

Over the FENCE

...Continued

Summer openings off to a super start

Our summer openings have got off to a great start with more than 250 visitors so far and more to come. While we've not seen as many larger groups, more couples or small groups have booked, with many being repeat visitors.

One was Angela, who emigrated to Australia eight years ago and had visited the garden before she left. She said she had a vintage rocking horse in her garden and would I like it when she moved. Needless to say, I said yes, and she was really pleased to make its acquaintance again last month.

I've had some pretty dazzling flowers make an appearance in the garden over the last few weeks. Every year some peach-coloured lilies that belonged to my aunt who passed away 20 years ago, flower like mad. This year they've looked the best ever, maybe in recognition of that milestone. That is, until gale force



Geoff Stonebanks

A seaside garden in East Sussex that opens for charity, featuring sculpture and reclaimed objects.

winds badly damaged them. Growing alongside them is a container of black lilies.

Red valerian thrives well in the sunny south-facing plot and also doing well is the 'King Charles Coronation' rose. What an incredible scent it has. I've placed it on a tall metal frame and it's looking very good and producing lots of flowers.

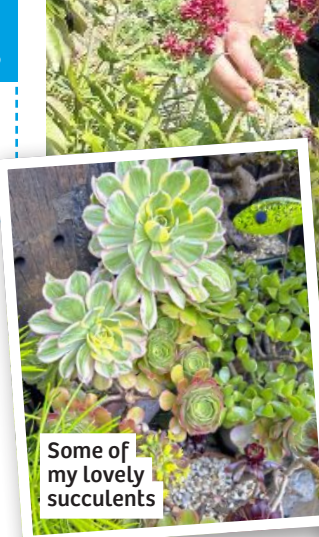
A plant that was already growing in the garden when we moved here 20 years ago was thalictrum. Back then, I'd not come across it and kept pulling it out as I believed it to be a weed. It was only when a garden expert was visiting that she told me what it was and now it's quite prolific with pretty, delicate flowers.

Another dazzler is a plant I bought about 15 years ago called *Erodium manescavii*, which has been dug up and replanted several times. The almost fluorescent pink flowers bring any bed alive.

I've had many positive comments about the large number of succulents displayed across the garden.



Red valerian is thriving



Some of my lovely succulents



Angela enjoyed seeing the horse she gifted to me during her recent garden visit



The scent from this 'King Charles Coronation' rose is wonderful

As well as being easy-to-look-after indoor plants, succulents are an amazing addition to any outdoor garden room. Their only drawback is having to be kept frost free over the winter. Most succulents are slow growing and love light. Though most varieties won't survive with full shade, they also don't need to be blasted with hot rays all day. The new railway sleeper area I created a couple of years ago is the perfect backdrop for much of my collection.

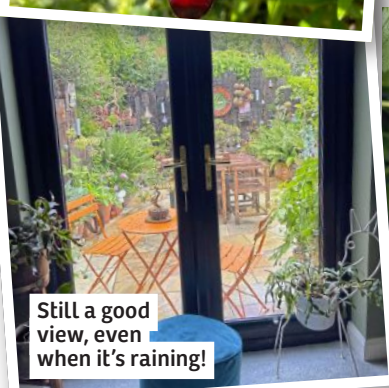
This year we've had so much rain that gardening has been out of the question on some days. That said, it has still been

possible to appreciate the patio at the back through the new French windows of the garden room.

Read more of Geoff's garden at www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk or book a visit before July 31 by emailing driftwood@gmail.com



Black lilies are always admired by visitors



Still a good view, even when it's raining!



Erodium stands out from the crowd



This is how the lilies looked before strong winds ruined them!

My highlight
Succulents showing off all through the garden.