

Garden Reflections

Linda Turnbull

The vagaries of our temperatures gives me pause to think or re-think my garden.

The 'Heat Dome' we experienced is something I would like to think of as a once in a lifetime experience. Unfortunately I think it is just a taste of our future. Extreme weather patterns and much less precipitation, in other words we can expect hotter and dryer summers. Even our sun lover plants took a hit with this one.

For our gardens we also must bring into the equation, urban densification This densification means the removal of large canopy trees and less green space for gardens, resulting in much hotter cities.

All is not lost for gardeners. We just have to re-think our gardens and what we plant and how we plant. Vancouver is known for its lush and green gardens. This may have to change a bit. Something to think about.

How we change our planting, not just our plant material choices but it will mean planting closer together, the less soil exposed to the elements the better our plants will retain their moisture. Deeper mulching and drip irrigation systems will also greatly help our plants, making sure our precious water source is getting where it needs to.

Fall is a time many of us plant new trees, shrubs and perennials. When replacing some of our trees, shrubs and perennials, I think we need to place greater emphasis on drought tolerant plant material. They will withstand the heat and drought more reliably. Always remembering that drought tolerant does NOT mean no water, especially in the first year when they are becoming established.

This does not mean we need to entirely give up on our beloved water hogs, just plant in containers or an area that has quick access to a water source.

The following is a selection of some choices and ideas to ponder. Always remembering that every plant family comes in a wide range of choices, tall to edging plants, as well as colour variations.

Trees and shrubs to consider are ornamental pear or olive trees. Grey/silver leafed plants tend to survive the heat conditions better.

Perennials: Dianthus, Monarda, sedums, Artemisia, Salvias are just a few that made it though the Heat Dome experience.



Monarda



dianthus



salvia aka sage



sedum



Artemisia



Salvia Hot Lips