





Take-away plan from Cancer Research Garden

by Andy Sturgeon

These plants are chosen for their foliage and textural contrasts. The colour scheme is restricted to lime green, plum-purple, orange and purple-blue for a dramatic and feisty border.

Ideally it should be planted with a dark backdrop behind, for example a painted wall or fence. For the amount of colour this combination provides, it is still low maintenance. Another bonus is that it provides interest all year round, with foliage interest from the euphorbia and the fern, polystichum.

Choose a site for your border that gets a fair amount of sun. The plants suit a wide range of soil types and can also tolerate a period of drought.

The plants should be arranged in interlocking blocks. The stipa and pilosella should merge so the orange flowers of the pilosella appear among the grass, almost as if the grass itself were flowering.

Plants used

- *Euphorbia x martini* x 3:
Fantastic flowers and will look good for a long time, even through winter when touched with frost.
- *Stipa tenuifolia* x 5/7:
Soft, fluffy and pale green grass. Grow other plants through it, such as alliums and tulips and the flowers will seem to dance through it.
- *Pilosella aurantiaca* x 15:
A beautiful burnt orange flower, also known as Fox and Cubs.
- *Carex testacea*, two groups - x 3 and x 5:
An evergreen grass which becomes bronze with age.
- *Polystichum polyblepharum* x 15:
A neat and compact evergreen fern which provides structure and, unlike many ferns, can also take some sun.
- *Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens', two groups x 7:
Chosen for its purple foliage, this salvia also has an interesting corrugated leaf and looks great with stipa.
- *Salvia* 'Caradonna' x 7:
This salvia is loved not only for its purple flowers but also dramatic purple stems.
- *Aquilegia* 'Ruby Port', five groups x 5:
These aquilegia have blue-green foliage and are great for self-seeding.
- *Aquilegia* 'Black Barlow' five groups x 5:
A very dark version of this cottage garden favourite.