

YOUR GARDEN

Allergy-Free Gardening

(NAPSA)—Growing in popularity is the idea of making your garden grow with allergic reactions in mind.

To help, landscaper Thomas Leo Ogren has developed the Ogren Plant Allergy Scale that rates more than 5,000 plants from one, the safest and least allergenic to 10, the worst and most allergenic. For example, a periwinkle is rated 1 and a staminate peppertree is rated 10.

“Allergy rates are rising at an epidemic pace,” says Ogren, who outlines his rating system in his book, *Allergy-Free Gardening, The Revolutionary Guide to Healthy Landscaping* (Ten Speed Press, \$19.95). “This is true in the U.S. and in all urban cities worldwide. Twenty-five years ago, only 10 percent of the U.S. population suffered from allergies. Today the official figure is 38 percent and rising.”

Allergy free gardening, however, is not enough, points out Dr. Mark Livezey, an allergist who also holds a Ph.D. in immunology and microbiology.

Often, he says, gardeners plant flowering plants that are not big allergy offenders compared with trees and grasses, whose pollen can be spread for miles by wind currents. Some gardeners may have to stay indoors during heavy pollen season or wear a mask to filter out the pollen. Their eyes, however, are still exposed.



Be a blooming genius: protect yourself from allergic reactions two ways.

“If you have one of the ophthalmic drops, it can help reduce symptoms and make it tolerable to work outside,” he says.

One leading ophthalmic medication is Zaditor (ketotifen fumarate ophthalmic solution 0.025%). Manufactured by Novartis Ophthalmic, it can relieve and prevent eye itch in three minutes and last up to 12 hours.

You can learn about understanding and managing eye allergies and get rebates on eye drops, online at www.zaditor.com. The site also features an allergy quiz and an “Ask the Expert” section where questions are answered by a board certified allergist.