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By **Larry Rettig (LarryR)**

April 11, 2011

Every year a whole host of new plant varieties is offered to gardeners across the country. Let me introduce you to some of the companies that provide them and the new plants they are offering this year.

In a special edition of *Horticulture* magazine (December/January 2011), garden writer Grace Naugle has compiled an impressive list of major players in the horticulture market and has included some of the new varieties they offer. These lists deserve to be more widely known among gardeners, so I will repeat some of the entries here in alphabetical order and will comment on each.

Major Players in the World of Commercial Horticulture

Anthony Tesselaar

Tesselaar is a global company with its head office in Australia and branch offices in the U.S., U.K., New Zealand, and South Africa. Anthony Tesselaar describes his business as being about "searching the world for brilliant plants that are environmentally friendly and easy to grow with a minimum of fuss. You'd think that alone would keep us busy, but we also put a massive amount of effort into making sure our plants are as good as we say they are. We've trial gardens around the globe, and we carry out research and development in areas such as plant diseases, managing water and identifying plants which grow well with less chemicals."



© Larry Rettig

Anthony Tesselaar introduction, Canna 'Tropicana' in author's garden

Some of the popular plants Tesselaar has introduced in the past include [Flower Carpet®](#) roses, [Bonfire®](#) Begonia *Begonia boliviensis* (see photo above), and [Tropicanna®](#) Cannas (photo at left). Among the more unusual plants is the [Fairy Magnolia®](#), introduced in 2007. This year's introductions include two new *B. boliviensis* cultivars with dark leaves, 'Choc Pink' and 'Choc Red.'

Bailey Nurseries

Located in Newport, Minnesota, just southeast of the St. Paul metro area, Bailey Nurseries is a fourth-generation, family-owned company. The family describes the nursery as "widely recognized as one of the United States' largest wholesale nurseries, with products distributed by more than 4500 independent garden centers, landscapers, growers and re-wholesalers. ...Bailey Nurseries has earned a reputation as a leader in the nursery industry with inventive techniques, high-quality plants and active involvement in industry organizations. Integrity, innovation and quality were the hallmarks of our company when it began - and they continue to this day."

Bailey's claim to fame



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includes such introductions as the Endless Summer® Collection of hydrangeas, [Easy Elegance®](#) roses, and [First Editions®](#) plants. This year's introductions include *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Great Star' and *Rosa* 'Sigrid Rose.'

Ball Horticultural

Founded in 1905 by George J. Ball, Ball Horticultural has introduced many award-winning varieties, including the [Wave® Petunia](#) Family, [Dazzler®](#) and [Super Elfin® Impatiens](#), and [Fiesta™ Double Impatiens](#). According to its website, "Ball is committed to sustainable practices and has highlighted its green accomplishments in its "[Sustainability Report](#)." Focused exclusively on the ornamental business that first made its reputation, Ball's global family of breeders, seed and vegetative producers, distribution companies, and research and development teams has a strong presence in over 20 countries on six continents."



© Ball Horticultural Company

Ball Horticultural introduction, *Petunia* 'Black Velvet'



© mslehv

Blooms of Bressingham introduction, *Geranium* 'Rozanne'

This year, Ball is formally introducing *Petunia* 'Black Velvet,' *Petunia* 'Phantom,' *Petunia* 'Pinstripe,' and *Zinnia marylandica* 'Double Zahara.'

Blooms of Bressingham

For almost a hundred years now, Blooms of Bressingham®, located in Bressingham, England, "has been recognized as a leader in identifying and selecting the finest of herbaceous perennials... During that time, the father and son team of Alan and Adrian Bloom have been responsible for introducing over 200 perennial cultivars...Remarkably, about 80 to 100 of these are still available worldwide." Among these are garden favorites such as:

- o *Achillea* 'Moonshine'
- o *Astilbe* 'Sprite' (1994 PPA Perennial Plant of the Year)
- o *Bergenia* 'Bressingham White' and 'Bressingham Ruby'
- o *Crococsmia* 'Lucifer'
- o *Dianthus* 'Oakington'
- o *Geranium* 'Ann Folkard', 'Ballerina' and 'Rozanne'
- o *Lavandula* 'Blue Cushion'
- o *Leucanthemum* 'Snowcap'
- o *Phlox* 'Oakington Blue Eyes' and 'Eva Cullum'

This year Blooms is introducing 31 new plants. Images of them are not available at the moment, as Blooms is redesigning its website. I've listed the names of the plants for you at the end of this article.

High Country Gardens

© Joy

High Country Gardens introduction, *Agastache* 'Desert Sunrise'

In 1984, New Mexico native David Salman opened Santa Fe Greenhouses. Determined to "transform western gardening by cultivating and growing beautiful blooming perennials, native & ornamental grasses and unique cacti & succulents," his business attracted such a fan base that he founded a mail order company in 1993 called High Country Gardens. He single-handedly "changed the face of western gardening from rocks and cactus to lush, blooming eco-friendly garden habitats."

To date, Salman has introduced [35 exclusive varieties](#) to the world of gardening. This year's newcomers include *Agastache* 'Blue Blazes' and *Penstemon* 'Coconino County.'

Monrovia

Harry E. Rosedale founded Monrovia in 1926. He was one of the early pioneers of growing plants in containers. A revolutionary idea at the time, he believed that plants would be less traumatized and transplant better if grown and sold in their containers. Today Monrovia grows more than 2,300 varieties and 22 million plants annually.

Some other innovations at Monrovia include automating the task of putting soil in containers, adding time-release fertilizers to the soil, establishing a dedicated research department, and affixing gardener-friendly color picture labels to plants.

Monrovia's mission is enhancement of "the beauty and value of the North American landscape - one garden at a time. By producing the strongest plants in the industry, we offer you peace of mind and quality assurance that stands behind each and every Monrovia plant."

New at Monrovia this year are:

- Pink Yuletide Camellia *Camellia sasanqua* 'MonDel'
- Bluebeard *Caryopteris x clandonensis* 'Korball' Blue Balloon®
- Pomegranate *Punica granatum* 'Smith' PP# 16578 'Angel Red'
- Blueberry *Vaccinium corymbosum* 'Bountiful Blue'
- Takara™ (*Treasure*) Itoh Peony *Paeonia* (*Intersectional hybrid*) x 'Smith Opus 2'
- Misaka™ (*Beautiful Blossom*) Itoh Peony *Paeonia* (*Intersectional hybrid*) x 'Smith Opus 1'
- Mountain Pepper *Drimys lanceolata*
- Sausage Vine *Holboellia coriacea* 'Cathedral Gem'
- Sausage Vine *Holboellia latifolia* 'Ritak.'

You can view photos of these new plants by doing a site search [here](#).

Proven Winners



© jnana

Proven Winners introduction, Angelonia 'Angelface Blue'

Proven winners is a bit different in that it is not a single company. According to their website, "the Proven Winners brand is owned by three leading U.S. plant propagators - Euro American in Bonsall, CA; Four Star Greenhouse in Carleton, MI; and Pleasant View Gardens in Loudon, NH. These companies "founded" Proven Winners in 1992, and, together with 3 licensees in Canada, produce superior liners under the Proven Winners name. Liners are then sold to wholesale growers to 'finish' and sell to retailer garden centers across North America...On a retail sales level, Proven Winners...sales are greater than a half-billion dollars annually. The plants are available from just about every garden center in North America.

The goals of Proven Winners are to introduce the best, most unique, high performing plants, to produce them under the highest quality standards, and to market the plants innovatively. Proven Winners plants are unsurpassed in terms of flowering, growth habit, disease resistance, and garden performance."

This year Proven Winners is introducing a whopping 105 new varieties. To view them all, click [here](#).

Terra Nova



© Kell

Terra Nova Introduction, Brunnera 'Jack Frost'

In 1991 Dan Heims began Terra Nova Nursery in Canby, Oregon, in cooperation with Paul Iwasaki of Riverview Greenhouses in an effort to bring to the wholesale market new and unusual plants originating in the U.S. and other areas of the world, especially Japan and England. He also began an intensive in-house breeding program. In 1992 he partnered with Ken Brown to launch Terra Nova Nurseries, Inc.

Since 1991, Terra Nova has introduced a staggering 725 new plants. New for this year are 64 different varieties. You can see them [here](#).

Perhaps you are as surprised as I was at the incredible number of plants these industry leaders have

brought to the home garden. I know that from now on, I'll be keeping a closer eye on these companies to see what new plants they have to offer each year. I'm sure the looks of my garden beds will profit from at least some of the new varieties released this year and in the future. That's more than I can say for the looks of that billfold in my back pocket, which will most certainly be much thinner! Perhaps a slimmer billfold won't wear a hole in that back pocket as quickly as it does now, and I can justify new plant purchases because I won't have to buy jeans as often. Gardeners are eternal optimists.

Credits

Thanks to Dave's Garden members mslehv, Joy, DaylilySLP, jnana, and Kell for the use of their PlantFiles photos and to Ball Horticultural Company for the petunia photo. The initial photo (*Begonia boliviensis*) was taken by the author in his garden.

Blooms of Bressingham Introductions for 2011

Achillea 'Peachy Seduction'	Geranium 'Queen of Hearts'	Iris bearded 'Blue Rhythm'
Achillea 'Pineapple Mango'	Hemerocallis 'Entrapment'	Iris bearded 'Constant Wattez'
Coreopsis 'Sweet Marmalade'	Hemerocallis 'Longfields Glory'	Iris bearded 'Indian Chief'
Dianthus 'Hearts Desire'	Hemerocallis 'Longfields Pearl'	Iris bearded 'Temple Gold'
Diascia 'Silver Wells'	Hemerocallis 'Longfields Tropica'	Kniphofia 'Elvira'
Erigeron 'Four Winds'	Hemerocallis Siloam 'Grace Stamile'	Leucanthemum 'Engelina'
Eryngium 'Big Blue'	Iris sibirica 'Contrast in styles'	Papaver 'Pink Pearl'
Euphorbia 'Frosted Flame'	Iris sibirica 'Moon Silk'	Papaver 'Ruffled Patty'
Geranium 'Sylvias Surprise'	Iris sibirica 'Rikugi Sakura'	Salvia 'Stampede'
Geranium 'Azure Rush'	Iris sibirica 'Shakers Prayer'	
Geranium 'Summer Skies'	Iris bearded 'English Cottage'	

About Larry Rettig



An enthusiastic gardener for over 50 years, my first plant was a potted Ponderosa Lemon tree ordered from a comic book ad at age 15. I still have it, and it's still bearing lemons! My wife and I garden on 3/4 of an acre, both flowers and vegetables. Although our garden is private, it's listed with the Smithsonian Institution as a national heritage garden and is on the National Register of Historic Places. We garden organically and no-till. Our vegetable garden contains a seed bank of vegetables brought to this country from Germany in the mid-1800s. For more info: <http://davesgarden.com/community/blogs/m/LarryR/>. Photos that appear in my articles without credit are my own.

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