



SM

Reliable Materials for *Wearable* Designs

A COLLECTION OF THE
STURDIEST FOLIAGE
AND FLOWERS

www.susanmcleary.com



WHY RELIABLES?

Choosing reliable "performers" for artful floral designs such as wearables gives us long-lasting results. The freedom that utilizing reliable materials + a proper hydration chamber allows is truly transformative. I talk about this at length in my book *The Art of Wearable Flowers*.

These are materials that I use and trust, and feel comfortable sharing with you. Use this as a helpful guide, and I encourage you to keep your specific environment and display needs in mind. Please test on your own and grow your own list of *reliables*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Susan Mcleary', written in a cursive style.





SM

RELIABLE FOLIAGE

- acacia (knifeblade, pearl & feather)
- acuba
- agonis
- aralia
- bay laurel
- baker fern/leather leaf
- blueberry branch
- berzelia
- bittersweet (late season)
- boxwood
- brunia
- brake fern
- calathea
- callicarpa
- camellia
- china berry *
- coral fern
- datura pod
- dracaena
- eleagnus (all varieties)
- eucalyptus (all varieties)
- euonymus
- evergreens (all varieties)
- flax
- fig on the branch
- galax
- grasses
- grevillea
- hakea laurina
- hala
- holly
- honey myrtle
- huckleberry
- ilex
- ivy (common, vine type)
- ivy (hedera, bush type)
- kakuma
- kochia
- kumquat on the branch
- leucadendron
- lipstick pods
- lotus pods
- lycopodium
- magnolia
- maranta
- ming fern
- monstera
- mulberry
- myrtle
- nagi
- nandina
- oak
- olive branch
- oregonia
- palm
- pear (ornamental)
- penny cress
- pepperberry
- persimmon on the branch
- photina
- pieris japonica
- pineapple
- pittosporum (all varieties)
- plumosus fern
- podocarpus
- pomegranate on the branch
- poppy pods
- privet
- pyracantha
- raspberry (ornamental)
- rose sumac
- rosemary
- ruscus
- salal/lemon leaf
- skimmia
- song of india
- smilax (southern)
- smilax (bagged) *
- snowberry
- succulents
- tillandsia
- ti leaves
- tree of heaven seed pods
- tropicals (most)
- viburnum (tinus)
- wooly bush

* indicates these have a vulnerable stem and may need more structural support - rather in larger design, but are perfectly suitable for many wearable designs.





RELIABLE FLOWERS

- alstroemeria *
- agapanthus
- ageratum *
- allium (all varieties) *
- amaryllis *
- amaranthus (upright)
- anthurium
- artichoke
- asiatic lily
- banana flower
- banksia
- begonia *
- berzillia
- boronia
- bouvardia (limited testing)
- bromeliad
- calla lily *
- calathea
- calycina
- carnation *
- celosia, cockscomb
- chamomile (button)
- chrysanthemum (the firm, plump varieties)
- crocosmia
- curcuma
- craspedia
- cypridium (lady slipper)
- dahlia (firm ball type, locally sourced) *
- date palm
- dianthus (sweet william)
- dianthus (green trick)
- echinops
- echinacea
- eremurus
- eryngium
- eriostemon
- eucomis
- festival bush
- forsythia
- fritillaria persica
- fritillaria imperialis *
- freesia
- garden rose (firm, South American, especially Juliet & Campanella)
- genista
- gerrondo gerbera daisy *
- ginger (beehive, wax, torch, shell, shampoo)
- gladiola
- gloriosa *
- grevillia
- gypsophila
- heather
- heliconia (all varieties)
- hellebore (mature, with seed heads) *
- hyacinth *
- hybrid tea rose
- hydrangea (late season antique)
- hypericum
- ixia
- kalanchoe
- kangaroo paw
- leptospermum
- liatris
- limonium
- lisianthus (doubles) *
- lipstick pods
- marigold
- martigon lily
- nerine lily
- orchids - (cymbidium, dendrobium, mokara, oncidium, vanda)
- ornithogalum - (arabicum & dubium)
- pieris japonica
- pompon mums
- protea (all varieties)
- psittacorum
- tanacetum (tansy)
- thyrsoides
- tulip (doubles) *
- tuberosa
- safflower
- sandersonia *
- skimmia, blooming
- statice
- strelitzia (bird of paradise)
- squill *
- sterling range
- stirlingia
- serruria
- rice flower
- rose sumac
- verticordia
- waxflower
- waratah
- yarrow *

* indicates these have a vulnerable stem and may need more structural support - rather in larger design, but are perfectly suitable for many wearable designs.



SM

CONSIDERATIONS

- The location and duration of your design's "performance". Remember the contributors to wilt: *temperature, light, wind velocity, relative humidity*.
- Utilize hydration chambers to increase longevity of delicate petals and leaves.

Lookout for materials like seed pod clusters, grasses, or cotinus fluff that you can responsibly forage (and dispose of).

- Learn more about all of these techniques in my [online tutorials](#).



MORE ON FLOWERS...

Some have soft or fleshy stems that may sag with time, but the blooms will hold well. Take this into consideration, and choose your placements accordingly. Allow cascading blooms to cascade naturally instead of forcing upward. Insert stems in a direction that will allow them to look their best for the length of the event. Large fleshy stems such as hyacinth and amaryllis can be bolstered by inserting a slim bamboo skewer.

With love and respect,