

Growing Friends – Spring Sale

The Growing Friends spring sale is scheduled for Saturday 12 November and features members of the Asteraceae (daisy) family. In the spring of 2008, the horticulturists and general staff planted a combination of 12,000 everlastings and other daisy flowers in a colourful mass planting adjacent to the Rock Garden lawn.

Growing Friends bring you some plants that can be planted to make your own daisy feature garden.



Brachyscome iberidifolia (Swan River Daisy) ANBG

Brachyscome iberidifolia, commonly known as the Swan River Daisy, is a colourful annual in the family Asteraceae. It grows 25 to 40cm tall, with branched stems and highly-divided leaves and daisy flowers. The ray florets of the daisy flower vary in colour from mauve, purple and white through all shades of blue, which surround contrasting disc florets that are black, yellow or brown circled with yellow. It is a popular and easily-grown garden plant for bedding, borders, rockeries, pots and hanging baskets.

Swan River Daisies are found in the wild in WA, SA and southern NT in a variety of habitats: in sandy or clay soils, on sand-hills and plains, along water courses, on swampy ground, on chalky hills and among granite outcrops. They are moderately frost-hardy and can be grown easily in most areas of Australia. It commonly flowers in spring and summer and intermittently at other times of the year.



Rhodanthe chlorocephala



Mass planting – Mt Annan Botanic Gardens

Rhodanthe chlorocephala is an annual plant widely grown due to its attractive flowers and foliage and because it's hardy, adaptable and provides a good, fast ground cover. The flowers are long-lived and dry well. It is an erect annual herb 20-60cm and has large single flowering heads that grow to 6cm diameter, gradually decreasing as the flowering season progresses. The colour of the bracts varies from deep pink (almost red) through pale pink to pure white, with a yellow or black centre. You can encourage branching (to create more blossoms) by pinching out the

growing tips. It prefers full sun to dappled shade and grows well in open woodland. It generally flowers from August to November in the wild but with sufficient water and warmth it will flower at other times. You can cut plants back and they will flower again.

Also available in the daisy family:



Rhodanthe anthemoides – ANBG – M Fagg

Rhodanthe anthemoides, commonly known as Chamomile Sunray, is small and compact with abundant white flowers and dark green foliage growing to between 15 and 30 cm tall. It is a perennial and widespread in eastern Australia and Tasmania. It grows chiefly in montane rocky areas, preferring sandy soils. Depending on locality, rose-pink buds will form during winter and stay dormant, opening in early spring to summer. Its most active time for bud formation is winter and therefore it can brighten up a garden at this time of year when other plants may be less productive. For ideal growth and flowering, plants should be placed on the eastern side of the garden so that morning sun is received. In order to maintain a leafy form and encourage onset of second flowering trim the plant after the first flowers have withered. In summer, watering should ideally occur every three days to prevent dieback and may need to be increased in very dry or hot weather.

And for large gardens:



Doryanthes excels – ANBG – M Fagg

Each plant grows from a thickened underground stem which is gradually pulled deeper and deeper into the ground by the roots and for this reason the plants do best in deep soil. The plant forms a large clump with numerous sword-like fibrous leaves, to 1m in length and up to 100mm wide. The red, trumpet-like flowers each 100 mm across, are borne in a compact terminal head 300 mm in diameter on a leafy flowering stem 2-4 m high. Suitable for large rockeries and gardens, It makes an interesting foliage plant, but must be sited with care to ensure a well-drained, deep soil, in full sun or partial shade. The plant needs to be kept well-watered. Although the foliage is resistant to frost damage, the developing flower buds need protection in areas of heavy frost. At the Australian National Botanic Gardens this protection used to be provided by a hessian-covered frame at the top of a tall pipe and mounted over the flower buds. In recent years, with reduced frost, the flower spikes are left uncovered and provide a handsome display in most years.