Late Summer Heat Lovers

Many of our native plants and plants naturalized to Bell County thrive when our temperatures are highest. Four Nerve Daisy (Hymenoxys), Blackeyed Susan (Rudebeckia hirta), Mexican Honeysuckle (Justicia spicigera), Golden Bush Daisy (Viguiera stenoloba), Lindheimer Senna (Senna lindheimeriana), Flowering Senna (Cassia corymbosa), Yellow Bird of Paradise (Caesalpinia gillesii), Texas Lantana (Lantana horrida), Esperanza/Yellow Bells (Tecoma stans) and Chocolate Daisy (Berlandiera lyrata) are heat-loving plants with yellow/orange color. Flame Acanthus (Anisacanthus quadrifidus), Turks Cap (Malvaviscus arboreus), Pride of Barbados (Orgullo de Barados), Autumn Sage (Salvia greggii) are red, drought tolerant plants. Add the cool colors of Purple Cone Flower, Gregg’s Mistflower (Eupatorium greggii), Mealy Blue Sage (Salvia farinacea), Cat Thyme (Teucrium maum), Cat Mint (Nepeta faassenii), Lavender, or Blackfoot Daisy (Melampodium leucanthum) for a pleasant contrast and you have a beautiful array of colorful blooms in the worst of our summer weather.

When adding these drought tolerant, heat lovers to your garden please remember to add some grit such as decomposed granite or washed builder’s sand to the soil. These plants must have good drainage to do well in our Central Texas clay. When planting, remember to gently tease the root ball to encourage the plant to stretch out its roots, otherwise it will continue to grow in a circular pattern and this can girdle and will kill the plant. Place your plant in a shallow hole with the soil line of the plant an inch above the ground. More plants die from being planted too deeply than from any other cause. Water every three days until established, and make sure to mulch to protect the roots from temperature extremes, weeds, and to conserve water. These late summer heat lovers in your garden will result in a beautiful heat-resistant display of color for years to come.

Any questions? Contact ask bcmga@gmail.com

Seen in the photos: Champions in the drought tolerant garden- Purple Cone Flower, Blackfoot Daisy, Spanish lavender, Mealy Blue Sage are some of the many heat-loving drought tolerant plants suitable for Bell County.