune Sunflower

Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>

<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>

<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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