



Bear Creek Press

'Firsts in Flowers'

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What's New in the Plant World

So let's start the new decade off right-with lots of new choices for your garden. There are new annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, even a few trees and shrubs. Some have been around for awhile, caught our eye and are new at the Bear. Others are brand new, beginners in the plant world, proven in countless trials and ready to prove themselves in your garden. All will soon be considered winners, in planters, mixed flower gardens or hanging baskets. And we will be asking ourselves this summer "How does the human race come up with so many cool new plants?"

Annuals

Rudbeckia hirta 'Cherry Brandy', 'Chim Chiminee', 'Moroccan Sun' and 'Tiger Eye' are a few of the many, many, many bright daisy-like cultivars in this family. They all share one trait: continuous eye-popping flower displays. All summer long, compact plants with four inch wide flowers will provide endless cut flowers and create jealous looks from the neighbors.

Dahlia 'Bloody Mary' This diminutive form of the popular garden plant will not overwhelm the way some dahlias can. These plants would be pretty to grow even if they didn't bloom. The handsome waxy red foliage is just a backdrop, however, and the bright zillion-petaled flowers steal the show.

Torenia 'Moon Rose' For you torenia nuts out there- if you are not a registered torenia nut, please apply at the nursery- here is a new color for you. Any Bear-watcher knows that we tend to favor blue flowers, but will occasionally offer other colors, if we *have* to. 'Moon Rose' is an example of the alternative hue of the blue form that was so popular last year. (See "Overachievers" in last issue). This short, shade loving, flower making gem is content in the ground, in a basket or alone in a container.

Calibrachoa Double Orange They continue to come up with new members of the great petunia family. These tiny, spreading cousins of the petunia are now available in a double flower. That sounds downright adorable to us.

Another first in the family is the petunia-calibrachoa cross. We were only able to get a few of the new **Petchoas** (or is it calibrachotunias?) but are looking forward to trying out another new family member.

Perennials

Leucanthemum 'Snow Lady' Although new to us, Snow Lady has the distinction of being voted an All American Selection *over 20 years ago*. We apologize for not offering this compact, long blooming, pure white Shasta Daisy sooner. It is also unfortunate that this prize specimen will be overshadowed by the first yellow Shasta daisy. Again, we apologize, and quickly suggest that you try the new **Leucanthemum 'Banana Cream'**, the first yellow Shasta daisy. Did we mention that it has yellow flowers? This long blooming selection has large flowers (4 inches) and a short habit (under two feet). In case you forgot, the blooms are yellow.

Echinacea 'Baby Swan' We found seeds for this breakthrough short coneflower that no one seems to know exists. Topping out at under 20", it may be the coneflower that actually fits into your garden. Short stature allows the Baby Swans to be placed in the *front* of the flower garden, where they have always belonged. These cute, new coneflowers are available in white and dark pink.

Rudbeckia s. 'Henry Eilers' This new introduction from the innovative folks at Terra Nova Nurseries is known for its unique flowers. Quilled petals (quilled means they have not taught the disobedient petals to flatten out like normal coneflowers) resemble yellow flutes attached to a brown cone. Growing over four feet, this tall perennial has the added charm of vanilla scented leaves.

Salvia n. 'Sensation Rose' The nemorose salvias set a standard for flowering perennials. Sensation Rose sets a further standard with its bright rose pink flowers. This vigorous salvia is only twelve inches tall, so can be tucked into spots that require a compact grower.

Salvia n. 'Blue Hill' The catalogs say this is more blue than other salvias which is kin to saying bottled water is wetter than tap water.

The Overachievers Part II

A continuing guide to our favorite annuals from last year.

Salvia Van Houtti 'Dancing Flames' Some folks distrust an annual whose flowering period starts late in the year. Doesn't the late start defeat the purpose of the annual's long blooming season? This salvia is the answer to those persnickety gardeners. Bright gold-flecked leaves would make this a garden worthy plant even without flowers. Add a shock of red flower spikes and 'Dancing Flames' will be the main attraction in the late summer garden. This is one annual whose size allows it to stand alone in container or on a porch or patio.

Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost', also known as **'Hip Hop'** This member of the versatile Euphorbia family (poinsettia, pencil cactus, crown of thorns) wins the award for "Best companion plant to any other member of the plant kingdom." Never-ending tiny white flowers are held by wiry stems, creating the appearance of living confetti to any mixed planter to which this extraordinary plant is added. If you believe that plants are made to be mixed generously and at close quarters, add Diamond Frost to your shopping cart. Look for a dark-leaved cousin, 'Breathless Blush' this spring.

Cuphea 'Dynamite' If the definition of fire cracker denotes a large explosion in a small package, the name of this cuphea is appropriate. The best part is that the blast lasts all summer. Small orange flowers combined with small green leaves makes this an under achieving overachiever. Constant flower production will make any gardener very happy with this choice of annuals.

Ornamental Pepper Jigsaw Turn up the heat of summer with this handsome variegated pepper. The one-foot tall bush has green, red and purple fruit on a single plant, fruit that is fiery hot if used for cooking. The ornamental pepper is a great addition to a mixed planter or looks good in the vegetable garden. Look for its cousin, the dark leaf **Black Pearl**, this spring.

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'Blue Hill' Salvia cont. This long blooming salvia grows under two feet and is an immensely satisfying, easy to grow perennial. And yes, it is a lovely shade of blue.

Agastache 'Lilac Sprite' You've read about 'em in the newsletter. You've seen 'em on TV. Now you can take home your very own Agastache (A-ga-stack-ee). This new heat-sneering, drought-tolerant, sun-loving, deer-deterin' perennial can be yours simply by calling 1-800-Lilac Sprite. Order your 'Lilac Sprite' today and we will throw in a complete set of Ginzu Knives and a Magic Bullet at no extra charge. Offer void during daylight hours.

Lamium 'Purple Dragon' Another perennial that is bound to make your heart (and garden) swoon, Purple Dragon will light up a shady spot. Silvery leaves are edged in green and topped with tight clusters of purple flowers.

This soft, dense groundcover grows six to eight inches tall and will tolerate dryer conditions than most other soft, fuzzy groundcovers. The catalog says Lamium is deer resistant, so we hope the deer will respond accordingly.

Regal Red Japanese Painted Fern
We are continuing to expand the perennial fern availability with many old favorites. The selection of Royal Fern, Northern Maidenhair Fern and our favorite, the Silver Cloak fern is better than ever. The new fronds on Regal Red, however, stand out in a sea of stunning foliage. This brilliant member of the painted fern family will ignite a shade garden, creating a silvery-red focal point with its lacy foliage.

And how about a tree...

Constellation Dogwood Developed at Rutgers University by Dr. Elwin Orton, this dogwood is a good example of members of the plant

world being improved by human intervention. By crossing the native dogwood, *Cornus florida*, with an Asian dogwood, *Cornus kousa*, Dr. Orton has created a hybrid that demonstrates the best of both species. Growing to about 20 feet tall, this small tree flowers later than the native dogwood with blooms that open after the foliage appears. The flowers last for several weeks on heavily branched trees. This disease resistant cross insures healthy leaves throughout the season and culminates in a deep red foliar show in the fall.

Look for more descriptions of new annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, shrubs and trees in the next issue of Bear Creek Press.

Thank you for shopping at the Bear; we look forward to seeing you this spring.

Open 7 days a week, April through mid June, Mon~Sat 9-5, Sun 11-4

Vegetable Plants this Spring

In addition to Chinese Cabbage, Broccoli, Spinach, Swiss Chard, lots of varieties of Lettuce and Purple Tomatillo we have the following:

Tomatoes

Jetsetter, Whopper, Lemon Boy, Better Boy, Black Prince, Campbell's, Red Alert, Celebrity, Arkansas Traveler, Amish Paste, Beefsteak, Roma, Brandywine and Sweet 100

Peppers

Red Bell, Satsuma Orange Bell, Golden Bell, California Wonder Bell, Anaheim, Pablano, Giant Jalapeño, Mexican Chili, Cayenne

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