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# Window Boxes and Their Care

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THE old, weather beaten house may be made spick and span and prosperous looking by the use of paint, but never beautiful and picturesque. But when draped with clambering vine and blooming masses of flowers the humblest, unpainted house becomes artistic and beautiful.

By filling boxes with soil and placing them in the cellar and planting early in January bulbs of tulips and hyacinths, later those of crocus and narcissi, one may have these popular bulbs blooming in the windows at about the time other people are having them in their gardens. This is especially of interest to the dwell-



The porch flower box.

The invalid or shut-in will find in the window garden a most fascinating form of gardening and by the use of a succession of boxes may follow the season around from the blooming of the first crocus until the fall frosts cut down the summer florescence, when, if one cares, the hardy evergreens and hollies may be substituted to gladden the more sombre days of winter.

er in a city flat whose gardening must, perforce, be that of the window box or garden.

While the tulips and other bulbs are flaunting gaily in the spring sunshine other boxes may be prepared to take the place; these may be planted with any flowers preferred, greenhouse plants or seedling annuals, or one's supply of house plants may furnish the nucleus of a suc-

cessful window box, with vines added. If, however, it is not convenient to have two sets of boxes one may sow seeds of annuals among the bulbs and the latter, lifted when through blooming, make room for the annuals. The large flowered and fringed petunias are always charming in window boxes, as are also the double varieties. Sweet allysum, candy tuft, phlox Drummondii, ageratum, lobelia and a host of other bright things may be depended upon to give good results and will succeed in almost any situation, but one should avoid planting things which make a tall growth in either window or porch boxes unless a screen for privacy is desired.

Plants which do not grow above a foot in height or can be kept back to that height are preferable for windows; from a foot to eighteen inches will do admirably for porch boxes. In either box, trailing vines should always appear and where desired climbers also can be used. For the window boxes climbers of a graceful delicate nature are usually to be preferred, and there is nothing more delicate and graceful than the *maurandia* vine, which clings by twisting the leaf petiole about a support and will cling to the window screen or any slight projection; its lavender, pink or white tube shaped flowers are borne in profusion and are an added attraction. The scarlet *manetta* vine is another graceful climber and when combined with the

white solanum is charming indeed, less delicate but equally charming is the *thunbergia* with its felt-like leaves and disc shaped flowers of white or orange and dark-eyed orange. For positions where a taller climber is desired, one which may be run on cords or wires to a

second story, the new cardinal climber is a delightful, graceful thing, easily grown from seed which should be started in glass in the house or hot bed and planted out when danger of frost is past. *Cobaea scandens* is another most excellent climber which blooms persistently from base to tip of the plant, its large, bell-shaped blossoms — which open a greenish cream and change through all the shades of lavender and mauve to a deep wine—are very conspicuous and beautiful



In any box trailing vines should appear.

and valuable for cutting. Most of the passion vines are desirable window box climbers, especially the tri-colored Southern Beauty with its large, showy flowers of pink, white and blue, nearly five inches across and borne in profusion all summer. This last should be purchased for a dime at the greenhouse and will usually be showing buds when purchased.

All these vines are rather addicted to sunny east, west, southern or western positions, but *Cobaea* and the cardinal creeper will do well even on a north exposure if a modicum of sunshine is possible at some time in the day.

The *Passifloras*, *Cobaeas*, and the larger growing *solanums* are especially desirable for porch boxes where they can be twined about the pillars. Nasturtiums, which are trailers and not climbers, are especially happy when grown in boxes where they can follow their natural bent. For growing these to perfection not too rich soil should be used as this encourages a rank growth of leaves at the expense of flowers, and a careful selection of colors should be made. The hybrids of Madam Gunther are the most desirable mixed sorts, but choose of these the darkest and clearest reds.

Trailing *vinca* is always popular but should have the ends of the sprays pinched back to encourage a fuller growth. Ivy leaved geranium, especially the silver leaved, is always good and some of the better flowering varieties especially good with boxes made up of greenhouse plants. Corden's Glory, a bright scarlet double flower, and Mme. Thibaut, a lovely shade of clear rose pink, are two

of the best, giving large trusses of flowers all summer. The trailing fuchsia is charming in north and east window boxes early in the season, as also the trailing *abutilon*.

One should always plan to grow something fragrant in the window boxes and for this there is nothing sweeter than the heliotrope, especially under bedroom windows. This plant loves sunshine and so can be used in any sunny exposure.

As a number of plants are to be crowded in a comparatively small space the quality of the soil is of moment; preferably it should consist of good fibrous loam,—that from the under side of sod being best, a little black leaf mould and old, thoroughly rotted manure thoroughly incorporated with the soil. The boxes should be filled quite full, pressing the earth firmly about the plants, as the soil, even when well pressed, settles much more than one would expect.

Abundant water is necessary and this, fortunately, is available by the use of the



One should always plan to grow something fragrant in the window boxes.

The following list of classified plants are suggestive rather than exhaustive and will be of assistance in deciding what to plant.

**Trailing Plants.**

Nasturtium,  
 Vinca,  
 Fuchsia—Trailing Queen,  
 Begonia—Marjorie Daw,  
 Gloxynia Scandens,  
 Abutilon,  
 Ivy Leaved Geranium—Souverain  
 Chas. Turner, Caesar, Francke,  
 August Hardy and Jeanne d'Arc,  
 Weeping Lantana,  
 Glehoma,  
 Wandering Jew,  
 Lobelia,  
 Asparagus Sprengeri.

**Climbers,**

Maurandia,  
 Cypress Vine, white or scarlet.

Cardinal Climber,  
 Cobea Scandens,  
 Miss Lobata,  
 Mina Wangueira,  
 Thunbergia,  
 Dolichos,  
 Scarlet Runner Bean,  
 Alleghany Vine,  
 Wild Cucumber,  
 Japanese Morning Glory,  
 Centrosomas,  
 Smilax,  
 Solanum Jasminoides.

**Blue Flowers**

Ageratum,  
 Lobelia,  
 Ipomea—dwarf morning glory  
 Plumbago.

Weeping Lantana,  
 Cobaea Scandens,  
 Maurandia vine,  
 Browallia,  
 Heliotrope.

**White Flowers,**

Candy Tuft,  
 Sweet Alyssum,  
 Petunia,  
 Verbena,  
 Phlox Drummond,  
 Camphor Geranium,  
 Geranium,  
 Antirrhinum,  
 Stock,  
 Lobelia,  
 Tuberos Begonia,  
 Schizanthus.

Among the plants which may be successfully grown in boxes may be mentioned the following:

**For East or South Exposure.**

Tuberos Begonia,  
 Fancy Leaved Calceola,  
 Gloxynia,  
 Most Flowering Begonia,  
 Fuchsia,  
 Heliotrope,  
 Abutilon,  
 Petunia,  
 Verbena,  
 Plumbago,  
 Phlox,  
 Browallia,  
 Geranium,  
 Ivy Geranium,  
 Wandering Jew.

Candy Tuft,  
 Camphor Geranium,  
 Antirrhinum,  
 Ten Weeks Stock,  
 Vinca,  
 Lobelia,  
 Cobaea Scandens,  
 Morning Glories,  
 Solanum,  
 Maurandia,  
 Thunbergia,  
 Passiflora,  
 Manetta Vine,  
 Bougainvillea,  
 Coleus,  
 Croton.

**For Northern Exposures.**

Nearly all varieties of Begonia,  
 The various Asparagus Ferns,  
 All the hardier fancy Ferns, Boston  
 and the like,  
 Dracena,  
 Farfugium,  
 Impatiens Sultan in var.  
 Trailing and Erect Fuchsia,  
 Abutilon,  
 Manetta Vine,  
 Sanseveria,  
 Pannicum Excurrens,  
 Wandering Jew,  
 Maurandia.

**Suggestions for filling boxes:****North Boxes.**

I.  
 Begonia—Otto Gecker      Dracena      Otto Gecker  
 Farfugium      Farfugium  
 Manetta Vine      Asparagus Sprengeri      Manetta  
 II.  
 Begonia Angel's Wing      Boston Fern      Ruhra Begonia  
 Impatiens Sultan      Impatiens Sultan  
 Trailing Fuchsia      Wandering Jew      Trailing Fuchsia  
 III.  
 Aspidistra      Boston Fern      Aspidistra  
 Bougainvillea  
 Maurandia      Maurandia  
 IV.  
 Asparagus Plumosus Nanna      Asparagus P. N.  
 Pannicum Excurrens  
 Nasturtium—dark red and scarlet

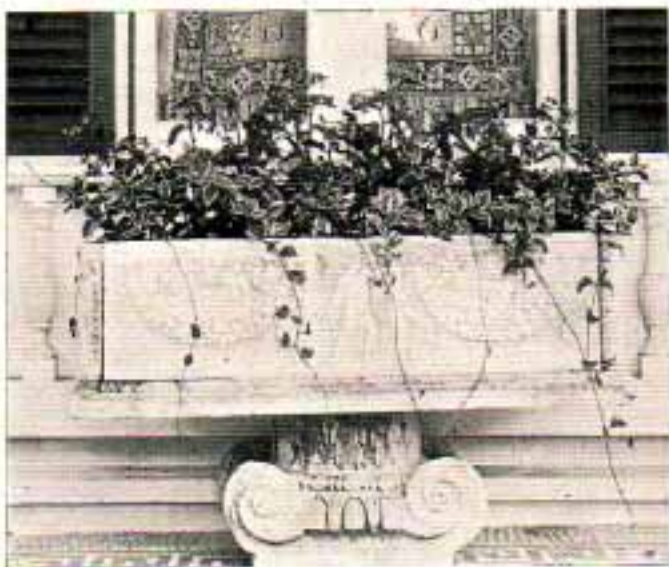
**East Window Boxes**

I.  
 Pink Justitia      Pink Justitia      Pink Justitia

White Double Petunia      White Double Petunia  
 Ivy Geranium Mrs. Fink      Ivy Ger. Sour. de Turner  
 Trailing Vine  
 II.  
 Pink Geranium      Pink Geranium      Pink Geranium  
 Heliotrope      Heliotrope  
 Weeping Lantana      Ivy Ger. Mrs. Fink      Weeping Lant.  
 III.  
 Scarlet Geranium      Scarlet Ger.      Scarlet Geranium  
 White Anterphium      White Anterphium  
 Manetta Vine      Solanum Jasminoides      Manetta Vine  
 IV.  
 Yellow Tuberos Begonia      do.      do.  
 White Tuberos Begonia      do  
 White Thunbergia      Yellow Thunbergia      White Thun.  
 V.  
 White Candytuft      White Candytuft      White Candytuft  
 Scarlet Phlox Drummond      Scarlet Phlox Drum.  
 White Verbena      Scarlet Verbena      White Verbena  
 Nepeta Glehoma      Nepeta Glehoma

proper kind of window boxes. It must be remembered that boxes on the sunny side of the house are under fire, as it were, a great part of the day, much more than plants growing in the ground, and if the windows above them are closed they may be said to be between two fires and it will make much for the comfort and success of the planting if the windows are allowed to remain open during the hottest weather.

During the early days of fall when the nights bring frost the open window back of the box is a great protection. Often a killing frost will be rendered harmless by the simple expedient of leaving a window open and screening the box with a shawl suspended from the bottom of the top sash, or an umbrella thrust through the open window over the box will preserve its beauties for the fine



No one who cared for architectural traditions could have placed this box.

days which are sure to follow early frosts.

The lists shown on the opposite page are merely suggestive and are arranged for boxes under ordinary width windows. In arranging larger boxes it will only be necessary to increase the number of plants. For an ordinary box nine plants, planted in three rows—the plants alternating—is about right. Plants received by mail from the florists should not be planted directly in window boxes but potted in small pots, placed away from direct sunshine for a few days and allowed to start into growing before being transferred to the boxes. Then a hole the size of the pot should be made in the soil and the ball of earth slipped into it without breaking it or in any way disturbing the roots. It is better, too, for boxes to be kept in the shade a few days after planting before placing in a trying sunny position.

North window boxes will always be a delight to the owner as there is no other position in which plants do so well. Nearly all house and greenhouse plants may be grown to perfection there, especially the ferns and begonias, and many of what are known as sun loving plants will do admirably if they receive the morning



Plants can be kept back to the desired height.

or late afternoon sun. Where no trees or porches intervene almost anything may be attempted.

In boxes of pink petunias and like soft colored flowers the wild cucumber is excellent during the better part of the season but should be removed as soon as it shows signs of growing shabby and something else planted in its place; if one takes the precaution to have ready some potted vine which can be slipped into its place the change will not be noticeable, except for the fresher appearance of the box.

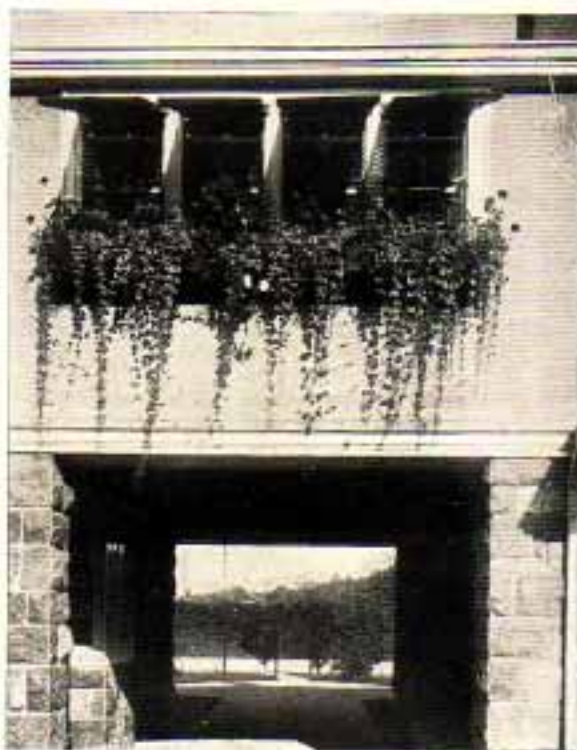
Japanese morning glories do finely in window and porch boxes and may be trained on cords to go to a second story window—as they are plants of soaring ambition and seldom find anything high enough for their desires.

They do not require as much root room as most climbers but must have an abundance of water to produce the immense flowers for which they are famous.

This is the beautiful part of the window box idea, that it is simple and inexpensive, adapted to the mansion or the humblest cottage; that one does not need the expensive products of the greenhouse to evolve a successful color scheme, for the simplest garden flowers will be quite as beautiful from the road—possibly more so, than many exotics, and may be had for the labor of planting and caring for

them. Just a few boxes of proper size and construction, a little earth of the right sort, a few flowers adapted to the location, and a reasonable amount of good taste in selection; for not all flowers, though beautiful in themselves, are at their best in any and all positions and circumstances. One must study the exposure, whether an east, west, south or north

one; the amount of shade; the color and material of the house and any other circumstance affecting results. The red house, perhaps, of all colors, presents the most difficult problem in color harmony. Usually preponderance of green brightened with a very dark red, as that of the S. A. Nutt geranium and the darker shades of nasturtiums will work out satisfactorily and many of the foliage



Over the porte cochere.

plants can be used to advantage. Considerable white is always safe to use. On a yellow house one has more latitude and most shades of blue, of mauve and of heliotrope may be indulged in. Soft pinks and white are also satisfactory. White houses may be brightened with all sorts of bright colors and are really delightful backgrounds to work out a color scheme upon, as also is gray and the natural weathered color of the wood.

Cement houses especially crave the presence of flowers growing under windows and along porch and balconies.