



Late Summer Garden Spruce Ups

By Kit Smith

UCCE Master Gardener El Dorado County

Here are some late summer flowers that will rejuvenate the look of the garden and lift any gardener's spirits.

Summer Hyacinth (*Galtonia candicans*) is a perennial bulb; plant it now for next year's bloom. It has a blooming funnel-shaped flower, and the plant wants regular water during spring and summer growth and bloom. Like the tuberose rhizome, it is better to leave the summer hyacinth bulb undisturbed from year to year.

Meadowsweet or Fernleaf (*Filipendula*), prefers damp soil and blooms tiny pink or white flowers on plumes of coarse leaves. For better results, plant this in partial shade.

Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*) grows four to ten feet tall and its blooms are on four to six inch spires of white spicy-fragrant flowers. It likes regular water and is happier in partially acidic soil. It will do well in full to partial sun.

Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja*) is a stunning and eye-catching plant with flowers, on a dense spike that attract butterflies. Plant in well-draining soil and give it ample water during its growing season. It will die back during a winter freeze, but it will re-grow from its roots and re-bloom.

Most of the varieties of *Sedum* will be beautiful assets this time of year. The one to two foot tall plant bears rounded smaller star-shaped pink cluster flowers, which turn to coppery pink and then rust. It is a succulent perennial, and most are evergreen. This plant is easy to propagate from cuttings of its leaves and stems.

Everyone's favorite is the easy-to-grow *Salvia*, Sage, that has fragrant foliage and flowers. It prefers well-draining soil and regular deep water. Specifically, the *Nemorosa* sprouts from a rhizome and blooms through fall. The *Ostfriesland* has intense violet bluish flowers with pinkish purple bracts. *Purple Majesty* is shrubby and has a purple long-blooming flower. *Mexican Sage* has a hint of pine fragrance and its yellow green calyxes and violet blue flowers will brighten the yard. *Pineapple Sage* is delightful-smelling and beautifully bright - it is stunning and easy to

grow. Autumn Sage, with its showy pink, white, red or orange flowers likes full sun and is drought resistant. Salvia attracts hummingbirds, bees and butterflies and is deer resistant. For better results, cut it back every year.

Goldenrod (Solidago) can live in most any type of soil. It is a woody perennial that is two to three feet tall and produces feathery yellow flower clusters. This, too, attracts butterflies.

Nemesia is a semi-trailing plant 14 - 16 inches tall and 16 inches wide with sweetly fragrant white blooms. It likes full sun and will flower until the first frost.

Consider the colorful Rudbeckia too. Prairie Sun has pale green centers surrounded by three to six inch-wide blooms. The petals near the center are butter to yellow color. It is a great cutting flower. The Gloriosa Daisy, Black-Eyed Susan grows three to four feet tall. Indian Summer has single to double golden yellow flowers, and Cherokee Sunset has handsome double and semi-double flowers three to four and one-half inches across in beautiful fall colors. It can grow to 30 inches. Goldsturm has black-eyed yellow flowers on 2-foot tall stems.

Summer Phlox, Bright Eyes, has flower clusters in the shape of domes. Each flower is pink with a dark eye. Annual Phlox, is a no fuss perennial. It has large clusters of small pastel and bright color flowers, some with contrasting eyes, taller than the dwarf strain, about eighteen inches tall. It has a subtle, pleasant fragrance. The flowers will last well into fall.

There will be no Master Gardener public education class this Saturday – have a happy and safe Labor Day weekend! Check our website for the latest schedule of future free Master Gardener Saturday classes. Locations vary. http://ucanr.org/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/. And Master Gardeners are available to answer garden questions at the local Farmers Markets.

Master Gardeners also answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512. Walk-ins are welcome. The office is located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our Master Gardener website at http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Gardeners/ and <http://www.facebook.com/pages/El-Dorado-County-Master-Gardeners/164653119129>.