

# Nobleton Notes

By Angie Maccarone  
King Horticulture

Verbena [from the Latin for sacred bough] or vervain as it is sometimes listed makes an interesting addition to the garden. In our region garden verbenas are treated as annuals and many of us are familiar with the low growing plant with its masses flower heads in shades of red, pink, wine, purple and the newer pastels. There are, however other varieties that do create interest points in any garden. Most of them are native to South America as is the low grower already mentioned, where they are perennials. One variety of these that is becoming more readily available here is verbena bonariensis a tall 45 to 60 cm--18in. to 2ft. plant with small clusters of mauve flowers are borne on stiff

upright almost leafless stems. This tough heat and drought resistant, easy care plant that isn't fussy about soil is one of the very few tall plants that be put at the front of the sunny border with smaller plants behind it or intermingled under it. For best effect v. bonariensis should be planted in mass with accompanying flowers of a contrasting colour such as French marigolds. While it usually won't live through our winters this verbena sometimes self seeds. The two perennial verbenas that have no problem over wintering here are both wild, v. officinalis a standby in European monastery gardens brought to the Americas by early settlers and v. hastata [blue vervain] a native North American wildflower taken to Europe by returning travellers. One can buy them

for about \$5 each at garden centres specializing in herbs or wildflowers or look for them in the wild. Both are common in and around King Twp. Both are tall 60 to 90 cm--2 to 3ft. Verbena officinalis which looks much like v. bonariensis but with tiny single pale mauve flowers prefers dry fields but verbena hastata with its candles of royal purple florets likes dampish areas.

Crocoshmia [crow--cause--mee--uh], a relatively easy to grow and strikingly handsome perennial with its panicles of fire engine red tubular flowers on stems that rise 60 to 90cm from a fan of iris like leaves, is a garden showstopper. The name comes from the Greek words krokos [saffron] and osme [smell] because the dried flowers dipped in water smell like saffron. These South African natives grow from small bulb like corms that should be planted 10 to 15 cm--4 to 6 in. deep

to survive our winters. Sometimes crocosmia is called montbretia [moan--bree--shuh] especially in Britain but montbretias, named for French botanist, Coquebert de Montbret, are a specific type of crocosmias that have orangey red flowers with touches of yellow. While crocosmias prefer slightly moist fertile soil I've had no trouble growing them in my garden's sandy soil that has been enriched with composted cattle manure. If you buy crocosmia plants plant them so that 7 to 10 cm--3 to 4 in of the stem/stalk is below the soil surface.

Give both verbenas and crocosmias some TLC until they get established and you will be well rewarded.

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Movies on the lawn If you haven't been there yet, please try to attend, it is worthwhile. The movies are on a 34 foot screen with professional projection and sound at the Nobleton Arena Sports Park. Gates to open at 8 p.m. and movies to start

at approximately 9 p.m. The dates remaining are Aug. 8 and 22; Sept. 5 and 19 (two rain dates have been scheduled for Sept. 12 and 29) ... you can go to the website at: www.starlightmoves.ca to get the full impact of what is being held. Here you will find trailers of the films, quizzes, games and other fun stuff. One can also order their season or individual tickets via secure online credit card from the website.

## Dr. Karim Kurji is Medical Officer of Health for York

York Regional Council recently endorsed Dr. Karim Kurji's appointment as the Medical Officer of Health for the Region.

Prior to joining the Region in January 2006, Kurji held senior positions with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Since 2003, he has been Ontario's Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health, and from 1999 to 2003, he was physician manager of Population Health Services. During his time with the Province, he also served briefly as Chief Medical Officer of Health and acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Health.

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