

# New for 2014

BY MARY YEE

IT MIGHT BE a bit of a cliché, but gardening really is an act of optimism, nowhere so apparent than in seed and plant catalogs this time of year when a slew of new varieties are introduced, most with the hope they are somehow better than what came before. Sure, some won't pan out, but part of the fun of gardening is trying something different.

How we navigate through the sea of new introductions varies from gardener to gardener. **Nancy Ondra**, a garden writer in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, says, "I'm always on the lookout for outstanding orange flowers." **Paul Lee Cannon**, a writer and garden consultant in Oakland, California, tends to gravitate towards offerings from a handful of companies with which he is familiar—one of them being Terra Nova Nurseries. "They are based in Oregon," says Cannon, "and most of their plants would work in [San Francisco] Bay area conditions." **Rita Pelczar**, a contributing editor for this magazine and an avid vegetable gardener in the mountains of North Carolina, says, "I look for heat resistance for spring crops such as lettuce and spinach, so I can enjoy them longer

after the weather warms up. I also look for cold tolerance for crops I plant in fall."

We asked these horticultural professionals and others across the country for recommendations of plants that performed well for them in trials last year and will be widely available this spring. Among those we consulted are **David Graper**, professor of horticulture and director of McCrory Gardens at South Dakota State University in Brookings; **Denny Schrock**, State Master Gardener Coordinator at Iowa State University in Ames; **Mark Dwyer**, director of horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville, Wisconsin; **Robert Bowden**, director of Leu Gardens in Orlando, Florida; and **Vincent Simeone**, a horticulturist and garden writer in Oyster Bay, New York.

Among the plants that excelled for our experts are Shooting Star hellebore (page 13), 'Mighty Mosaic' coleus (page 14), and Sweet Lifeberry™ goji berry (page 15). Grow a new variety or two in your garden this spring. You just might find a real winner. 🌱

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*Mary Yee is managing editor and art director of The American Gardener.*

## PERENNIALS



BLOOMS OF BRESSINGHAM

***Echinacea purpurea* Supreme™ 'Cantaloupe'** is a double-flowered coneflower in a luscious new color. Young flowers have darker centers that eventually turn light orange. Plants grow 24 to 29 inches tall. Mark Dwyer says this selection had "a heavy flower count and strong stems," minimizing flopping. Zones 4–9, 9–1. Blooms of Bressingham, Terra Nova Nurseries.



STAR® ROSES AND PLANTS

**Dark Blue Moody Blues veronica (*Veronica spicata* 'Novoverblu')** bears dense spikes of deep blue flowers all summer long on compact plants that grow only 12 to 14 inches tall and wide. Other colors in this series include Light Blue Moody Blues, Mauve Moody Blues, and Pink Moody Blues. Zones 3–8, 8–1. Star® Roses and Plants.



SKAGIT GARDENS

**'Beyond Blue' fescue (*Festuca glauca*)** is a winner for Mark Dwyer, who notes the grass's "steely blue color was intense and experienced no fading in the hot summer." Plants grow 9 to 12 inches high and 18 inches wide and are suited for growing in containers or planted *en masse* in beds and borders. Zones 4–8, 8–1. Skagit Gardens and Southern Living Plant Collection.



SKAGIT GARDENS

**Gold Collection® Shooting Star hellebore** (*Helleborus xericsmithii* 'COSEH 790') features forward-facing white flowers that bloom in late winter and age to pink and pale green. Denny Schrock says its "rich green foliage holds up into early winter." Rita Pelczar enjoys "the lovely contrast between the red stems and dark green leaves." Plants grow 18 to 22 inches high and 24 inches wide. Zones 5–9, 9–5. Skagit Gardens.



WALTERS GARDENS

The eye-catching white-and-green-variegated leaves of '**Desert Diamond**' agave or century plant (*Agave* hybrid) grow in neat rosettes 12 to 15 inches tall and 18 inches wide. The spines on the thick leaves start out yellow, maturing to a dark red-brown. This plant is ideal for desert gardens and grows well in containers in more temperate regions. Zones 9–11, 11–5. Walters Gardens.



JELITTO

Perfect for rock and trough gardens, '**Rose Bells**' pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*) bears rose- and cherry-pink flowers with bright yellow centers in spring. Plants grow to 12 inches high with downy, fernlike foliage. Zones 5–7, 7–5. Jelitto.



WALTERS GARDENS

A reblooming daylily that flowers in late spring, **Hemerocallis 'Midnight Raider'** produces large ruffled, fragrant, red-purple blossoms with yellow halos and green throats. Plants grow 30 inches tall. Zones 3–9, 9–1. Walters Gardens.



TERRA NOVA NURSERIES

**Coreopsis 'Bengal Tiger'** is a vigorous tickseed with two-inch-wide yellow-and-rust-red flowers that bloom all summer. Drought- and heat-tolerant plants grow about 20 inches tall and 24 inches wide. Zones 5–9, 9–1. Terra Nova Nurseries.

#### Additional new perennials

- **Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Burgundy Bunny'** is a compact fountain grass that grows eight to 18 inches high and 12 to 18 inches wide; leaves are green with red in summer, turning all red in autumn; cream-colored plumes of flowers appear in late summer. Zones 5–9, 9–1. Bailey Nurseries.
- **Andropogon gerardii 'Rain Dance'** is a selection of native big bluestem with spiky, deep green foliage with red tips that turn entirely red in autumn. It grows to about six feet tall. Zones 3–9, 9–1. Emerald Coast Growers.
- **Helenium 'Short 'n' Sassy'**, a diminutive sneezeweed that grows 12 to 18 inches tall and 24 inches wide, bears loads of bright orange and yellow flowers with brown centers. Rita Pelczar says, "It bloomed continuously until mid-fall and has a neat, compact habit." Zones 4–8, 8–1. Skagit Gardens.
- **Heucherella 'Buttered Rum'** features glossy caramel-colored maplelike foliage that turns red in autumn. Denny Schrock notes its "warm coppery tones hold up through the heat and humidity of the Midwest." Zones 3–8, 8–1. Blooms of Bressingham.



BALL HORTICULTURAL COMPANY

**'Mighty Mosaic' coleus** (*Solenostemon* hybrid) was rated "superior" at the Penn State Trials. It also gets high marks from Robert Bowden: "If an annual makes it through a full summer in Florida, it has to be tough. 'Mighty Mosaic' is in the top five of the best coleus we have grown in the last several years. We received rave reviews from our guests about the intense mottled shades of burgundy and chartreuse. It's a strong grower and it flowers very, very late in the fall." Plants grow 18 to 24 inches tall and fare best in shade, but Mark Dwyer notes, "this variety was a solid asset in the full sun garden—with adequate moisture." Pan American Seed Company and Ball Horticultural Company.



BALL HORTICULTURAL COMPANY

David Graper says *Petunia ×hybrida* **'Ching Cherry'** is "a great petunia with creamy-white flowers with vibrant cherry stripes and yellow throats. Plants were covered with flowers all summer long." Mark Dwyer adds, "It performed very well in containers." Plants grow 10 to 16 inches tall. Ball Horticultural Company and Burpee.



PROVEN WINNERS

"For a bright, polar white shot of color in your display, you can't go wrong with this beauty," says Robert Bowden of **Whirlwind® White fan flower** (*Scaevola aemula*). "It held up for us in our intense heat and high humidity and was perfect in hanging baskets." The small flowers bloom on stems that trail to 24 inches. Proven Winners.



SELECT SEEDS

If, like Nancy Ondra, you like orange flowers, try **'Irish Poet' tassel flower** (*Emilia javanica*). This is actually a rare heirloom plant that is being reintroduced to today's gardens. Ondra says it "was a star in my hot-color garden from June through October. The tufted, bright orange flowers of this easy-to-grow sun-lover appear at the tips of slender, lightly branched stems reaching 18 to 24 inches tall, adding dots of eye-catching color." Select Seeds.

## Additional new annuals

- **Zahara™ Sunburst zinnia** (*Zinnia marylandica*) grows 12 to 18 inches tall, has good disease resistance, and is ideal for sunny, hot, and dry areas. David Graper says, "Great mounded plants held their lovely orange and rust-red pin-striped flowers just above the foliage, which helps hide the older faded flowers. It looked great all summer and fall." Pan American Seed Company, Ball Horticultural Company, Burpee.
- **Moonlight Eclipse™ petunia** (*Petunia ×hybrida*) bears continuously-blooming dark blue/purple flowers with a refreshing light green edging; mounding plants grow 12 to 14 inches tall. Suntory.
- **'Shock-o-Lat'** is a multi-branching sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*). Its six-inch-wide blooms have dark brown-red petals tipped in golden yellow. Plants grow to six feet tall and the flowers produce no pollen, making them a good choice for indoor floral arrangements. Park Seed.
- **'White Lightning' osteospermum** (*Osteospermum ecklonis*) produces white daisylike flowers on mounded plants to 18 inches tall and 20 inches wide. This heat-tolerant species is originally from Africa, where it is perennial; here it is grown primarily as an annual. David Graper says, "This is one of the few osteospermums that has bloomed all summer since planting and the well-branched plants look great, too." Burpee.

# EDIBLES



PROVEN WINNERS

**Sweet Lifeberry™ goji berry** (*Lycium barbarum* 'SMNDSL') is a thorny deciduous shrub from Asia that bears bright red antioxidant- and protein-rich fruits in summer. Plants grow to 10 feet tall and five feet wide. The flavor of the fruit is both sweet and sour and has been variously compared to that of raisins, cranberries, and tomatoes. This selection promises extra-sweet fruit. Denny Schrock admits, "I was skeptical of goji berry, since I considered it a fad grown for its purported health benefits rather than fruit quality. However, I was pleasantly surprised by the appealing flavor of the attractive berries produced on a first-year plant. I can't wait for a bigger yield next year when the plant is more established." Zones 5–9, 9–1. Proven Winners.



FALL CREEK NURSERY

**Brazelberries™ Blueberry Glaze™ blueberry** (*Vaccinium* Blueberry Glaze™) is a compact two- to three-foot-tall shrub with glossy, dark green leaves reminiscent of boxwood; the foliage turns deep red in fall. The small mid-season fruits have a wild blueberry flavor. Zones 5–8, 8–1. Fall Creek Nursery.



BURPEE

If you like 'Early Girl' tomatoes, try **'Summer Girl' hybrid tomato**, which produces larger crops about a week earlier, between 49 and 52 days. The rounded five- to six-ounce fruits are good for slicing and eating fresh. Plants are highly tolerant of common tomato diseases such as verticillium and fusarium wilt. Burpee.



JOHNNY'S SELECTED SEEDS

**'Adelaide' carrot** is a true baby-sized hybrid selection that is only three to four inches long at maturity (about 55 days). The sweet orange roots don't have the tough cores of other so-called baby carrots, which are large carrot varieties harvested at an immature stage. Johnny's Selected Seeds.

## Additional new edibles

- **Sugar Mountain™ Blue haskhap** (*Lonicera caerulea*) is a native honeysuckle with small, tubular fruits with a flavor described as a cross between blueberry and raspberry. Plants grow five to six feet tall and wide. Zones 2–8, 8–1. Spring Meadows, Proven Winners.
- **'Dragon's Tongue' arugula** is an attractive selection of wild rocket that has peppery-tasting green leaves with prominent red veins. Robert Bowden says, "We have used it as an ornamental in mixed containers with annuals and perennials. Smaller types of 'greens' often have a tough time in the Florida summer heat but 'Dragon's Tongue' came through unblemished." Johnny's Selected Seeds, Park Seeds, Gurney, J.W. Jung, and others.
- **'Muir' lettuce** is heat tolerant and forms full heads of light green ruffled leaves and resists many types of downy mildew. Johnny's Selected Seeds.
- **'Bam' basil** is highly heat tolerant and does not flower, so it continues to produce fragrant green leaves all summer long. Burpee.

## TREES, SHRUBS, & VINES



PROVEN WINNERS

**'Diamond Ball' clematis** (*Clematis* hybrid) produces pale blue, double, four- to five-inch-wide flowers on both new and old wood all summer. Plants grow to six feet tall and three feet wide. Zones 4–9, 9–3. Proven Winners.



DAVID AUSTIN ROSES

The fully double scarlet flowers of **'Heathcliff' English rose** (*Rosa* Ausnipper) have a fragrance described as a mixture of tea rose and old rose with notes of cedar. Plants grow about three-and-a-half feet tall and three feet wide. Zones 5–9, 9–1. David Austin Roses.



BAILEY NURSERIES

**First Editions® Pink Frost Florida anise tree** (*Illicium floridanum*) is a keeper for Vincent Simeone, who says, the tree “offers creamy variegated leaves that turn pink in cold weather. This is complemented by a shrubby habit to six feet tall and wide or more and deep reddish maroon, star-shaped flowers in spring. This shrub is a real eye-catcher in the winter landscape and is virtually carefree once established—resisting drought, heat, and deer.” Zones 6–9, 10–9. Bailey Nurseries and Plant Introductions.



PROVEN WINNERS

**'Lemon Lace' cutleaf elderberry** (*Sambucus racemosa*) sports bright yellow-green foliage and grows three to five feet tall. Mark Dwyer says “this variety has a finer texture than the standard ‘Sutherland Gold’ variety and features the same orange spring highlights. An occasional severe rejuvenation pruning will promote vigorous and showy new growth. This is an eye-catcher in the full or part sun border and has container applications as well.” Zones 4–7, 7–1. Spring Meadows and Proven Winners.

### Additional new trees, shrubs, and vines

- **Sweet Spot™ Decorator Rose™** (*Rosa* hybrid) is a new line of compact hybrid roses in four colors, each with dark pink-red centers: Calypso (scarlet and yellow); Peach (soft peachy pink), Ruby (deep pink and soft pink); and Yellow (bright yellow, maturing to soft yellow). Plants grow 16 to 24 inches high. Zones 5–10, 9–1. Anthony Tesselar International.
- **Blue Cascade distylium** (*Distylium* Blue Cascade®) is an Asian evergreen shrub in the witch hazel family. “This plant has great potential as a replacement for overused cherry laurel, euonymus, cotoneaster, and juniper, performing especially well in hot, humid climates,” says Vincent Simeone. Blue Cascade has a spreading habit, growing to three feet tall and four feet wide with blue-green foliage. “Distylium in the Northeast should be planted in partial shade, with some protection from the potentially harsh afternoon southern sun in winter,” Simeone advises. “It also works quite well in dense shade.” Zones 6–9, 9–5. Gardener’s Confidence Collection.
- **'Scentsation' honeysuckle** (*Lonicera periclymenum*) is a deciduous vine that blooms mid-spring through summer and climbs to 15 feet. Denny Schrock says “I especially like its extended showy display. Not only are the creamy yellow flowers colorful and fragrant, after blooms fade, the vine is loaded with brilliant red berries. As of yet, I’ve not seen a problem with self-seeding from the berries.” He adds that his plants “have withstood severe drought as well as several months of saturated soils followed by another drought, continuing to thrive and bloom well.” Zones 4–8, 8–4. Proven Winners.
- **Enchantress® hydrangea** (*Hydrangea macrophylla* ‘Monmar’) is a rebloomer with ruby-black stems; nine-inch-wide flowerheads (pink in alkaline soil, blue in acidic soil) bloom on old and new wood; shrubs grow three to four feet tall and three to five feet wide. Zones 5–9, 9–5. Monrovia.



J. FRANK SCHMIDT & SON

**Skinny Genes oak** (*Quercus robur* × *Q. alba* 'JFS-KW2QX') has a very narrow, columnar shape, growing to 45 feet tall and 10 feet wide. It has dark green foliage that turns yellow in autumn. Zones 4–8, 8–4. J. Frank Schmidt & Son.

## Wholesale Nurseries/ Marketing Consortiums

Visit these companies' websites to locate retail sources for their plants.

- Anthony Tesselaar International**, [www.tesselaar.com](http://www.tesselaar.com).
- Bailey Nurseries**, [www.baileynurseries.com](http://www.baileynurseries.com).
- Ball Horticultural Co.**, [www.ballhort.com](http://www.ballhort.com).
- Blooms of Bressingham**, [www.bloomsofbressingham.com](http://www.bloomsofbressingham.com).
- Fall Creek Farm & Nursery**, [www.fallcreeknursery.com](http://www.fallcreeknursery.com).
- Gardener's Confidence**, [www.gardenersconfidence.com](http://www.gardenersconfidence.com).
- J. Frank Schmidt & Son**, [www.jfschmidt.com](http://www.jfschmidt.com).
- Monrovia**, [www.monrovia.com](http://www.monrovia.com).
- Plant Introductions**, [www.plantintroductions.com](http://www.plantintroductions.com).
- Proven Winners**, [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com).
- Skagit Gardens**, [www.skagitgardens.com](http://www.skagitgardens.com).
- Star Roses and Plants/Conard-Pyle**, [www.starrosesandplants.com](http://www.starrosesandplants.com).
- Southern Living Plant Collection**, [www.southernlivingplants.com](http://www.southernlivingplants.com).
- Suntory**, [www.suntorycollection.com](http://www.suntorycollection.com).
- Terra Nova Nurseries**, [www.terravanurseries.com](http://www.terravanurseries.com).
- Walters Gardens**, [www.waltersgardens.com](http://www.waltersgardens.com).

## Retail Mail-Order Sources

- David Austin Roses**, Tyler, TX. [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com).
- Forestfarm**, Williams, OR. [www.forestfarm.com](http://www.forestfarm.com).
- Great Garden Plants**, Holland, MI. [www.greatgardenplants.com](http://www.greatgardenplants.com).
- Gurney's Seed & Nursery Company**, Greendale, IN. [www.gurneys.com](http://www.gurneys.com).
- Hirt's Gardens**, Medina, OH. [www.hirts.com](http://www.hirts.com).
- Jelitto Perennial Seeds**, Louisville, KY. [www.jelitto.com](http://www.jelitto.com).
- J.W. Jung Seed Company**, Randolph, WI. [www.jungseed.com](http://www.jungseed.com).
- Johnny's Selected Seeds**, Winslow, ME. [www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com).
- Park Seed**, Greenwood, SC. [www.parkseed.com](http://www.parkseed.com).
- Plant Delights Nursery**, Raleigh, NC. [www.plantdelights.com](http://www.plantdelights.com).
- Raintree Nursery**, Morton, WA. [www.raintreenursery.com](http://www.raintreenursery.com).
- Reimer Seeds**, Saint Leonard, MD. [www.reimerseeds.com](http://www.reimerseeds.com).
- Select Seeds**, Union, CT. [www.selectseeds.com](http://www.selectseeds.com).
- W. Atlee Burpee & Company**, Warminster, PA. [www.burpee.com](http://www.burpee.com).
- Wayside Gardens**, Hodges, SC. [www.waysidegardens.com](http://www.waysidegardens.com).



MONROVIA

The bright evergreen foliage of **Golden Duchess™ eastern hemlock** (*Tsuga canadensis* 'MonKinn') grows on cascading branches and tolerates full sun. Shrubs grow three to four feet tall and three to five feet wide. Zones 4–7, 7–3. Monrovia.



BAILEY NURSERIES

Bred by University of Georgia horticulturist Michael Dirr, **First Editions® Cobalt-n-Gold™ hypericum** (*Hypericum* 'PIIHYP-I') is a mounded shrub that grows only two to three feet high with exfoliating bark. Its silver-green foliage turns red, yellow, and orange in autumn; three-quarter-inch yellow flowers bloom in late spring to early summer. Zones 4–7, 7–4. Plant Introductions and Bailey Nurseries.