

# A Really Low-Maintenance Plant

I've got a lot of plants in my garden, some needing frequent attention, others needing almost no attention at all.

Of course, just because a plant needs attention doesn't mean it's not a good plant. My 'Hansel' and 'Gretel' eggplants, for example, are growing in containers, and they need nearly daily watering and frequent fertilizing. However, I don't begrudge them the effort. I want to eat the eggplants, and as I run out of room in my garden beds, I need to see which vegetables I can grow successfully in pots. I believe strongly in the need for more homegrown vegetables.

But there are other plants that have needed almost no attention at all. Angelonia. Cannas. Cultivars of Hydrangea paniculata like 'Pinky Winky'. (I'm sure I would be able to say the same about 'Limelight', which I have never grown but have observed in the gardens of others.)

The angelonia is probably the lowest-maintenance plant I've ever grown. Cultivars have been on the market for several years now and they just seem to sit where they're planted and bloom their little heads off, all the way until frost. Little-to-no-deadheading. Occasional watering. Just forget about them and let them do their thing, which is bloom.




**Angelonia 'Archangel Purple'**

This year the nice folks at Ball Horticultural sent me six samples of a new angelonia called 'Archangel Purple'. I planted three in the garden and three in a long narrow container with a couple of 'Bonanza Deep Orange' French marigolds, also from Ball. The plants in the ground got shaded out by their neighbors, but those in the container have been basically no-care. They've grown vigorously and bloomed up a storm. So vigorously, in fact, that they've pretty much squeezed out the marigolds. Bottom line? Angelonias are terrific plants that, like many annual verbenas and calicabroas, seem to do better in pots than in the ground. Get some for yourself and you'll be proud of the way your garden looks. I guarantee it.

—Carolyn Ulrich



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