

Garden Type: Cottage Garden

Theme: The Secret Garden



Tended by: Linda Bishop and Dian Eddy

PRIMARY PURPOSE: Our garden is a cottage garden with many cutting flowers. There are no 'rules' for cottage gardens although many folks intend for their cottage garden to provide cut flowers and vegetables through the growing season.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Our cottage garden is set up to inspire children. This year's theme, *The Secret Garden*, is based on Frances Hodgson Burnett's children's novel about two young people who found a long-forgotten garden and brought it back to life. Included in our garden is a 'small house' for children to use for tea parties and other opportunities to play, a small fishpond, and a bed with a flower quilt. Scarlet runner beans line the cattle guard fencing, purple hyacinths have been planted to grow over the outside of the playhouse, and Mexican sunflowers are all meant to 'hide' parts of the garden from the outside of it. The garden has a mix of annuals and perennial flowers all will attract bees and butterflies and birds. Many flower varieties were also chosen because they are typically grown in cutting gardens and because some bloom from early to late summer and others in late summer until a fall frost.

Resources:

Creating a Cottage Garden - The Spruce

[Designing a Cottage Garden \(thespruce.com\)](https://www.thespruce.com/designing-a-cottage-garden)

Book – The Secret Garden

[The Secret Garden - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Secret_Garden)

Storybook Garden Plants

ANNUALS

Ageratum (*Ageratum houstonianum*). Commonly used as a bedding plant, the flowers on this tender annual come mostly in shades of blue but can be pink, lavender or white. Ageratum is one of the few annuals with a truly blue flower. The soft fuzzy flowers are dainty and feathery, often delightfully fragrant, and usually completely cover the plants. Ageratum grows in neat mounds, flowering from late spring through fall and is one of the more dependable flowering annuals. Low-growing ageratum is 6-8" but other varieties can be 2 ft. tall and be other colors.

Blue bedder salvia (*Salvia farinacea*) A richly colored, multi-branched salvia variety with deep violet-blue flowering spikes on steel blue, squared stems. Thrives in full sun to part shade in average to rich, evenly moist soil. Makes excellent cut flowers. Easy-to-grow, low maintenance, pest and disease-resistant, mostly ignored by deer and rabbits. Deadheading increases flower production.

Blue Boy Bachelor's Buttons (*Centaurea cyanus*). Bachelor's buttons is a sun-loving perennial that grows 1 to 2 feet tall with fringed white, pink, or blue flowers appearing in early summer. The plants can be a bit floppy so some staking may be necessary. Water frequently and deadhead spent blooms. Hardy from zone 3-8. Self-sows.

Benary's Giant Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*). Favorite all-season cutting flowers that hold up well in summer rain and heat all over the U.S. Densely petaled blooms are up to 6" across. Long-lasting standouts in bouquets. Cut-and-come-again flower yields multiple cuts over the season. Colors include: deep red, orange, carmine rose, coral, lime, wine, purple, bright pink, white, salmon rose, scarlet, and golden yellow. Grows 3-4 ft. Susceptible to powdery mildew.

Cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*). *Cosmos* is native to Mexico. It is a popular, low-maintenance, late-blooming, showy annual that typically grows 2-4' tall on erect stems clad with medium green leaves that are deeply cut into threadlike segments. Single, saucer-shaped, daisy-like flowers (to 2-4" diameter) with red, pink or white rays and yellow centers bloom freely from early summer to frost. Easily grown in average, well-drained soils in full sun. Appreciates even moisture but tolerates some dry soils. Avoid rich, fertile soils.

Globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*). Globe amaranth is an annual flower in any zones north of Zone 9. This flower boasts a profusion of clover-like flower heads and is 6-24 inches tall. Blooms from early summer to the first frost. Often grown for dried flower arrangements. Tolerates heat and drought and attracts beneficial insects to the garden.

Lemon basil (*Ocimum x africanum*). Lemon basil is a hybrid, fast-growing annual that will grow to about three feet tall and spread twenty-four inches wide. This herb grows best in full sun with well-draining, organic soil. It also prefers to grow in average moist soil conditions. White flowers appear in late summer.

Marigold (*Tagetes*). Easy and fast-growing ornamental annuals, these flowers thrive in full sun. Blossoms can be orange, yellow, red, gold, copper, brass, white, or any combination of those colors. Foliage has a distinctive smell that repels mosquitoes, squash bugs, tomato worms as well as deer and rabbits making marigolds great companion plants that deter pests.

Mexican sunflower (*Tithonia*). A native of Mexico and Central America, tithonia loves hot and dry climate. It provides nectar and habitat for beneficial insects, including butterflies. The bright orange flowers also attract hummingbirds. Dependent on variety the Mexican sunflower can grow 3-8 ft tall.

Nicotiana (*Nicotiana persica*). Plant it in full sun to partial shade in moist, well-drained soil that is high in organic material. It has a low tolerance for drought conditions, so be sure the soil remains moist. While it withstands full sun the plants appreciate some afternoon shade, especially in hot southern climates. This plant needs 12-14 inches of space when planted and will grow to reach 3 to 5 feet in height. It can be propagated easily through seed which can be directly sown in the garden or started indoors.

Purple hyacinth (*Lablab purpureus*). The plant of hyacinth beans is annual or short-lived perennial, twining or trailing herb with a thick stem which is about 6 meters long. The plant grows up to 10-15 feet high. The leaves are alternate, trifoliate and 7.5 – 15 cm long. The flowers are purple or white. It requires well-drained soil.

Scarlet Runner Beans (*Phaseolus coccineus*). Scarlet runner beans are often grown as an ornamental just for the colorful flowers. Removing the developing pods will encourage the plant to continue to flower. Use the vining plants as a temporary cover on a chain link fence, as a seasonal privacy barrier. For best results, grow scarlet runner beans in full sun and in rich soil with plenty of organic matter and average moisture.

Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*). Sunflowers are some of the best low-maintenance flowers. While they need water to grow tall, they do not do well with overwatering. Sunflowers would rather have too little water than too much. Sunflowers have long roots that need space to spread out. For average sized sunflowers (about three feet tall), space your seeds about a foot apart. There are over seventy species of sunflowers. Because of their height, sunflowers can be susceptible to damage from wind. Plant seeds along a wall or fence for built-in support.

PERENNIALS

Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*) A dense, rounded, terminal, head-like cluster of bright red, tubular flowers atop a square stem. Scarlet beebalm is a popular perennial with scarlet-red flowers in terminal tufts. The 3 ft. stems are lined with large, oval, dark-green leaves. Individual flowers are narrowly tube-shaped, tightly clustered together in 2 in. heads. Normally 2-4 ft tall. The leaves have a minty aroma. Recognized by pollination ecologists as attracting large numbers of native bees.

Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) This purple coneflower, a widely known immune booster, is most often grown as an ornamental. Plants reach 3-4' high at maturity. Tolerates drought conditions. Grow in full sun or partial shade. Can be propagated by root cuttings. It also attracts and feeds important native pollinators, making Echinacea a healer both for us and for the environment.

Giant hyssop (*Agastache*) *Agastache*. commonly called giant hyssop, is a genus containing about thirty species of upright herbaceous perennials, most of which are native to North America. Showy lavender blue flowers are easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soils in full sun. Tolerant of some light shade. Good soil drainage is essential. Plants will perform poorly and may not survive winter in hard clay soils that retain moisture. Plants tolerate heat and dry soil once established. Deadhead spent flowers to promote additional bloom. Flowers are attractive to bees, hummingbirds and butterflies.

Grayheaded cone flower (*Ratibida pinnata*) This slender, hairy-stemmed plant bears flower heads with drooping, yellow rays surrounding a roundish to ellipsoid, grayish central disc darkening to brown as rays drop off. The Gray-head Mexican-hat is a 3-5 ft. tall, summer perennial with a branched stem. One or several flowers, each on its own long stalk, may top a single stem. The yellow rays (petals) droop downward and are arranged around a

grayish-brown cone. Lower leaves are long and divided into leaflets, while the upper leaves are smaller.

Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum × superbum*). The Shasta daisy is a commonly grown flowering herbaceous perennial plant with the classic daisy appearance of white petals around a yellow disc. The blooms of Shasta daisies attract butterflies and pollinators. Grown in full sun this perennial makes for great cut flowers; deadhead spent blooms to encourage new ones. This perennial will need to be replanted every 3-4 years. Divides easily for relocating parts of the plant to new locations.

Spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohiensis*.) The bright blue flowers of Ohio Spiderwort bloom for an extended period from late spring into midsummer. The blue-green grass-like foliage and upright form are attractive in any garden or meadow. Spiderworts bloom profusely in the morning and early parts of the day, and then close-up in the heat of the afternoon, unless it is cloudy or cooler. This conserves energy and allows the plant to continue to flower over a longer period. Plant Ohio Spiderwort along with Smooth Penstemon for a fantastic bloom combination. Include some later-blooming prairie flowers and grasses nearby, as the late summer foliage of Spiderwort tends to look a little worn. Also known as Bluejacket, *Tradescantia ohiensis* will tolerate very light shade, but flowers best in full sun. Very adaptable and easy to grow in a wide range of soils. It will self-seed readily under ideal circumstances. Plants can be cut back to six inches high in late summer when the foliage starts to decline, which will help minimize the self-seeding, as well. Mature clumps can be divided every few years.