

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENER

Tip of the Week

By Mary Lew Quesinberry

“Bright Spots of Color in the Garden”

Yellow is the color of hope and cheerfulness and with some planning you can have cheerful spots of color in your garden year-round.

Hymenoxys scaposa (Four Nerve Daisy) is a Central Texas roadside plant. It blooms all year and it is a wonderful addition to a garden. Yellow Columbine and *Kerria Japonica* are yellow spring bloomers.

Black-Eyed Susan, Flowering Senna, *Zexmenia*, Black-Eyed Susan Vine, Esperanza, Lindheimer's Senna, Yellow Lantana and Chocolate Daisy bloom from summer to fall.

Use Copper Canyon Daisy and Mexican Mint Marigold for fall bloom. *Damianita* blooms in the spring and again in the fall. Some of these plants like the *Damianita* are so bright you will need sunglasses!

After you have your yellow bright spots selected for your garden add another color for a WOW factor. Opposites attract and opposite yellow is blue.

To add blue/purple plants try Mealy Blue Sage, Purple *Salvia greggii*, Mexican Oregano, Gregg's Blue Mistflower, Indigo Spires, Lavender and Creeping Germander. These plants will provide blooms from spring to fall. Purple Coneflower and Bi-color sage bloom mostly in the summer. Use Black Dalea and Mexican Bush Sage for fall bloom. Foliage plants, Purple Heart (*Wandering Jew*) and *Cordyline Festival Grass* will add rich dark purple color.

Now that you have some colorful planting ideas, it is time to plant.

Plants require good drainage. Dig the hole your plant will live in wider but no deeper than the pot it is in. Add 1-2 inches of coarse builder's sand or decomposed granite to the bottom of the hole. Also add the coarse sand or granite to the soil you will use to backfill around the plant. Make sure the plant root ball is damp before placing it in the hole. Tease or cut the outer roots of the root-ball to encourage the roots to reach out, rather than continuing to grow in a circular fashion. Water the plant and mulch with 2-3 inches of organic matter. Stand back and enjoy all your color!

In the photo: Black-Eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia Alata*), an annual vine, will add a cheerful spot of color to the garden.

Have any questions? Go to ask.bcmga@gmail.com

