

# Dazzling results...

## Geoff Stonebanks

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

I don't think we've yet reached the challenges of last summer, but I've certainly been doing a lot of watering! When you plant as many annuals as I have, more than 700, I suppose I've made a rod for my own back. However, no regrets, as the end result always dazzles. The other challenge with so many annuals is the daily need



**Nigella keeps springing up all over the place!**

to deadhead to ensure there's always a great display for visitors.

There are a couple of real dazzlers in the garden at the moment. One is an unknown rose I received free a few years ago with an order of other plants. Unfortunately, there wasn't a label with it. For the last three years though the blooms it's produced have been quite blousy and stunning. I also have a glorious pink cistus 'Chelsea Bonnet' that grows up through one of the rusty metal arches in the centre of the garden.

I know lots of gardeners consider *Erigeron karvinskianus* a bit of a weed, but I love it. I've several clumps in my beach garden and throughout the back garden. The plant has a long flowering period, from May to October, and is amazingly versatile, being low-growing, happy in sun or partial shade and thriving in any well-drained soil. Fortunately for me, it's also tolerant of coastal conditions!

I've tried it as an edging plant in a mixed border, alongside my paths at the front, in a gravel garden at the back, spilling over walls by the kitchen, or planted in the cracks in paving. Bees and butterflies love them, so they can make a wonderful addition to a wildlife garden, too.

A few years ago, I got some nigella and sowed them alongside the drive at the front of the house - now they're springing up everywhere in

the beach garden. We've now had a couple of public open days and seen quite a few visitors. I've not had as much time as I would have liked to prepare plants, so most of mine for sale this year have come from three friends who've been happy to donate them to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

My Chelsea Plant of the Year 2018, hydrangea 'Runaway Bride Snow White' has really taken off now with masses of pretty flowers in bloom and still forming.

■ **Read more about Geoff's garden at [www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk](http://www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk).**



**Can you name my unknown rose?**



**Constant watering is needed!**

## My highlight

**The stunning rose 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' around the green folly door, given to me by two of my garden volunteers, Liz and Linda.**