

A Lazy Gardener Ponders the Garden

Written by Will Balk, Jr.
Tuesday, 14 May 2019 13:26



When you're as lazy a gardener as I am, and when you procrastinate just because you can . . . well, sooner or later you have to get right down and start working in the dirt. Today I reached that point and admitted that the new garden bed had to be addressed immediately.

One of my problems stems from my preference for growing and learning about plants, instead of the design and arranging of plants for garden effect. I tend to collect every new plant I discover; it seems to matter little whether I have a place in mind for it, nor even if it is likely to grow in our challenging climate. This leads inexorably to my current difficulties.

I have dozens of unusual or rare (or common!) plants, sitting in their pots where I've cared for them with varying degrees of success. Very often I will have found ways to propagate them, which automatically multiplies my problem. Here at the farm, I have created an unkempt personal nursery of plants in pots, crammed cheek-by-jowl beneath some fruit trees and an ancient *Camellia sasanqua*. They are close by the big back sitting porch, and they make for a lovely view in that corner of the yard.

At least the view is lovely to me. Unfortunately, there are daily comments from family and visitors, most along the lines of "When are you going to do something about that bunch of plants still in their pots?" While I find immense pleasure in strolling among my pots of hydrangeas (I counted some 20 different kinds of hydrangea this morning) and crinums (only 14 different varieties of these) and dozens of other kinds of plants, it seems that others can't quite appreciate the beauty I see there.

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