

GARDENING FOR THE SENSES

Fragrant Flowering Plants

Basil *Ocimum basilicum* (many cultivars)
Beebalm *Monarda didyma*
Chamomile *Anthemis tinctoria*
Heliotrope *Heliotropium arborescens*
Hyacinth *Hyacinthus orientalis*
Lavender *Lavandula angustifolia*
Lemon balm *Melissa officinalis*
Lily *Lilium* sp.
Lily-of-the-Valley *Convallaria majalis*

Fragrant Ground Covers

Chamomile *Anthemis tinctoria*
Sweet Woodruff *Galium odoratum*
Creeping Thyme *Thymus serpyllum*
Woolly Thyme *Thymus praecox*

Fragrant Vines

Clematis *Clematis* sp.
Climbing Rose *Rosa* sp.
Honeysuckle *Lonicera* sp.
Jasmine *Jasminum nudiflorum*
Passionflower *Passiflora* sp.
Sweet pea *Lathyrus latifolius*
Wisteria *Wisteria floribunda*

Plants to Listen To

Animated Oats *Avena sterilis*
Balloon flower *Platycodon grandiflorus*
Bamboo Many species
Chinese lantern plant *Physalis alkekengi*
Honesty or Money Plant *Lunaria annua*
Pampas grass *Cortaderia selloana*
Pearl Grass *Briza maxima*

Mint *Mentha* sp. (many cultivars)
Peony *Paeonia* hybrids
Pinks *Dianthus* sp.
Sage *Salvia* sp.
Scented Geranium *Pelargonium* sp..
Stock *Matthiola incana*
Thyme *Thymus vulgaris*
Violet *Viola odorata*

Fragrant Tropical Plants

Frangipani
Plumeria sp.
Gardenia *Gardenia jasminoides*
Jasmine *Jasminum nudiflorum*

Fragrant Trees and Shrubs

Butterfly Bush *Buddleia davidii*
Lilac *Syringa* sp.
Mock Orange *Philadelphus* sp.
Rose *Rosa* sp.

Trees to Listen To

Birch *Betula* sp.
Pine *Pinus* sp.
Poplar *Populus* sp.

GARDENING FOR THE SENSES, cont

Plants to Touch

Cape Jasmine *Gardenia jasminoides*
Cockscomb *Celosia cristata*
Feather grass *Stipa pennata*
Gay-feather *Liatris spicata*
Globe Amaranth *Gomphrena globosa*
Hare's Tale Grass *Lagurus ovatus*
Lamb's ears *Stachys byzantina*
Lily *Lilium* sp.
Love-lies-bleeding *Amaranthus caudatus*
Mullein *Verbascum* sp.
Obedient Plant *Physostegia virginiana*
Poppy *Papaver nudicaule*
Pussy willow *Salix discolor*
Rose mallow *Hibiscus coccineus*
Squirrel-tail grass *Hordeum jubatum*
Statice *Limonium latifolium*
Woolly thyme *Thymus praecox*
Wormwood *Artemisia* sp.

GARDENING FOR THE SENSES, cont.

While many gardeners choose plants for their visual beauty, you may also want to concentrate on choosing plants that stimulate the other senses. The following suggestions and plant lists will help you choose plants that cater to your sense of taste, smell, touch, and hearing.

A Garden You Can Taste

Fruits, vegetables, and some herbs are perfect for stimulating your sense of taste. As long as you're not spraying your crops with pesticides, you can munch your way across the garden any time during the growing season.

Vegetables that are brightly colored when ripe, such as golden zucchini squash, red leaf lettuce, and purple podded beans, stand out from the surrounding green foliage and make harvesting easier for the visually impaired gardener. Tomatoes and strawberries soften slightly and turn bright red when they are ripe. Peppers, peas, beans, and leafy vegetables such as lettuce and spinach are ready to pick when they feel large enough. The soil can be pushed away to check on the progress of root crops, like carrots and radishes. You may want to grow bush-type varieties, so you don't have to search long, tangled vines for your produce.

Nasturtiums have a wonderful peppery taste to both leaves and blooms. Mint is very refreshing to chew, and there are dozens of types of mint: not only the spearmint and peppermint everyone is familiar with, but apple mint, orange mint, and many others can be planted in your garden. Hundreds of herbs can be used for cooking.

A Garden You Can Smell

Every plant has its own scent. Different scents can subtly alter your mood, and your garden can help you take advantage of this. Try to create different "rooms," or pockets in the garden. An area surrounded by the scents of lilacs, roses, or lily-of-the-valley is a relaxing place to set up a hammock or lawn chair.

Some heavy scents, like honeysuckle, jasmine and wisteria, can make you feel sleepy, while herbs such as lavender, rosemary, and lemon verbena energize and invigorate you. A stroll through a section of culinary herbs, like oregano, sage, and thyme, will often help whet your appetite.

Some fragrant plants release their scents when they are touched or crushed. Herbs like chamomile or creeping thyme can be used as groundcovers for pathways, and will release their fragrances as you walk across them. Different herbal paths can lead to various "rooms" in your garden. People using canes, or who otherwise are at risk of falling, may not want to use scented ground covers for pathways.

Scented geraniums and other aromatic herbs can be planted along pathways, and will release their scents when touched by garden visitors. Raised beds can be planted with fragrant ground covers, providing an aromatic resting area.

The following tables list some fragrant plants that are available. Some of the fragrant trees and shrubs listed are not winter-hardy in Indiana; however, they make excellent house plants, and can be moved indoors for the winter if they are kept in containers.

GARDENING FOR THE SENSES, cont.

A Garden You Can Feel

Our sense of touch can make the garden an exciting place to explore the different plant textures. Place plants with interesting textures in a small, enclosed garden with comfortable garden seats or mossy places to sit. Garden beds raised to a height of two feet and constructed with edges to sit on bring touchable plants within reach. Choose only nonpoisonous and non-prickly plants for the petting garden.

There are many different textures that you can include in the garden. Some plants have soft, fuzzy leaves or flowers, like lamb's-ear, woolly thyme, and pussy willow. Many ornamental grasses, especially hare's tail grass, have fluffy flower heads. The blossoms on some plants, such as hibiscus, gardenia, and most lilies, feel silky to the touch. Blossoms of statice and globe amaranth have a papery feel, as do the seed pods of honesty (also called the money plant). A list of plants with interesting textures can be found at the end of this publication.

A Garden You Can Hear

The sounds that a garden makes can create subtle moods in visitors. The whisper of weeping plants, such as willows and birch, has a calming influence. The rustling of ornamental grasses and bamboo can create a sense of excitement and activity, and make excellent audio signals to help gardeners orient themselves. The accompanying list suggests just a few plants you may want to include for their interesting sounds.