

The Greenhouse

Rita's Monthly Gardening Tip! May 2008 – Perennials vs. Annuals



May 2008 – Perennials vs. Annuals

A plant that you plant in the spring and provides you with flowers and/or fruit during the summer then dies in the fall is an annual. In this category are plants such as tomatoes and marigolds. A perennial can be planted in the spring, summer or fall. Some may die back in the winter but it will grow back from the roots in the spring year after year. Examples of perennials are pineapple salvia and Mexican sage. A biennial is a plant that when planted in the spring only grows leaves the first year then the second year bursts forth with beautiful flowers such as Canterbury bells and pincushion flowers. The clear line between annuals and perennials is often blurred in coastal California where frosts are light and freezes are rare, helping some annuals act as perennials. Also, many plants will reseed bringing back plants we had last year from new seed.