

Foliage & texture

Each month landscaper René Wright features a small garden with a plan, to help you plan your outside area. This month we focus on a modern garden with foliage colour and texture variations as a permanent colour framework

Even in the dead of winter you do not need flowers

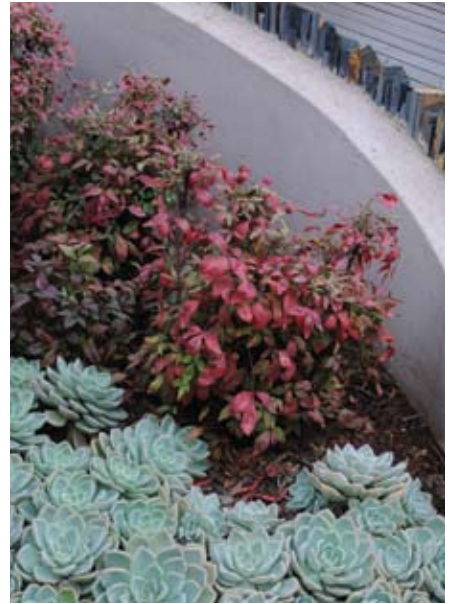
for colour - just look at the Nandina warming the heart with its fiery display in defiance of the temperatures!

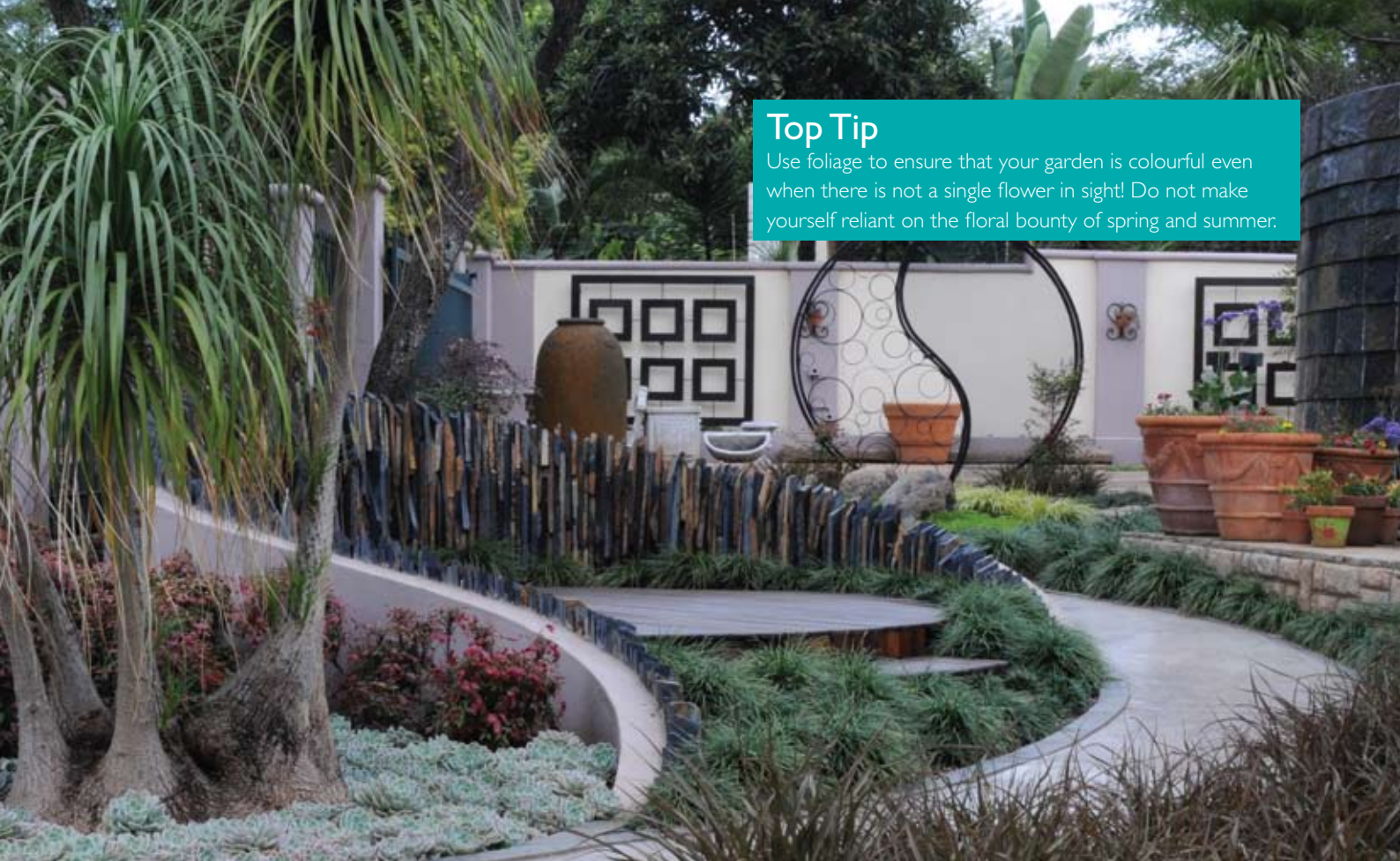
This month's garden relies virtually totally on foliage colour. The result is most striking without sacrificing restfulness and with layers of interest unfolding before you.

A long and thin area has been visually 'compacted' by utilising a serenely flowing pathway curving through the garden. Strong visual accents lead the eye through the space. The ancient yin/yang symbol was used as a departure point for the garden's curvaceous ground pattern, to facilitate the much desired element of tranquillity.

A restful mound with three smooth rocks nestled in a bed of moss, surrounded by dark leaved ajuga to the one side and mondo grass to the other, reflects an essence of simplicity by the water element. It captures your interest without agitating the spirit.

The gentle slope with contrasting foliage colours and textures, delicately tilted towards the viewing angle of the visitor for maximum effect, displays the subtle art of maximising foliage power beautifully. Curly leaved Phormium 'Bronze baby' grass sits next to spiky fine grey mounding festuca grass, which in turn contrasts with soft, smooth lime green moss - a truly festive fusion!





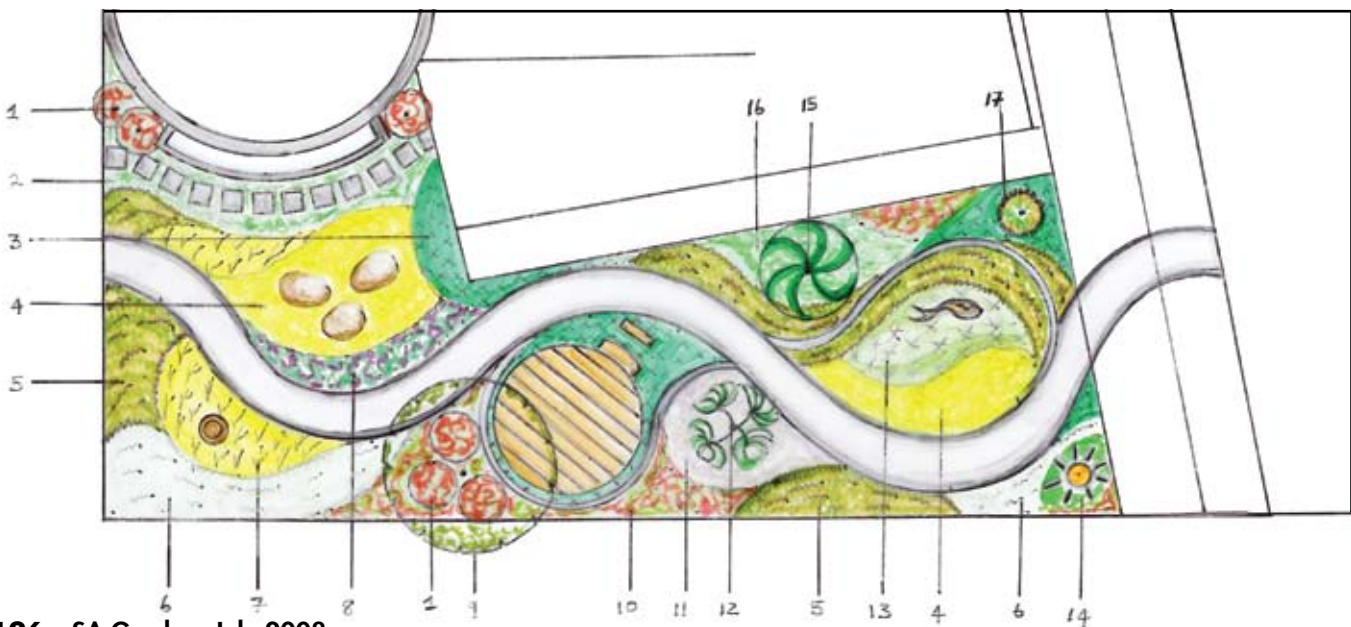
Top Tip
 Use foliage to ensure that your garden is colourful even when there is not a single flower in sight! Do not make yourself reliant on the floral bounty of spring and summer.

The virtue of foliage

The well-planned garden should always look good, and when the full foliage spectrum of nature is employed, this is easy to achieve!

The gardener should never be entirely dependant on flowers to provide colour in the garden, as this will likely result in periods where there is little to stir the senses.

Foliage colour provides a permanent colour framework to the garden independent of the seasons. Nature's amazing palette of foliage colours also comes packaged very conveniently in vastly different textures – some are smooth to the touch, almost waxy, and others are textured and rough. Add to this the extraordinary range in sizes and shapes of leaves, and you have the makings of a truly exceptional garden!



A rose show in your garden.



Foliage offers three layers of interest:

Colour
Texture
Shape and form

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FOLIAGE CHOICES:

PLANT	COLOUR	SHAPE & TEXTURE
1. <i>Nandina domestica</i>	Red / orange	Arrow-shaped, matt
2. <i>Parahebe catarractae</i>	Dark green	Small, round leaves
3. <i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>	Mid to dark green	Fine tuft forming leaves
4. <i>Sagina subulata aurea</i>	Bright lime	Delicate and spreading
5. <i>Phormium 'bronze baby'</i>	Bronze	Arching, curly, thin leaves
6. <i>Aristida stricta</i>	Light green	Fluffy ends on thin, fine leaves
7. <i>Acorus ogon aurea</i>	Golden yellow	Open tuft of soft, thin leaves
8. <i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Dark bronze / blue	Round, textured, glossy leaves
9. <i>Rhus pendulina</i>	Matt grey green / brown	Highly textured trunk
10. <i>Nandina domestica 'pygmae'</i>	Red / Orange	Arrow shaped, matt
11. <i>Echeveria</i>	Light grey	Waxy, shiny and smooth
12. <i>Beaucarnia recurvata</i>	Brown stem, mid-green leaves	Coarse, textured base and stem. Fountain shaped light green leaves
13. <i>Festuca glauca</i>	Grey	Fine spiky tuft
14. <i>Mentha requinii</i>	Dull lime green	Smooth, mat-forming leaves
15. <i>Cycas revoluta</i>	Dark green	Hard, thin pointed leaves in architectural shape
16. <i>Lamium maculatum 'Beacon Silver' and Erigeron karvinskianus</i>	Silvery white and grey Matt mid-green	Delicately textured leaf Small pointy leaves
17. <i>Chondropetalum tectorum</i>	Dark green with dark brown seeds	Thick, round, slightly arching cylindrical leaves