

Toby's Talk Plant List

These are most of the plants that Toby talked about on 11th November and a few of my scribbled notes about them. You will see that most of them are both attractive to see but also useful.

Grafted Tomatoes – a new technique mainly used by professional growers

Pelargonium sidoides has a more pleasant aroma than many pelargoniums

Red Orach an amaranth (see later) but only leaves edible

Pelargonium radula – flavour of Attar of Roses so put a leaf at the base of a cake tin

Japanese banana – structural plant, can use the leaves as plates at BBQs but you need a big garden for this one – and it has a slow suckering habit.

Japanese ginger - vigorous and hardy plant, flowers have the ginger flavour

Allium 'Christophii' put alliums at the front of the bed, Gladiator is a good un.

Sunflowers in nature they are multi stemmed with a long flowering period, only bred for one large flower by Russians for the oil. Bend the stems down to encourage side shoots and more flowers.

Mexican sunflower

Ricinus communis dark flowers – source of poison ricin but in Toby's view there is really no need to exclude it from public planting, also rue, spurge,

Fennel and Thyme both these herbs have chemicals which other plants don't like, happy in poor soil. Also tend to deter insects and bugs (Strewing herbs)

Parsley - eat this by the handful for best effect – this is best if allowed to self seed, coriander as well

Curly Kale - lovely colours and long harvesting season

Rue (*Ruta graveolens*) blueish foliage very attractive but leaves can irritate

Olives - give it a go but make sure you have 2 trees for a good crop

Finger/Caviar Lime apparently an addition to cocktails

Makrut Lime - also known as Kaffir Lime widely used in Thai cooking

Tulbaghia violacea – society garlic can impart a garlic flavour via leaves, stems and flowers but also an attractive flower

Salvia 'Amistad' means friendship so it can be freely shared. A very good pollinator

Mint Black - *Tagetes minuta* I supposed to suppress ground elder but Toby has NOT found that that works, but is a useful culinary and medicinal plant ?like instant salsa?

Tomatillo very easy to grow and as they are a recent introduction pests and diseases haven't latched on to them – yet.

Grain amaranth – seeds a very rich source of protein and leaves taste like spinach. Also known as Callaloo

Yacon or yacon a potentially sweet tuberous plant from the Andes, tubers are very watery when first harvested then sweeten up.

Chilli peppers - do best if kept a bit dry

Fig leaved/Malabar gourd The gourds can be stored for more than a year as long as you cut a T junction of stem above the gourd so it can mature. A good tip for all marrows, squashes and gourds. This gourd is naturally sweet and does help with diabetes.

Other tips made in passing

When hedge clipping, use the clippings as a nutritious mulch – but not laurel

If you want to take cuttings from a plant, cut is back when in full growth and the regrowth will not have flowers so will be good for cuttings

Make up paper pots for seedlings then put pot and all into the ground when the weather has warmed up

If a plant is labelled officinalis then it was developed as a medicinal plant, eg salvia officinalis – sage.

If your soil is very dry but you want to germinate some seeds in it, eg carrots, then sow in a line, lie a plank over the seeds then check every day to see if they have germinated. The plank will have drawn moisture up via capillary action to help the seeds germinate.