



▲ Candytuft (*Iberis*), which makes a good display for a short period, is best sown where it is to flower. Elliott photo.

▼ Borders with bedding plants soften the hard outline of concrete paths and drives.



Bulbs and corms are used for bedding displays and are then generally interplanted with other plants, so that the flowering season of the bed or border is extended. Though by this means a better display can be obtained, it is frequently to the detriment of the bulbs. Plants used for interplanting are often hosts for aphids and thrips, and such infestations may cause spread of virus diseases in the bulbs and corms. Furthermore, bulbs and corms can seldom be lifted at the correct time and will consequently suffer.

Use of Bedding Plants

Formal Beds

The advantage of using bedding plants is that displays can be planned for special occasions and the arrangement can be altered every time the beds are replanted.

When a formal bed is being planned subjects which have a long flowering period should be chosen. Several months will pass from planting before flowering begins. If subjects such as cornflower or candytuft are used, the display will soon be finished, but plants such as petunias, phlox, and salvias will flower most of the season.

Annual Borders

In contrast to formal beds annual borders may be planted up with bedding plants. Here the plants need not be set out in the same way as for a formal display. Greater variation can be made and the flowering season of the border extended by the use of early as well as late flowering subjects.

Some gardeners plant these annual borders with specific plants in groups or drifts to give bold displays of colour here and there. The advantage of this method is that when a batch of plants have finished flowering they can be pulled out, and after adequate soil preparation a new batch

planted. In northern areas this will ensure flowers in the border throughout the year.

This method will not be so satisfactory in districts where growth is decidedly slowed up in winter, as few bedding plants will flower during winter in such districts, and spring and summer bedding is practised. Various bedding plants can be interplanted, so that early subjects will provide colour while later flowering ones develop. This demands great care in planning, but excellent examples can be seen every year in many home gardens in southern centres.

Mixed Borders

The mixed border provides a situation where bedding plants can be used to advantage; herbaceous perennials have seasonal flowering and judicious use of bedding plants can enhance its beauty. Hardy bedding plants, which are best sown in the position where they are to flower, fit well into the layout of the mixed border.

Other Parts of the Garden

Some of the dwarf bedding plants will be found useful to provide additional colour in the rock garden. Permanent plants should not be smothered and it is generally wise to use only subjects which do not seed prolifically or seedlings may become a nuisance in future years.

Some annuals can also be used between stepping stones. Livingstone daisy (*Mesembryanthemum*) and portulaca are often used; it should be remembered, however, that though they do well in such situations, they are not suitable for walking on.

Bedding plants used between bulbs not only extend the flowering season, but the number of bulbs required for a bed can be reduced. Best results are generally obtained if contrasting colours are used, as the flowers from the bulbs will then show up more distinctly.

A new shrubbery will not look very spectacular for several years after planting. Interplanting with bedding plants is very satisfactory, provided the temporary plants are kept well out in the open spaces. Not only should adequate space be left for the shrubs to develop, but there should be no competition for plant food and moisture.

Window boxes and tubs can be planted up with bedding plants and have special uses. Sometimes it is more convenient to keep the containers in a reserve area where they can be given better care and protection than might be the case if kept in the position in which they eventually will be used.