



Newsletter



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"August rain: the best of the summer gone, and the new fall not yet born. The odd uneven time."

-Sylvia Plath

The Pervasiveness of Flower Power!

Flowers and plants pervade our lives. For instance, they represent most countries provinces/states, and even cities. The rose is one of the most common symbols used in the western world. More exotic countries are represented by the lotus, peony or jasmine flower. Several countries are represented by plants rather than flowers. Canada has the Maple Leaf; Ireland, the Shamrock; and Scotland, the Thistle. Churches and denomination art use florals. The Blessed Virgin has the Lily, representing purity and innocence. Throughout history, many noble, medieval houses included flowers on their flags, shields or coat of arms. The English Houses of Tudor and Lancaster used the red and white rose to differentiate themselves in the War of the Roses. Imperial China used the peony.

Flowers represent months of the year. For example, the Gladiola (above) is for August. Flowers can represent special occasions. The Carnation represents a marriage's first anniversary, the daffodil the 10th, the Iris the 25th, and the Violet the 50th. We decorate weddings with a profusion of flowers. We express grief through floral arrangements. Men break the ice with their special one with fragrant bouquets or use them to say "I'm sorry." The medicinal value of flowers and plants is as ancient as their ascetic value. For instance, during the Black Plague (14 to 17th centuries), it was widely believed that their aroma would block the foul stench of the disease and thus contain the contagion. However, the cause of the Black Plague was from the fleas off rats scuttling ships from China. The medicinal value of "Posies in your pockets" (Ring around the Rosie) turned out to be a false security. Their healing properties best expressed themselves through ointments and oils.



News

There will be NO August meeting. The next meeting will be September 18th.

Arrive at 7 pm to enter plant(s) into competition. Otherwise, arrive at 7:30 pm for coffee, cookies and conversation.

Meeting begins at 8 pm.

Speaker will be Claudette Sims, "The Future of Gardening".





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The Pervasiveness of Flower Power! (continued)

Through the centuries, citizens of many countries have learned about the medicinal properties of their native vegetation. For instance, rose water (or Bulgarian Rose), cultivated from Damascus (Persia), was used for cosmetic (anti-inflammatory) and ceremonial benefits. Its use spread from the Middle East into Europe during the crusades. In a certain region of India, the Bougainvillea (Paper Flower) was used as an anti-fertility drug. Today modern research has discovered additional medicinal properties. For instance, rose water has anti depressant and anti anxiety effects. Rosa Damascena, a flowering shrub, has been found with anti-HIV, anti bacterial, anti-oxidant, antitussive and anti-diabetic properties.

Lastly, we cannot forget floral contributions to food and drink. For example, nasturium can be added to a salad or flavor a cake. There is a great proportion of plants whose blooms turn into edible vegetables or fruit. For example, the pea plant's white flower grows into the pea pod. Fruit tree blossoms become the fruit. It is nature's way of giving to the earth.

The tea industry has boomed with floral flavored beverages, including jasmine, peppermint chamomile, lavender and rose to name just a few. Whether cultivated or wild, a hot cup of fragrant tea can be the pleasure of the rich or poor alike.

Most notable "flower power" was the oft shouted slogan from the "flower children" of the 60s and 70s. Peace and free love were their goals and flowers their movement's symbol. Perhaps they knew something of flowers and plants all vital, encompassing and varied contributions to the life of people and the world throughout history.

References:

petal republic.com all that grows - you tube medium.com National Library of Medicine hgtv.com

Tools and Implements Crossword

Answers

ACROSS

4. shovel
6. trowel
8. wheelbarrow
9. gloves
11. sprinkler
13. plow
15. scythe
16. fork
17. garden fork
20. hoe

DOWN

1. cultivator
2. hose
3. water
5. mower
7. fertilizer
10. pruners
12. loppers
14. hands

A Senior Citizen's Ingenuity

Illustration by Unknown



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