Seaside Daisies and California Goldenrod

Blooming merrily away in my cottage garden are two wonderful autumn-blooming plants. Particularly pretty right now are the seaside daisies (Erigeron glaucus). This is a delightful perennial that comes from the coast of California and blooms off and on from late spring through September. I have been watering it fairly often, as I made the mistake of planting it in too much sun. In my Forestville garden, which gets fairly hot, it would need more shade to keep it blooming. It seems to appreciate a rich soil, not dry or sandy. The flowers are a soft lavender color with wide yellow centers. The flowers’ rays are in double rows, so they appear extra thick and lush. The plant itself grows to a foot or more tall, and fills out to the sides. The flowers have always had many little native pollinators on them, plus the ubiquitous honeybees.

Goldenrod (Solidago californica), in the sunflower family, is a late summer through fall bloomer that needs lots of room to spread by its underground rootstock. Goldenrod has a bad reputation, especially in the eastern states; it gets blamed for causing hay fever and allergies, but in fact, it’s other plants that cause it. Goldenrod attracts butterflies, bees, and other pollinators, and is easy to grow. Rather undemanding, it prefers full sun and accepts many soils. Some summer water will keep it looking vigorous. There are so many fewer autumn bloomers than there are spring/summer bloomers, that goldenrod would be a good choice if your yard has a large enough area for it to spread. It grows up to three feet tall, topped by lots of little yellow flowers; a great plant for a meadow.

By Judy Brinkerhoff