Late Blooming Wildflowers

THE SECRET TO AN ENDLESS SUMMER

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THERE’S A CERTAIN WITCHCRAFT that settles into an autumn wildflower meadow. The ironweed and goldenrod create a dreamlike palette of deep hypnotic violet and harvest yellow, while brown seedpods add a cathartic nostalgia to the romantic cornucopia. In the September wind, swaying stems, quivering blooms and fluttering wings create the same serenity one feels gazing out onto an oceanscape. Yet unlike the ocean, the meadow you’re surrounded by extraordinary winged animals everywhere you look. Even after gardeners have finished the season’s weeding, children have gone back to school, and beach bags have been stowed away, the energy of summer continues here.

Flashy goldfinches frolic across the meadow from one sunflower to the next, honeybees covered in pollen eagerly wriggle among the velvet petals of the mountain mint, and butterflies of myriad species—monarchs, fritillaries, silvers, buckeyes, dillphins—dance with rapture around the profusion of aster blooms! Indeed, late September and October are the pollinator after-party, where the champagne of the late blooming wildflowers does fluoresce at this time, having many pollinators including the iconic monarch butterfly.

Late June is greeted with delicate sprays of white of the Virginia mountain mint, bright fuschias of the purple coneflower and the fanciful blue petals of the camas spindworts. July is the peak display with splashes of lavender of wild bergamot, dusty rose-colored Joe Pye weed and multi-colored garden phlox.

Finally the robust August performers of bergamot, dusty rose-colored Joe Pye weed and multi-colored garden phlox.

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