

## 2016 Container Gardening - Notes on some individual slides

### 13. Porosity

### 19. Drill bit

28. Hydrogels – have been shown to tie up nutrients and have “other disadvantages” that generally outweigh their advantages.

Do hold water, but **no researched based evidence that they release the water into the soil.** (Still, many people swear by them. Some gardeners put a diaper in the pot.)

“Although water beads or crystals can hold water, research conducted by Dr. Jeff Gillman at the University of Minnesota and others suggest that they may be holding onto water too tightly and not benefiting plants because the water they are holding may not be readily available to plant roots. Work continues to compare different types of hydrogels.” David Slezak U of M

31. Dish under the pot can hold water and prevent drainage. Especially in the **RAIN.** Never use saucers outdoors. Even oak barrel containers can become water tight – I’ve had mine become swimming pools and had to drill holes on sides near bottom

32. Water under pots, besides preventing drainage, can discolor and rot wood deck or stain concrete. Lots of lifting products or just use bottle caps

35. Avoid too much nitrogen in fertilizer. As it increases green growth, not flowers. U recommends **5-10-5, or 5-10-10** overall for annuals. Don’t use lawn fertilizer on flowering annuals. Nitrogen- Phosphorous- Potassium

36. Impatiens, begonias, millionbells, and lots of tiny flowers do not need to be deadheaded, plants with larger flowers over an inch usually do. Some new hybrids are sold as **“self-cleaning”** – Supertunias although you can still deadhead if you want!

### 37. Example of care for supertunias

Late July and August is when plants should be at their best, but there is only one problem: The plants have **run out of energy** and the gardeners realize it too late to help the plants recover. This is especially true in raised containers and hanging baskets. Here is the best way to keep your petunias in the super category.

1. When you buy them in the spring, buy a slow release fertilizer to top dress the basket or container. If you plant your own basket, incorporate some of the slow release fertilizer in the soil as you plant. Follow the package directions. Give them a very slight trim back to encourage even more branching and ultimately more flowers. If you are transplanting stretched plants cut them back by as much as a third to help improve the habit.

2. In May fertilize with a water-soluble fertilizer once every two weeks. Mix up the fertilizer and water the plants just like you would if you were using clear water. It normally takes a good half of gallon of water to really water a 10" wide basket or raised container.

3. In June fertilize weekly. If the weather turns really hot fertilize every third watering.

4. July is when the cutting back occurs. Around the 4th of July, (after your big party) get some of the slow release fertilizer that you bought in spring and re-apply across the top of the planter. At the same time, trim back – maybe 20% or even an all overtrim. Water every other day – with fertilizer.

5. Keep up the water and fertilizing, and again, if the plant starts to look straggly remove a few more branches but never more than 20%. Otherwise you can give it a general trim as before.

6. It is September and the plants should still look good, start to back off the watering and the feed, but shape the basket with the last pruning of the season.

**38-39** Designs can be works of art. Jane Horn is one of our Master Gardeners who has won contests for her containers. You'll see a lot of her pictures in this presentation, but don't get intimidated - it doesn't have to be this complicated.

**41. Location:** Under the eaves on the front porch facing north? High on a sunny deck facing west? May want different containers, may need different plants.

**Lifestyle:** How much maintenance do you want? Travel a lot? Up at the cabin every weekend? Or are you retired and willing to water twice a day?

**Water:** How far do you want to drag water? Can you set up something to make it convenient? Decks, window boxes on the second floor? (Neighbors who quickly turned to plastic flowers) Near the rain gutters? Use a rain barrel

**54 – Plans** Garden Stores and magazines offer suggested plans, (Note this one: Perennials could be moved into the ground before winter.)

**56 57.** But **will you be able to find these** easily? Plans are great, but sometimes you can't find a (Peter pan gypsy unicorn coleus) It may be easier to use what is available at your local garden centers. Often they are stocking what grows well here.

Read the labels as you need to know the mature size of your plants.

**59.** Something as simple as coleus has many heights which could change how you plant your container.

**62. Annuals** – in general - bloom all season

**64.** Pot with Angelonia, Calibrachoa, Setcreasea, Dichondrea, Iresine

**65. Setcreasea** - grown for its foliage (leaves can reach 7 inches in length); best color is achieved in bright sunlight and a dry, cramped root zone. It grows 8-12 inches tall, Can irritate skin.

**71.** Water – especially moss lined pots

**72.** Thrill, spill, fill and euphorbia

**73. Euphorbia** - for texture and constant white highlights

**75. Perilla Magilla** Full sun to part shade, tolerates deer, low maintenance mounding plant

**76.** Color repetition

**77.** Grass

**79.** Near tree - no dig

**86. Alternanthera** - Bright one called “Party Time” full sun, comes in many varieties.

**88.** Single **spider plant** from St. Catherine University

**89.** Even better spider plant with others

**90. 90.** Most houseplants are understory plants from the jungle, **can't handle full sun**, but do very well outdoors in the shade. **Elephant Ears** – Lots of the tropicals look truly exotic in our gardens. Single, or as the “thrill” in a planting.

**93.** Color of the container adds to this garden. Showy pot or more neutral? Blue flowers are Torenia (see next slide)

**94. Torenia** - **Wishbone Flower, Sun or shade**, deer resistant, many colors, no deadheading, attracts hummingbirds, snapdragon like flower., mounded or trailing

**95.** Pot to fill up bare spot – point out Angelonia

**96. Angelonia**- Called “summer snapdragon” Full sun, drought tolerant, no deadheading, makes good cut flower and re-blooms. Upright.

**98. Heliotrope** was recommended by some of our master gardeners as a great container plant. Part sun to sun, mounded filler attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

**101** – Contrast or same colors?

**102** – Moss rose and succulent garden (vigor)

**103** Licorice Vine

**105** Annual Salvia – hummingbird story

**109 Impatiens** All varieties of *Impatiens walleriana* and any hybrid with *I. walleriana* in its background are susceptible to **impatiens downy mildew**. **New Guinea impatiens (*I. hawkerii*) is highly resistant.**

Impatiens downy mildew is caused by *Plasmopara obducens*. This pathogen is not a true fungus but is a member of the Oomycota, often referred to as **water molds**. The pathogen can be introduced into a garden on infected transplants. In addition, impatiens planted into beds that were infected in previous seasons may become infected and survive in the soil for many years. Impatiens can be planted into beds or pots with no history of downy mildew but care should be taken to purchase disease free plants. Thoroughly inspect all transplants for yellowing foliage and downy growth on the lower leaf surface. Reject any plants with evidence of infection. Once a plant is infected, it cannot be cured.

Alternative plants include **coleus, caladium, begonia, and New Guinea impatiens**

**110. Bounce Impatiens** – Made to bounce back from lack of watering – also **resistant** to downy mildew

**113. Vertical garden**, almost like a picture frame, lots of directions on line. Home Depot had a detailed easy to watering plan on their web site.

**128.** Two pots stacked has Scaevola

**130. Scaevola** “fan flower”, sun, trails up to 24”, height 8-12”, considered an easy plant – medium water required.

**131 Minnesota!**

**133. Bulbs, Perennials, Shrubs** Difficult (not always impossible) to **overwinter** plants in pots in our climate.

Don't try in an **expensive ceramic pot** as freezing and thawing may crack the ceramic.

**143. 10% bleach solution** to clean pots in the fall. (Or for me, in the spring.)

Ceramic pots, take in, or empty and store under shelter upside down to avoid freeze/thaw problems.

Fiberglass, plastic, etc --- OK to leave outside even with dirt.