

Pretty in Pink

Martin Blow from SpecialPerennials gets in touch with his softer side.

My garden is so often full of the blazing hot colours of my helenium collection that at times it's lovely to sit and relax surrounded by softer, calmer coloured flowers and what is more calming than pink.

There are so many shades of pink flower to choose, from the palest blush through to luxurious lipstick pink. Pink is an easy colour to combine – just avoid orange unless you like jarring clashes. Here are some of my summertime favourite pink flowers.

For early summer the pink drumsticks of the bistort (*Persicaria bistorta* Superba) are easy to grow in most soil types and look great paired with violet cranesbills. Later in the summer another *Persicaria*, *Rosea*, puts on a stunning show of tall stems covered with pale pink flowers over many months. *Veronica* Pink Damask creates a similar effect but on a far smaller scale.

There are many lovely pink hardy geraniums to choose from. The low growing, sun loving “Elke” and “Striatum” are particularly tough and make a lovely edging against a patio or path. “Sherwood” is



“For early summer the pink drumsticks of the bistort”



“Veronica Pink Damask puts on a stunning show on a smaller scale”

taller and has intriguing, rolled up petals.

Scent in the garden is very important and the border pink “Devon Wizard” has a spellbinding fragrance and bold, bright flowers that are also great for cutting. If you keep him deadheaded he will weave his magic right to the end of autumn

For a moist or even wet soil, perhaps by a pond or stream then candelabra primulas are a good choice. One of the best pink flowered one is Beesiana because it isn’t too tall and floppy and it will grow in drier (but not too dry!) soils as well.

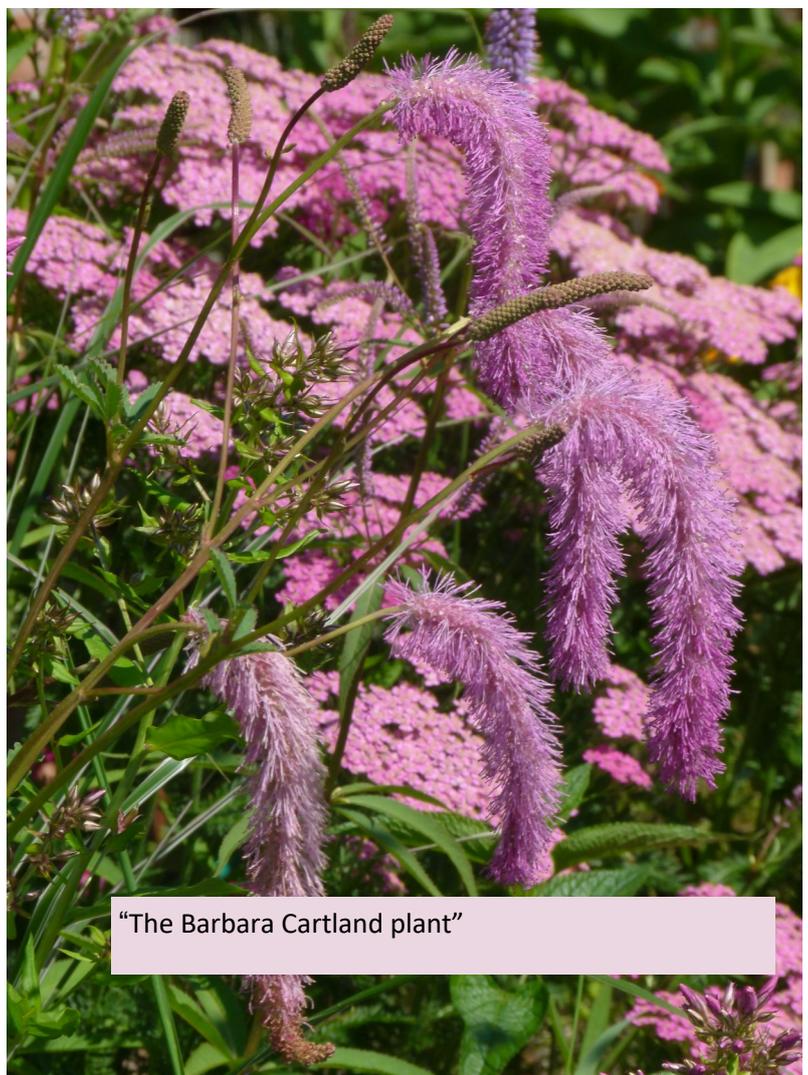
One of the most impressive pink flowers in my garden are the large, thistle-like, fuchsia-pink heads of the Stemacantha that erupt from ping-pong ball sized silver buds in June and July. Once the flowers have finished the seed heads give prolonged interest and feed finches in winter.

Another striking looking flower is that of the Japanese Burnet (Sanguisorba Lilac Squirrel), affectionately known as the Barbara Cartland flower in our garden as the long, feathery, candy pink flowers look just like the one of the feather boas that might have graced the great lady’s outfits.

With so many lovely flowers and shades to choose from there’s no reason why your garden shouldn’t be pretty in pink the whole summer long!



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“The Barbara Cartland plant”