



Solenostemon scutellarioides 'Ruby Heart'

PANAMERICAN SEED



Calibrachoa 'Pink Lemonade'



Pentas lanceolata 'Beehive White'



Impatiens walleriana 'Appleblossom'

New Plants for 2023

Update your garden with some of these new plants available this year.

BY CLAIRE SPLAN

THIS YEAR, as happens every year, seed companies send out catalogs and nursery owners stock their shelves with new plant introductions—the latest varietals that have been bred over a period of years and trialed in gardens all across the country. Most of these plants have been carefully hybridized to meet a particular need, such as improved hardiness, a more desirable size or form, better or longer blooming, or increased disease resistance. Some may be heritage varieties that had disappeared from production long ago and are being brought back to a gardening community that has become more appreciative of plants with a pedigree.

Whatever their backstory, these new plants are deserving of some attention and even fanfare, as I think you'll see in the following pages. No matter where you garden, at least a few of these plants

will probably be going on your wish list.

ANNUALS

Let's start with some amazing pops of color. Although saddled by the growers with a mouthful of marketing names, Superbells® Prism™ 'Pink Lemonade' calibrachoa (*Calibrachoa* sp.) from Proven Winners is a virtual kaleidoscope. "This plant is a combination within itself," says Denise Mullins of Smith Gardens, a wholesale nursery headquartered in Bellingham, Washington. "The flower colors are all changing from shades of yellow to pink. It added a nice bright touch to the trial garden this past summer!" At 12 to 18 inches high, it will be a dynamic performer in hanging baskets and other containers with no deadheading required. Blooms will continue right up to a hard frost, and the plants are hardy in USDA Zones 9–11.

For a striking hit of color in shadier spots, 'Ruby Heart', a new coleus (*Solenostemon scutellarioides*) from PanAmerican Seed. Deep-ruby-colored, heart-shaped leaves have a narrow chartreuse border and yellow-green undersides. This low-maintenance plant grows to 18 to 24 inches tall, making it a good candidate for containers. In higher-humidity areas, it can even tolerate a sunny location without scorching.

Pacific View dahlia (*Dahlia pinnata*) from Breck's Bulbs is an annual that produces colorful three-to four-inch-blooms and a lot of them. Salmon-pink flowers with yellow centers abound from mid-summer all the way to the first frost on compact mounds 24 to 36 inches high. In Zones 3–8 the tuberous roots can be lifted in the fall and replanted the following spring; in Zones 9–10 it performs like a perennial.

An impressive new annual that doubles as an edible is 'Baby Orange' nasturtium

(*Tropaeolum minus*) from Sahin Home Garden/Takii Europe. Mullins also trialed this compact nasturtium and is a big fan. “You can spot this bright beauty from a mile! It’s extremely heavy flowering and keeps a nice mounded habit for planters and even in the landscape. Nasturtium flowers taste like radishes and if you pickle the seed heads they taste better than capers.” The plants stay compact—just 12 to 18 inches high and wide—and in full sun to part shade it will keep pumping out blossoms from summer through fall.

Impatiens cultivar Glimmer™ Appleblossom (*Impatiens walleriana* ‘Balglimmapp’) from Ball FloraPlant will brighten up shady spots with its roselike double blossoms in the softest shade of pink. At 10 to 16 inches tall and 10 to 12 inches wide, it forms a lush mound in containers and hanging baskets or it can be planted *en masse* to fill out a border. And it has an important bonus: it’s highly resistant to the fungal strain that causes the downy mildew that has plagued so many impatiens cultivars.

Beehive™ White pentas (*Pentas lanceolata*) from Syngenta Flowers is a compact mounding/trailing plant, 8 to 12 inches high and wide) that can take extreme weather conditions and still keep its attractive white clusters of star-shaped flowers coming. It is the only spreading pentas from seed and its excellent basal branching provides full flower coverage, making it suitable for hanging baskets or landscape use.

An interesting addition to a cut flower garden (or any garden!) is starflower ‘Paper Moon’ (*Scabiosa stellata*), an established selection now being brought back by Sahin Home Garden/Takii Europe. The clusters of small, pale blue blossoms that appear on wiry stems mature into fascinating bronze-colored, globe-shaped, papery seed heads that are used in fresh or dried bouquets. Plants grow two to three feet tall and require full sun.

PERENNIALS

One trend that continues to grow is to mix edibles in among ornamentals and *Allium* Autumn Bee Attraction F1 (*Allium* ‘Autumn Bee Attraction’, Zones 7–10) from Pure Line Seeds straddles both categories. While the small, creamy white flowers are appealing to pollinators and long-lasting as cut flowers, the leaves



Astilbe chinensis ‘Dark Side of the Moon’



Polemonium pulcherrimum ‘Golden Feathers’



Salvia hybrida 'Blue By You'

'Golden Feathers', a new Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*, Zones 5b–9a) from Darwin Perennials, is another new plant that caught the eye of Jentz, who calls it a "show-stopper." With bright golden and green variegated foliage and bluish-purple flowers in late spring and summer, it can brighten a shade garden. Denise Mullins of Smith Gardens trialed 'Golden Feathers' and says, "It's an early spring bloomer but the amazing bright foliage makes this plant a standout all year long. It will brighten up your dark corners or planters in the shade."

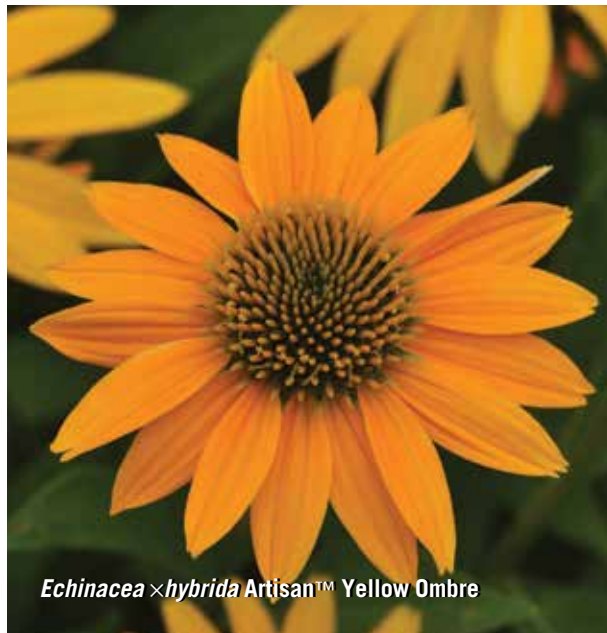
Low-water gardens can always use another kangaroo paw and Monrovia Nursery's Celebrations™ 'Fireworks' kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos* sp., Zones 9–11) is a striking option. It's a tough, drought-tolerant evergreen that sports fuzzy blossoms with shades of teal, green, and hot pink that make long-lasting cut flowers. Planted in full or part sun, it will keep sending up its colorful blooms from spring through fall.



Anigozanthus 'Fireworks'

are tender and have a sweet, garlic flavor. It can bloom in the first season and in subsequent years it will bloom again in spring and fall. It's a great candidate for a patio container for easy harvesting.

Washington, D.C.-based garden writer Kathy Jentz observed that 'Dark Side of the Moon' astilbe (*Astilbe chinensis*, Zones 4–9) from Walters Gardens and Proven Winners was getting a lot of attention at a Perennial Plant Association gathering last year and it's easy to see why. New leaves start out yellow with dark margins, then darken to a deep chocolate-burgundy as they mature. Rosy-purple blooms rise up



Echinacea x hybrida Artisan™ Yellow Ombre

above the mounded foliage, reaching up to 24 inches high. For best growth and flowering it needs full sun and adequate moisture, but it can tolerate some shade and drought.

Artisan™ Yellow Ombre, a hybrid coneflower (*Echinacea x hybrida*, Zones 4a–10b) from PanAmerican Seed, has a low-maintenance, uniform growth habit. Connie Bijl of William Dam Seeds trialed this All-America Selections (AAS) Regional Winner and says, "It's an impressive seed with a robust plant habit, and the yellow is a lovely medium shade. I sowed it at end of March and it was already blooming by August."

Carpet Angel® daisy (*Leucanthemum superbum*, Zones 4a–10b) from Green Fuse Botanicals is the first-ever groundcover Shasta daisy and was an AAS Regional Winner for the West/Northwest and Mountain/Southwest regions. Large, three-inch, white blooms feature a frilly flower center, giving a unique look to this low-growing (six-inch-high) filler that can spread to 20 inches wide.

Judges praised it for its unique shape and color, its dwarf size, and its winter hardiness.

Another AAS Winner, 'Blue by You' sage (*Salvia hybrida*, Zones 4b–9a) from Darwin Perennials, impressed the trial judges with its large flowers and intense blue color. A great addition to pollinator, cutting, or container gardens, this salvia blooms from late spring into fall when spent blooms are removed. It demonstrated excellent winter hardiness and heat tolerance, and while hummingbirds and butterflies are drawn to it, deer and rabbits tend to leave it alone.

SHRUBS AND TREES

Banana Split® daphne (*Daphne odora* 'Monzulzay', Zones 7–9) from Monrovia Nursery is a treat for the eyes and the nose. The leaves are edged in bright yellow and the fragrant blossoms, which appear from late winter to early spring, start out pink, then turn white as they open. It grows to four feet high and wide and can handle sites in full to part sun.

With so many hydrangea varieties to choose from, it can be hard to pick just one, but Pink Dynamo™ (*Hydrangea serrata* 'JPDor', Zones 5–9) from Van Belle/Bloomin' Easy is like no other. Hot-pink lacecap flowers rebloom late spring through summer against intensely black foliage. It has a compact form at two to three feet tall and wide in part sun.

Interest continues to grow in smaller evergreens and Monrovia Nursery's an-



Rise Up Lilac Days® rose

swer is JeanGenie™ a Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens* 'Moneva', Zones 2–8) with cream-colored new growth that matures to striking blue needles. Its pyramidal form tops out at 15 feet tall and eight feet wide, suitable for use as a focal point or wind-break. Small enough to be grown in a container but tall enough to serve as a privacy screen, it provides year-round interest.

New roses are introduced every year and it's hard to pick just one standout, but Rise Up Lilac Days® (*Rosa* 'ChewLilac-days', Zones 4–8) from Proven Winners is an attention-getter. Mary-Kate Mackey, a garden writer based in Washington State, is intrigued by this unique dusky lilac rose with strong fragrance, adding: "Better yet, this one is considered a mini-climber at five to eight feet tall and three to four feet wide.



JeanGenie™ Colorado blue spruce

That means I can secure the branches sideways on a relatively small trellis and get masses of blooms along each horizontal stem." It can also be pruned as a shrub rose to use in a container or in mass plantings as a hedge.

EDIBLES

More and more, home gardeners are looking for edibles that are suited to container growing and PanAmerican Seed has developed a tomato that's perfect for that. 'Sun Dipper' (*Solanum lycopersicum*) produces elongated, orange, two- to two-and-a-half-inch long fruits on four- to six-foot-tall indeterminate bushes. "I grew 'Sun Dipper' in a large pot and it produced an amazing amount of cherry-sized fruits that were great in salads and cooking," says Vermont-based garden writer Charlie Nardozzi.

Kristen Noble of Harris Seeds was also a fan of 'Sun Dipper'. "While these tomatoes impress with their novel appearance, they are also flavorful, high yielding, and excellent garden performers with strong disease resistance and tolerance to cracking," she says.

Gardeners in cooler climates will appreciate tomato RuBee Dawn (*Solanum lycopersicum*), a large, very early maturing salad variety from Sakata Seed America. The compact, indeterminate plants have good disease resistance and yield 8- to 12-ounce fruits that mature in just 57 days from transplant. The flavor has a good balance of sweetness and tartness with a hint of a floral overtone.

Kitchen gardeners who are tight on space will also appreciate 'Incredible Escalator' climbing zucchini (*Cucurbita pepo*) from Renee's Garden. Instead of the usual sprawling



RuBee Dawn tomato

OUR GARDEN EXPERTS

Thanks to all the gardening professionals who shared their impressions and plant picks for 2023 with us:

Connie L. Bijl (Dundas, ON), flower & herb seed manager, William Dam Seeds

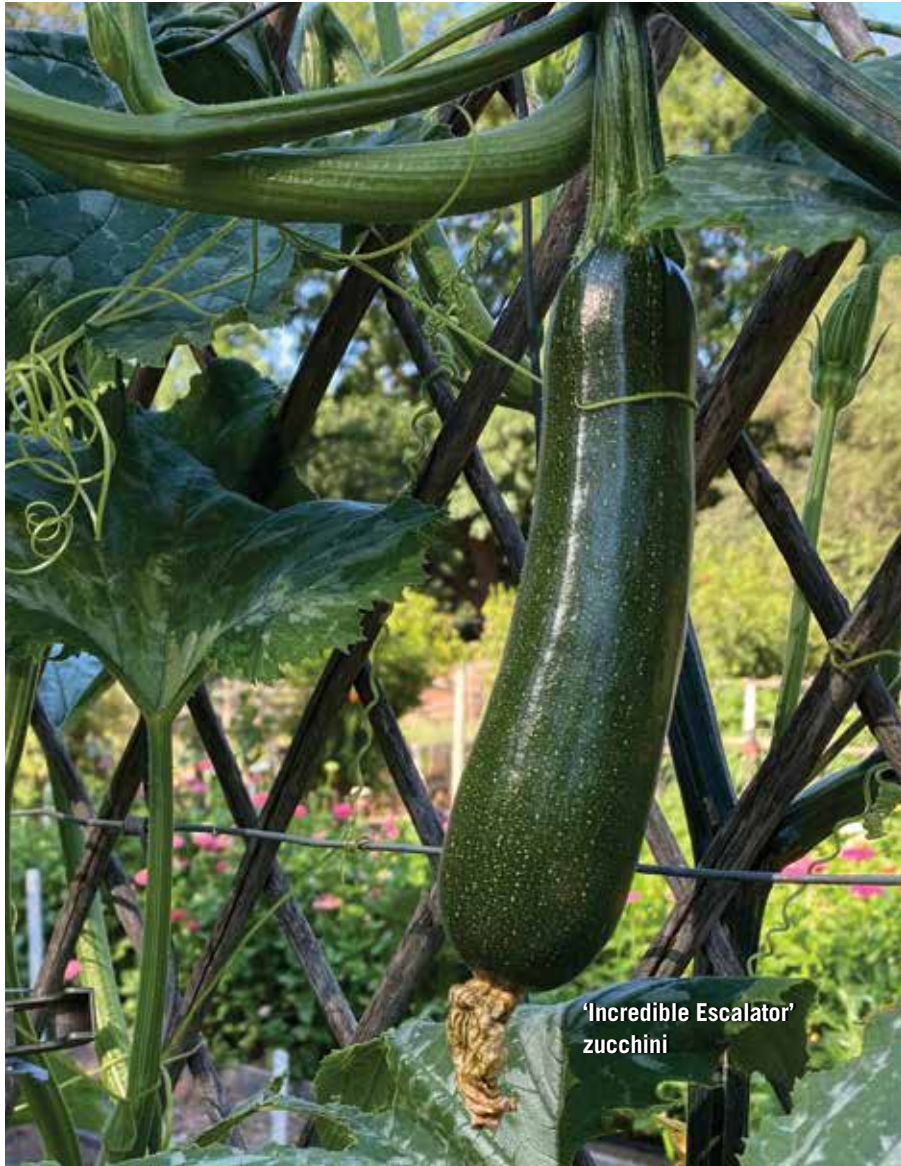
Kathy Jentz (Silver Spring, MD), co-author of *The Urban Garden*

Mary-Kate Mackey (Eugene, OR), author of *The Healthy Garden*

Denise Mullins (Bellingham, WA), director of product innovation, Smith Gardens

Charlie Nardozzi (Ferrisburgh, VT), author of *Foodscaping*

Kristen Noble (Rochester, NY), director of product management, Harris Seeds



'Incredible Escalator' zucchini



'Rubyfirm' watermelon

form, this one can be trained to grow up a six- to eight-foot fence or trellis.

Watermelon Rubyfirm (*Citrullus vulgaris*) from Partner Seeds is an AAS Regional Winner for the West/Northwest and Mountain/Southwest areas. Judges loved this personal-sized (three- to five-and-a-half-pound) melon for its sweet, crisp flesh with minimal seeds. Plants yield two to three melons apiece and demonstrated good resistance to downy mildew and powdery mildew.

After all the trialing and judging that breeders subject their plants to, the true test of course is how the plants will perform in your garden. Looks for these new plants—and so many more!—in your local garden centers this season and take home a few to try for yourself.

Claire Splan is associate editor of The American Gardener.