

## Everlasting Flowers\*

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In our experiments with annuals at the Central Experimental Farm we included this year a collection of Everlasting Flowers. The collection included the most important of the everlast-



*Helichrysum* (Golden Globe)

ings. We found that these everlastings when judged on a comparative basis had to be rated high amongst the several hundred annuals which were this year tested at Ottawa. Besides this, they have to be allowed points on account of their usefulness for bouquets during the winter. They may be dried for winter use by methods of the simplest kind and when cut at the right stage they retain their attractiveness for long periods.

The seed used was obtained from two firms, Messrs. Sutton, of Reading, England, and Messrs. Vaughan, of Chicago. It was sown on the twelfth and eighteenth of April, and the plants put out into their permanent positions during the first and second weeks of June. The soil in which they were planted was sandy in character, but owing to the large amount of rain that fell it appeared to suit them remarkably well.

All varieties made good growth and were flowering freely before the end of July, many of them by the middle of July. The length of the flowering season for most of them was an average of ten weeks, while some varieties of the *Helichrysums* bloomed during twelve weeks, and would have probably continued in bloom two weeks longer had it not been that they had to be pulled up early in November to make room for other things. The *Gomphrenas* succumbed to the early frosts, but the *Ammobium*, and *Helichrysums* were but slightly affected by frosts ranging from four to eight degrees.

The following order in which they are here discussed coincides with that in which they should be placed with regard to merit. It should be mentioned that the *Gomphrena* (Globe Amaranth) is the only one of these Everlastings which has a common name.

**Helichrysums:** These included Sutton's Golden Globe, Silver Globe, Fireball, pink and cream shades, and large flowered mixed. In our opinion the best three are the Golden Globe, Fireball and a white one from the mixed packet. They grew to heights ranging around four feet six inches to five feet, and were encouraged to further growth by repeated cutting. It is generally considered that these plants do best in sandy loam, and judging from the fact that they grew with us this year much higher than usual, it is safe to assume that they will do well in soil of even less than average quality if it be well watered.

**Acrocliniums:** The acrocliniums are often placed under the genus *Helipterum*. These both for bedding and for cutting are in some ways superior to the *Helichrysums*. The varieties are, double rose, single rose, and single white. There is very little difference between the single and doubles, both being as a matter of fact mostly semi-double. The variety single rose is of a particularly pleasing shade of pink, and either by itself or mixed with other everlastings is really attractive and pleasing. These plants are benefited by judicious cutting, and used either for that purpose or for bedding they are eminently satisfactory apart from the fact that they are everlastings.



*Rhodanthe* (Maculata)



*Gomphrena* (Globe Amaranth)

*Rhodanthe* is the second of these everlastings, which belong to the genus *Helipterum*. More accurately stated, *Rhodanthe* is used as a synonym of *Helipterum*. It is graceful in habit of growth and the nodding heads on long pedicels retain their grace when dried. Its rose pink color is pleasing. Its blooming season is not quite so long as the two former plants. It grows about one foot high and is rather fragile in appearance.

*Ammobium* is our fourth everlasting, and this variety is known as *alatum*. Its habit of growth as a plant is straggling and the broadly winged branches gives it a distinctive appearance. The flowers are pure white, rather small, but pleasing in the effect they produce in bouquets.

**Gomphrenas:** Our fifth flower does not belong to the family *Compositae*, as the four former *Gomphrenas* known as *Globe Amaranths*, and belong to the family *Amaranthaceae*. We grew six varieties and recommend these three. *G. globosa roseo*, *G. globosa rubra*, and *G. Haageana aurea superba*. These are tender to early frost, which takes all the color out of the flower heads. Both growing and when cut the flowers have a rather stiff appearance.

*Helipterum Sandfordii* is the only other everlasting tested and cannot be recommended to the same extent as the others. When growing it very much resembles a dwarf type of golden rod, and is not at all attractive. It has, however, some value in a bouquet of dried flowers, as its bright golden color is pleasing. Its blooming season was not more than eight to ten weeks, and its height about one foot.

\*An address delivered at the recent annual convention of the Ontario Horticultural Association.