

Your garden in June

Everything's coming up roses

June must be my favourite time of year. The garden is well into bloom, the hedgerows are bursting with flowers and the air is filled with birdsong. Everything still has a freshness about it which will be gone by late summer.

June is the time to enjoy many of the flowering shrubs. I particularly love Philadelphus known as mock orange, which has white flowers with a glorious fragrance redolent of orange blossom. Good for a smaller garden is Philadelphus 'Belle Etoile', a compact shrub up to 2m high, its white flowers having a maroon flush at the centre.

I also have Philadelphus coronaria 'Aureus' which contributes much to the garden even when not in flower. As it comes into leaf, the foliage is a beautiful gold colour, gradually fading to greenish yellow as it ages. Mine grows in an east facing border which prevents the leaves getting scorched by too much sun, and it lights up the border. Plant it next to a purple-leaved shrub such as one of the Berberis, or Cotinus coggygria 'Royal Purple' and you will be enjoying both shrubs long after the flowers have faded.



June is, of course, the month when many roses reach their peak. With so many roses on the market, the choice can be bewildering, but there really is a rose for almost every situation. There are patio roses for pots and containers, low-growing ones for ground cover, medium and large shrubs, upright climbers for arches and pergolas, and vigorous ramblers for covering large walls or growing through large trees.

Although many of the old garden roses and species roses tend to bloom once in early summer, many newer varieties have been developed that will flower all summer with regular deadheading, in particular the English roses developed by David Austin Roses. Try the fragrant pink 'Gertrude Jekyll' or the rich velvety crimson of 'William Shakespeare 2000'.

If you take a trip this month up to the Royal Horticultural Society garden at Hyde Hall near Rettenden, you'll see roses grown at their best. Don't miss the truly magnificent ramblers growing on the wall of the barn restaurant. Forget tea and cake, fill your senses with the delicious sight and scent of the rose.

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