

# Passalong Plants

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Passalongs are plants that have survived in gardens for decades by being handed from one person to another. These botanical heirlooms, such as flowering almond, blackberry lily, and night-blooming cereus, usually can't be found in neighborhood garden centers; about the only way to obtain a passalong plant is to beg a cutting from the fortunate gardener who has one.

In this lively and sometimes irreverent book (don't miss the chapter on yard art), Steve Bender and Felder Rushing describe 117 such plants, giving particulars on hardiness, size, uses in the garden, and horticultural requirements. They present this information in the informal, chatty, and sometimes humorous manner that your next-door neighbor might use when giving you a cutting of her treasured Confederate rose. And, of course, because they are discussing passalong plants, they note the best method of sharing each plant with other gardeners.

Because you might not spy a banana shrub or sweet pea in your neighborhood, the authors list mail-order sources for the heirloom plants described. They also give tips on how to organize your own plant swap. Although the authors live in and write about the South, many of the plants they discuss will grow elsewhere. from the book Amid the clamor of press releases touting the newest, improved versions of this bulb or that perennial, what keeps people interested in old-fashioned plants? Nostalgia, for one thing. It's hard not to feel a special fondness for that Confederate rose, night-blooming cereus, or alstroemeria lovingly tended by your grandmother when you were a child. Such heirloom plants evoke memories of your first garden, of relatives and neighbors that have since passed on, of prized bushes you accidentally annihilated with your bicycle. Recall the time you first received a particular plant, and you'll recall the person who gave it to you.

"The perfect marriage of two noble traditions: southern storytelling and a gardener's love for sharing plants."-- American Horticulturist

Steve Bender is a senior writer for Southern Living and a contributor to several books on southern gardening. He lives in Birmingham, Alabama.

Felder Rushing is a seventh-generation Mississippi gardener, an author and columnist, and host of radio and television gardening programs. He lives in Jackson, Mississippi.

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Passalong and Commemorative Plants Honesty Lunaria annua Lamb's - ears Stachys byzantina Larkspur ... PASSALONGS In their book , Passalong Plants , Steven Bender and Felder Rushing define pas- salongs as plants that are easy to prop- ..."