



Bear Creek Press

'The New Plant Issue'

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New Sun Perennials

New plants are in the spotlight this issue. We will describe as many new plants as space allows. There's no time for small talk, so let's get busy.

Yellow Hardy Ice Plant

Delosperma congestum

For those of you who were concerned that ice plants are a little too pink, these compact plants are the answer. The fleshy green leaves are evergreen, taking on purple tones in the winter. Bright yellow flowers seemingly pop out of nowhere throughout the summer. This perennial succulent is happy in a sunny spot and works well in rock gardens and containers.

Hardy Geranium

Geranium 'Midnight Reiter'

This perennial geranium forms a 8-10" mound of dense foliage in the spring. Hardy to Zone 5, *'Midnight Reiter'* is happy in a sunny to part shady site. In full sun, the lacy leaves are a dark purple. Best of all, true blue flowers cover the handsome foliage in early summer.

First Choice Blue Mist Spirea

Caryopteris

When every other living being is struggling through late summer, the heat loving *Caryopteris* puts on sunglasses and starts to flower. Earlier in the summer, this 3' tall, drought tolerant shrub is covered in deep green, deer resistant foliage. Dark blue flowers clothe the branches in late summer and provide a landing zone for butterflies and honeybees. Hot sun and poor soil have been known to encourage *'First Choice'*.

Anise Hyssop

Agastache 'Black Adder'

This plant is guaranteed to get along with the Ozarks. It is sun loving, heat and drought tolerant, deer resistant, fragrant, and attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. *'Black Adder'* also features bi-color flowers. Whew, if that is not enough to get your plant loving juices flowering, you need to change hobbies.

Plum Crazy Rose Mallow

Hibiscus 'Plum Crazy'

Here is a specimen plant for all you lavender lovers. Ten inch flowers feature purple veining on a lavender field with a dark eye. Plum colored leaves have a maple shape and love full sun. This robust plant will grow to 4' tall and 4' across in 2 years. Did you know that the original marshmallow was derived from the Hibiscus?

Sundown Coneflower

Echinacea

The traditional colors of *Echinacea* (pink, white, yellow) now seem kind of boring. New hybrids have produced a sunset's worth of tones and variations. *'Sundown'* is a good example. The few flowers that have come up this winter were stunning blends of peach and orange. This new coneflower will grow to 3' tall when in flower and loves a sunny spot.

New Annuals

Silky Mix Butterfly Weed. *Asclepias*.

Attracting Monarch

Butterflies is as simple as growing this annual member of the Butterfly Weed family. A single plant grows to about 3' tall and wide, providing plenty of leaves for food. Twenty of these plants were defoliated in a Monarch orgy 2 years ago at the Bear. We were so proud. Clusters of red or yellow flowers and large seed pods top the foliage. A must-have for the butterfly garden.

Orange Symphony. *Osteospermum*.

With eye-popping colors

(the other one is named *'Soprano Purple'*) and an endless display, these daisy relatives are a hot addition to a container planting. If the idea of a long bloom season appeals to you, we saw these flowering in Kansas City on Thanksgiving after a mild fall. Let them spill, fall, edge, drape or otherwise spice up the garden.

Coleus

There has been an endless procession of new *Coleus* over the last few years. Their varied names suggest diversity in shape and color: *'Ruffles'*, *'Kingswood Torch'*, *'Amora'*, *'Skyfire'*, *'Swinging Linda'*. There has never been a better choice of these garden gems. In the garden or on the porch, in the sun or tucked away in the shade, there is a *Coleus* that is waiting to surprise you.

Lantana Red Spread

All of the members of the *Lantana* family have proven themselves to be garden worthy. Like a good scout, they are trustworthy and honest, they love the heat and deter deer with their fuzzy leaves. We were impressed with the short, yellow *'New Gold'* variety last year. With a healthy spread and a hearty red, this one may become the next famous *Lantana*.

Fire Profusion Zinnia

The *Profusion Zinnias* fall into the category of landscape *Zinnias*, which merely means they last a whole lot longer than any other *Zinnia* you have ever seen. One plant will form a dense mound of foliage about 12" tall and 18" wide and will flower continuously all summer long. *'Fire'* is the newest color offered. Oh, yes, did we mention the deer didn't touch them?

Herbs

Anise Hyssop (*Agastache hybrids*) We're not certain whether to call the *Agastache* (Ag-a-stack'-ee) a perennial or an herb, so we will feature them in both columns. These hardy, drought tolerant gems are ideal plants for the Midwest. There are several new hybrids this year, all boasting fragrant, deer-resistant foliage. The descriptive names give away the flower colors: *'Lavender Haze'*, *'Purple Pygmy'*, *'Apricot Sprite'*, *'Sunset Hyssop'*. One of our favorites, *'Golden Jubilee'*, has blue flowers atop stunning golden foliage. Absolutely yummy.

Basil There are lots of types of basil at the Bear. The Italian types are best for pesto; *'Spicy Globe'* is cute in containers and it's hard to beat the color of *'Purple Ruffles'*. But there were 2 Basils that we couldn't resist trying this year. *'Red Rubin'* is a handsome large leaf basil. Copper-tinged purple leaves will stand out in the garden or in the salad bowl. The combination of flavors in *'Lime Basil'* just doesn't sound possible. One squeeze of a leaf will convince you: they did a pretty good job of combining the fruity taste of lime with the sweetness of basil.

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New Shade Perennials

Obsidian Coral Bells

Heuchera

The deep purple leaf color of this Coral Bells will make you think you woke up in the late 60s. A glossy polish on the purple adds to the groovy experience. Violet buds and cream flowers explode over the foliage in early summer. 'Obsidian' will grow to 12" tall and 24" wide. Morning sun will help bring out color. Truly psychedelic.

Samurai Lungwort

Pulmonaria

Lungwort is the unsung hero of the shade garden. In the early spring, new leaves barely have a chance to grow before flower clusters pop out. Lavender flowers age to blue, showing off a two-tone glow. Silvery leaves form a 12" tall mound and are covered with tiny hairs that

help keep deer at bay. 'Samurai' is a great addition to the Lungwort family.

Stoplight Foamy Bells

Heucherella

Yellow leaves with red centers places this plant in the late 60s psychedelic group. Fortunately, it stays under 12", so we can stay focused on it. Clusters of white flowers stand endlessly in the early spring. Stoplight is an easy way to brighten up a corner of the shade garden.

Running Tapestry Foamflower

Tiarella

The lovely Foamflowers defy the cold — their leaves last almost all winter. The early spring flowering season sneers at the frost by lasting over 8 weeks long. 'Running

Tapestry' is a rare form of Foamflower that spreads by runners forming a slowly spreading, dense groundcover. This shade lover will grow between 8-12" tall (20" when in flower) and slowly ramble its way into your heart.

Pirates Patch Foamflower

Tiarella

Our favorite shade perennial is the Foamflower. Flamboyant foliage and fragrant flowers that impress even our jaded judges are just a couple of reasons. 'Pirates Patch' is a new introduction by the folks at Terra Nova (they practically invented Foamflowers). Large, crisp maple shape leaves carry a dark maroon center and turn bronze red in the fall. Did we mention it's our favorite shade perennial?

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