

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

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Lamorinda Home Sales

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Summer Sweetness

By Cynthia Brian



Daisies, rudbeckia, and echinacea enrich the sweetness of summer.



Sky blue plumbago with pink crape myrtle.



Build a rock cairn for fun or as a monument.

"What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness." John Steinbeck

It is still hot, yet a cool breeze wafts through the patio where I am writing under an awning. I can't bear being inside an office when I can do my work outside on my trusty Mac laptop with a full view of nature, the soothing sounds of a gurgling fountain, and the perfumed air from my roses and viburnum. In the cold of winter, I long for days like these: warm, sunny, and sweet.

Hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies are darting about, oblivious to my presence. The fiery orange crocosmia, also known as coppertips or firecracker plant, is on display and attracting pollinators. I adore this exotic perennial because the corms are easily transplantable, it blooms when so many other plants are dormant, and it is showy in floral arrangements. Although it is a sun lover, I've also planted it in sheltered

Photos Cynthia Brian

shade for longer-lasting blooms.

Bees are gathered on my bronze fennel. I cut a few fronds of seeds to sprinkle on my vegetables for tonight's meal without bothering the buzzers. Walking my property, I noticed that my many hollyhocks were being eaten by the painted lady butterfly caterpillars. Painted lady butterflies are found throughout the world and because they are such beneficial and beautiful pollinators, I am happy that they dine on my hollyhocks.

My fragrant four o'clock plants didn't get the memo that they were supposed to bloom in the late afternoon or early evening. My flowers bloom like clockwork every morning from nine to 11. Many years ago, my mom gave me seeds from her species growing on our ranch. They have perennially sprouted and supported a multitude of pollinators, including the nocturnal moths. As a kid, I remember that her four o'clocks bloomed on time in the late afternoon.

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