

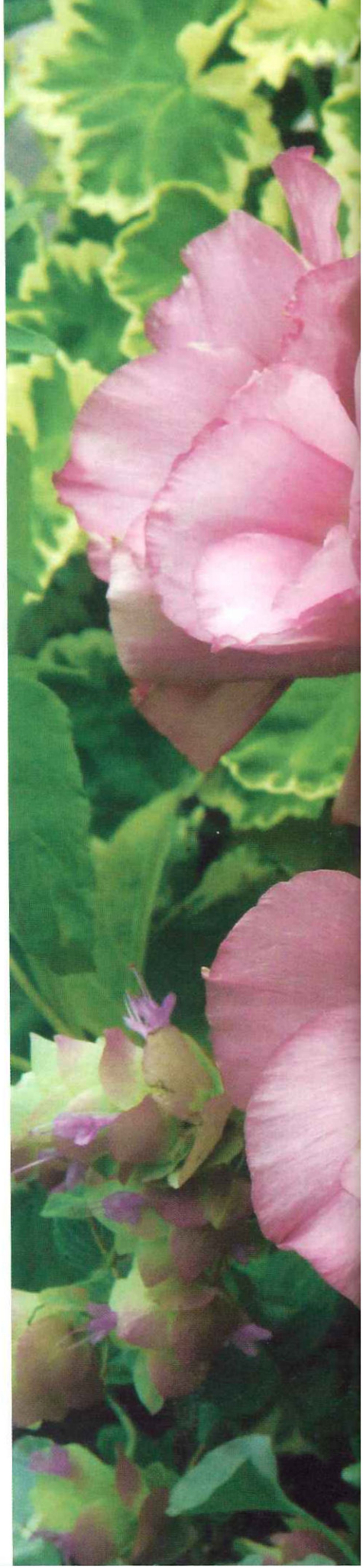
Plants With Punch

THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR ANNUALS! Fill your containers, tuck them into your perennial border or encircle your mailbox. These hard-working plants bloom and bloom, from spring to fall. And when your perennials take a break or die down, the annuals are still going strong.

There's more to annuals than the traditional marigolds, petunias and pansies. From big, bold spider flower to sweet-smelling heliotrope, you have all sorts of fantastic choices. Even geraniums and impatiens have a new look. Check out their spectacular colors and flower shapes in the pages that follow. Then we'll show you how to plant up three gorgeous container gardens and give you the scoop on four easy ways to take the work out of watering your containers this summer.

Flowers are nature's jewels, with whose wealth she decks her summer beauty.

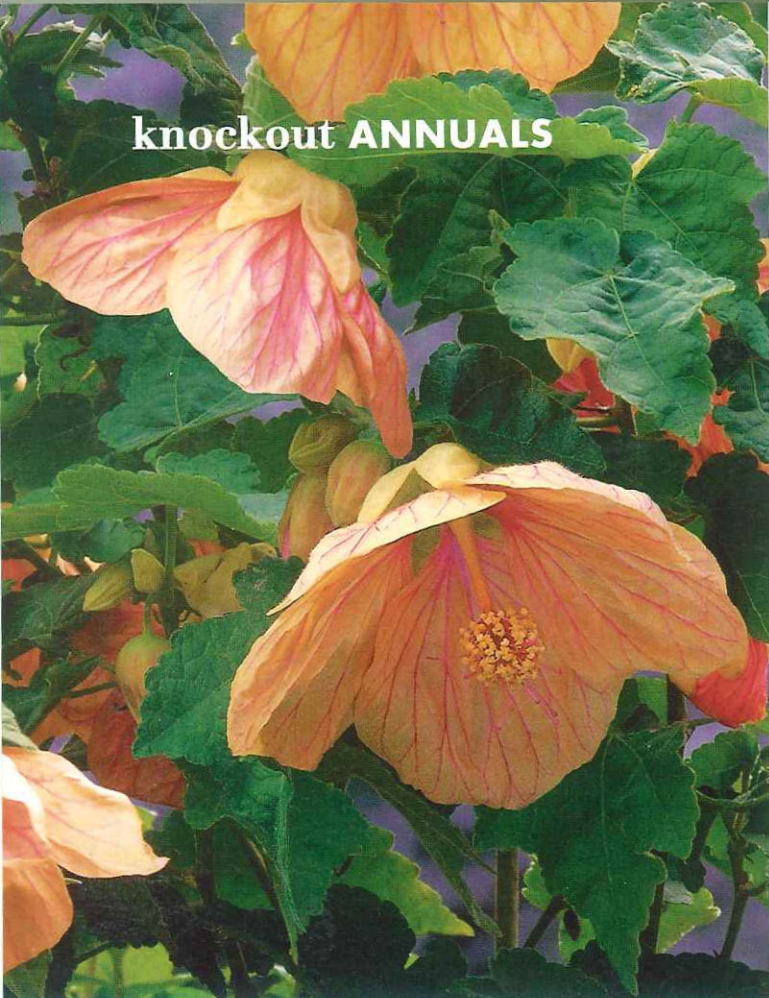
— George Croly





This pink lisianthus makes an elegant cut flower as well as a very good container plant. Here it's paired with the unique flowers of 'Kent Beauty' ornamental oregano.

knockout ANNUALS



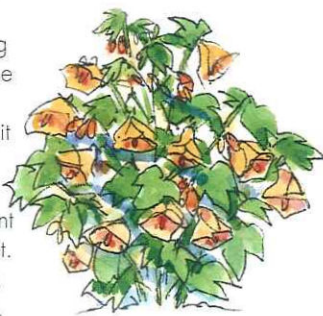
Flowering maple *Abutilon* hybrids

HEIGHT: 18 to 20 inches in a container **WIDTH:** 18 to 20 inches in a container **LIGHT:** Full sun with afternoon shade **SOIL:** Moist, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Bell-shaped blooms

Flowering maple has been making a comeback in a big way because it does so well in containers. Although it has an upright shape, it may arch or trail a bit, so give it some room to grow. If you live in USDA zones 9 or warmer, this plant can get much larger, up to 15 feet.

Bell-shaped flowers bloom from spring until frost in shades of white, yellow, orange, pink or red.

If you have the space, bring your potted flowering maple inside before frost. Give it consistent moisture and a spot on a sunny windowsill to keep it blooming all winter long.

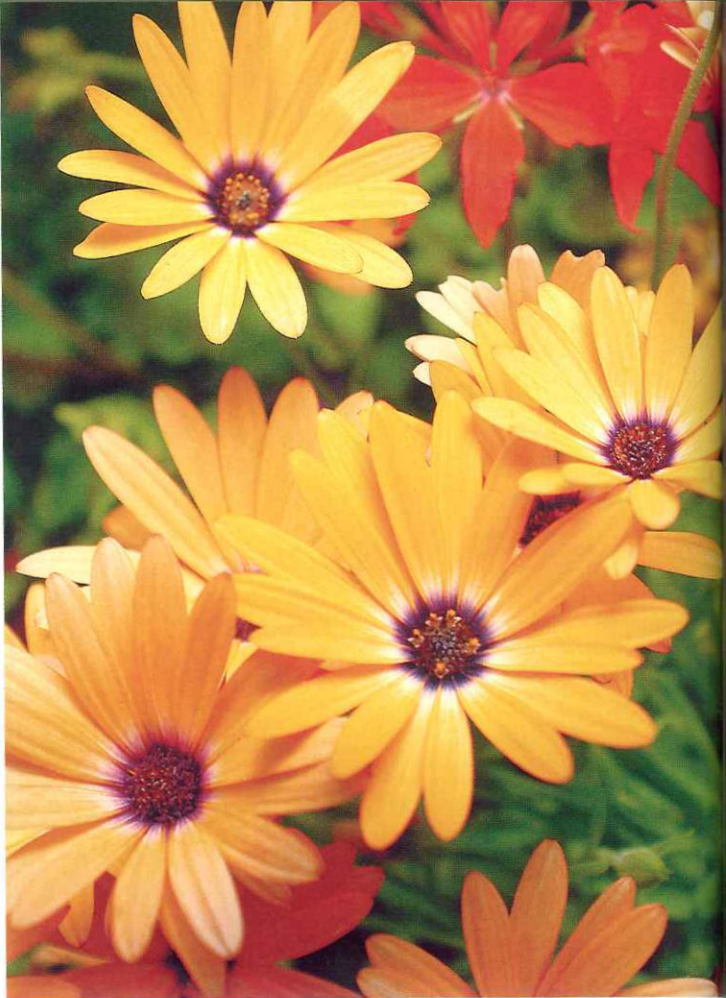


try THESE!

Mixed colors: 'Large Flowered Mixed' (in photo)

Compact plants: 'Bella Mixed'

Variiegated foliage: 'Souvenir de Bonn'



Cape daisy *Osteospermum* hybrids

HEIGHT: 6 to 24 inches **WIDTH:** 12 to 24 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun to part shade **SOIL:** Average, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Tropical colors

This sweet daisylike flower is versatile enough to go almost anywhere in your garden. Whether you plant it in the ground or in a container, it's sure to add a little sunshine to the scene.

Cape daisies have toothed gray-green foliage and bloom in shades of pink, yellow, orange and white. The flowers close at night and open again in the morning.

Cut a new plant back hard in early spring before it blooms and again in midsummer to promote a dense, full shape. To keep the blooms coming as long as possible, deadhead spent flowers. Cape daisy needs cool nights to bloom, so if the flowers stop during the heat of the summer, wait until fall and they'll start up again.



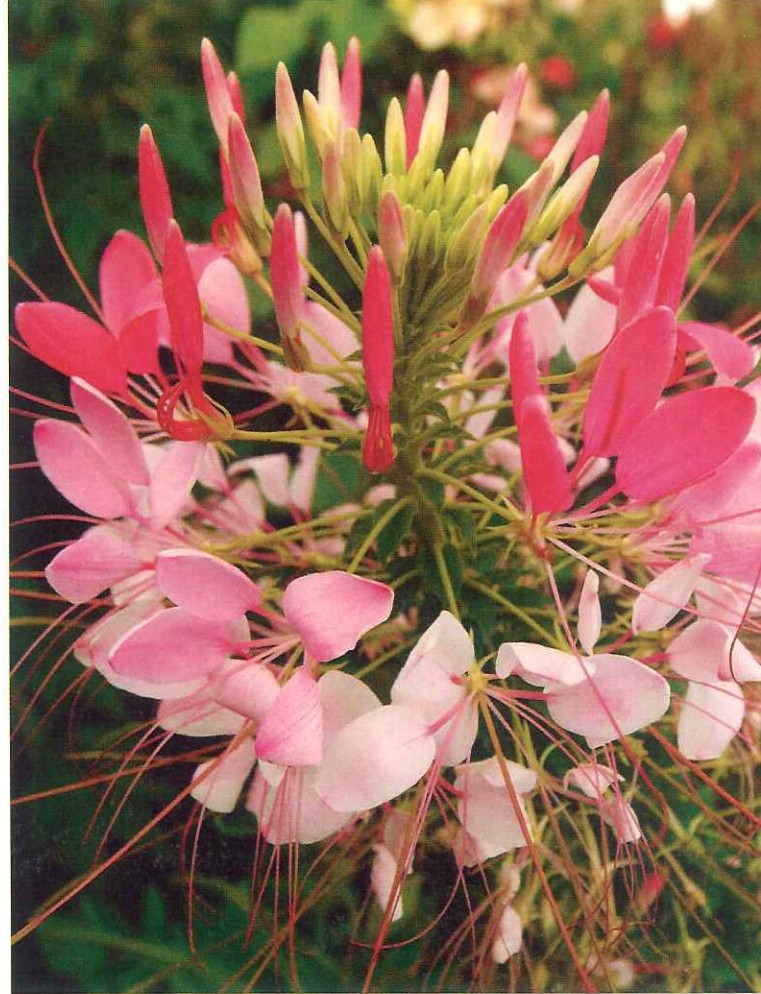
try THESE!

Orange flowers: Symphony™ 'Orange' (in photo)

Unique flower form: 'Whirligig'

Magenta blooms: Springstar™ 'Sirius'

Pink blooms: Soprano™ 'Light Purple'



Geraniums *Pelargonium* hybrids

HEIGHT: 3 to 24 inches **WIDTH:** 3 to 24 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun to light shade **SOIL:** Well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURES:** Interesting foliage and showy blooms that last a long time

Plant breeders have been busy making spectacular improvements on Grandma's good old geraniums. Blooms with striped petals, contrasting eyes and new forms, including doubles, rose and tulip shapes, are now available. There's even colorful variegated foliage, too.

Geraniums do well in pots or in the border. To keep blooms coming, snap off each flower stem as the petals fade. The important things to remember are to keep them on the dry side and feed them regularly.

Can't bear to part with your beautiful geraniums when the weather gets cold? Bring them indoors in a sunny window. They'll get bigger year after year.



try THESE!

Tulip-shaped flowers: 'Patricia Andrea' (in photo)
Green leaves with white centers: 'Happy Thought'
Gold leaves: 'Friary Wood'

Spider flower *Cleome hassleriana*

HEIGHT: 1½ to 5 feet **WIDTH:** 1 to 2 feet **LIGHT:** Full sun to part shade **SOIL:** Humus-rich, well-drained, sandy **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Unique flower shapes

Spider flower gets its name from the many long protruding stamens that make this tall, arching annual beautiful and unique.

This is a plant you can sow directly in the garden — you won't need to start it indoors. It'll start blooming when it's only 1 foot tall or so and then keeps growing, with older blooms and seed pods at the base being replaced by new flowers on top. By late summer, the plant is at its peak with lots of tall blooms.

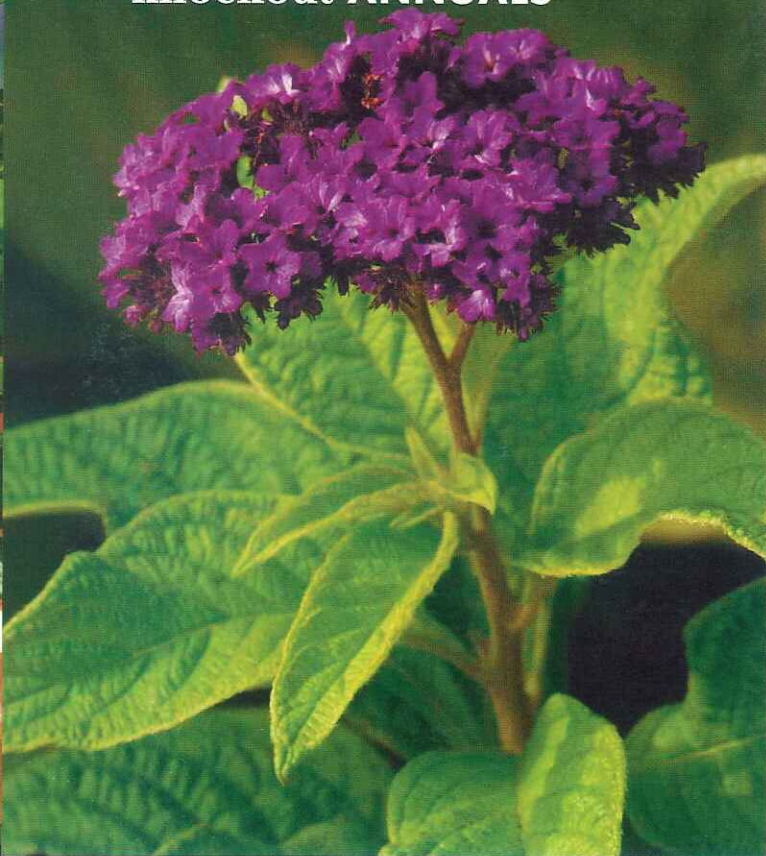
Spider flower needs well-drained soil, and despite its height, rarely needs staking or deadheading. Be careful where you plant spider flower — some people think its pungent, herbal scent is unpleasant. And it can reseed.



try THESE!

Easy-to-find pink: 'Rose Queen' (in photo)
Compact plant: 'Sparkler' hybrids
White blooms: 'White Spider'

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Heliotrope *Heliotropium arborescens*

HEIGHT: 18 to 36 inches **WIDTH:** 18 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun
SOIL: Well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1
BEST FEATURE: Vanilla scent

Looking for an annual with an unbelievable scent? Plant heliotrope. Its sweet vanilla fragrance, rich-purple flowers and dark-green textured leaves make it a wonderful bedding or container plant.

Wait until the weather has thoroughly warmed up before planting heliotrope outside — 2 to 3 weeks after the last frost date in your area. The most important thing to remember about heliotrope is to keep it on the dry side — it will flounder with too much moisture. To keep it blooming, be sure to deadhead. You can save heliotrope over the winter in a sunny window. By spring it'll be lanky and sparse, so cut all the stems back so it's about half its original size and start fertilizing it.



try THESE!

Great all-around: 'Marine' (in photo)
White blooms: 'Alba'
Compact grower: 'Dwarf Marine'



Love-in-a-mist *Nigella damascena*

HEIGHT: 20 inches **WIDTH:** 9 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun
SOIL: Average, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1
BEST FEATURES: Unique seedpods; reseeds easily without being invasive

Love-in-a-mist just might be the easiest annual you can grow. Generations of gardeners have enjoyed this old-fashioned favorite with its blue, pink or white flowers and delicate, feathery green foliage. By simply dropping the seed on the soil and lightly scratching it in, you can have lots of flowers. Sow the seed where you want it to bloom, because love-in-a-mist seedlings have a taproot and don't like being moved.

If you deadhead, it'll bloom on and off much of the summer, especially if you live where it's cool. Leave a few of the large, round, maroon-striped seedheads on the plant to ripen so you can pick them for dried flower arrangements. And let a few pods stay on the plant so it'll self-seed. That way you'll be sure to have more flowers next year.



try THESE!

Best known: Common love-in-a-mist (in photo)
Blue double blossoms: 'Oxford Blue'
White: 'African Bride'



Ornamental millet *Pennisetum glaucum*

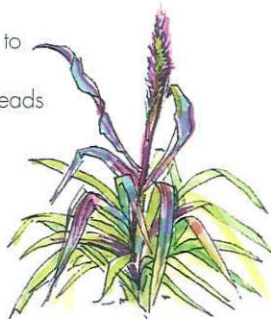
HEIGHT: 3 to 5 feet **WIDTH:** 2 to 3 feet **LIGHT:** Full sun
SOIL: Well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1
BEST FEATURE: Strong, architectural form

Looking for a conversation piece to add to your garden? Try ornamental millet. The purple, straplike leaves and spiky seedheads are striking and will certainly make people take notice. Plus the seedheads will draw birds in for a snack.

While it can tolerate almost any growing conditions, from extreme heat and low moisture to cool and damp, millet does best with a light feeding of a water-soluble fertilizer every time you water.

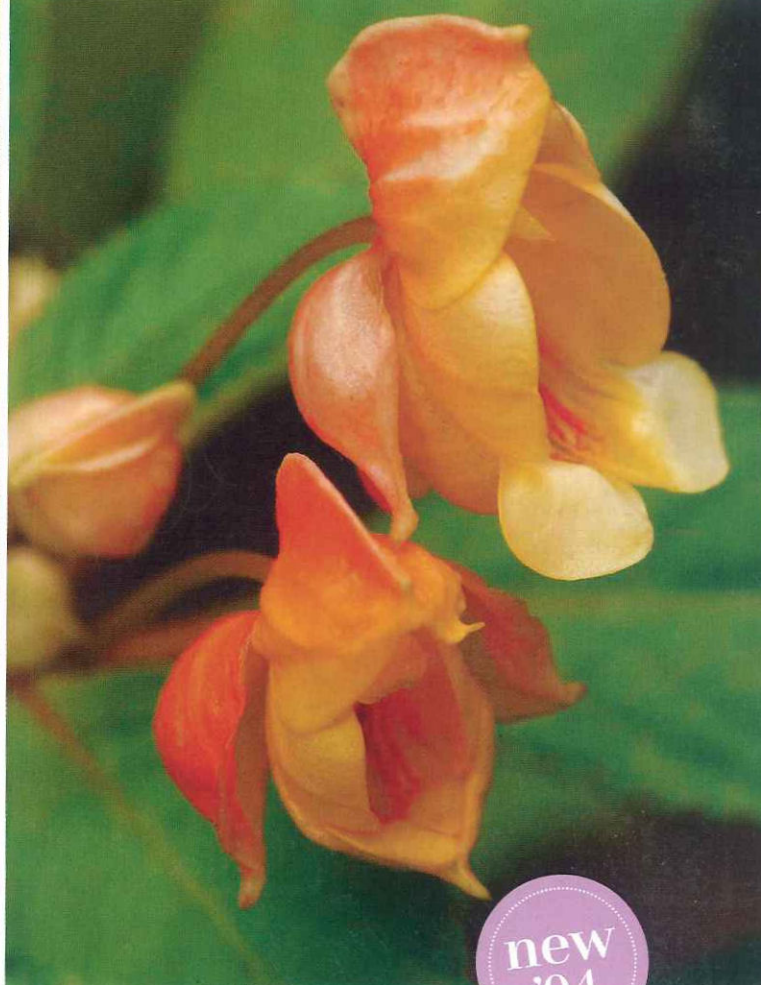
Mix clumps of ornamental millet into perennial borders or use it as a centerpiece in an annual garden. It's wonderful along a driveway, in your foundation border or along a fence. You can even grow it in large containers, as we'll show you on p. 36.

Use the dramatic seedheads in fresh or dried bouquets.



try THESE!

Bronze-green foliage: 'Jester' (in photo)
Dark-purple leaves with red midribs: 'Purple Majesty'
Smallest: 'Purple Baron'



Impatiens *Impatiens* hybrids

HEIGHT: 6 to 18 inches **WIDTH:** 10 to 15 inches **LIGHT:** Part shade to shade
SOIL: Rich, moist, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Bright color for shady situations

Easy to grow, versatile and constantly blooming, impatiens have been a garden favorite for many years. Whether you grow them in beds or containers, there's something for everybody. But the wide variety of new plants available may surprise you.

Impatiens now come in almost every color, including yellow. And there are more new sizes, colors, bi-colors and doubles coming every year.

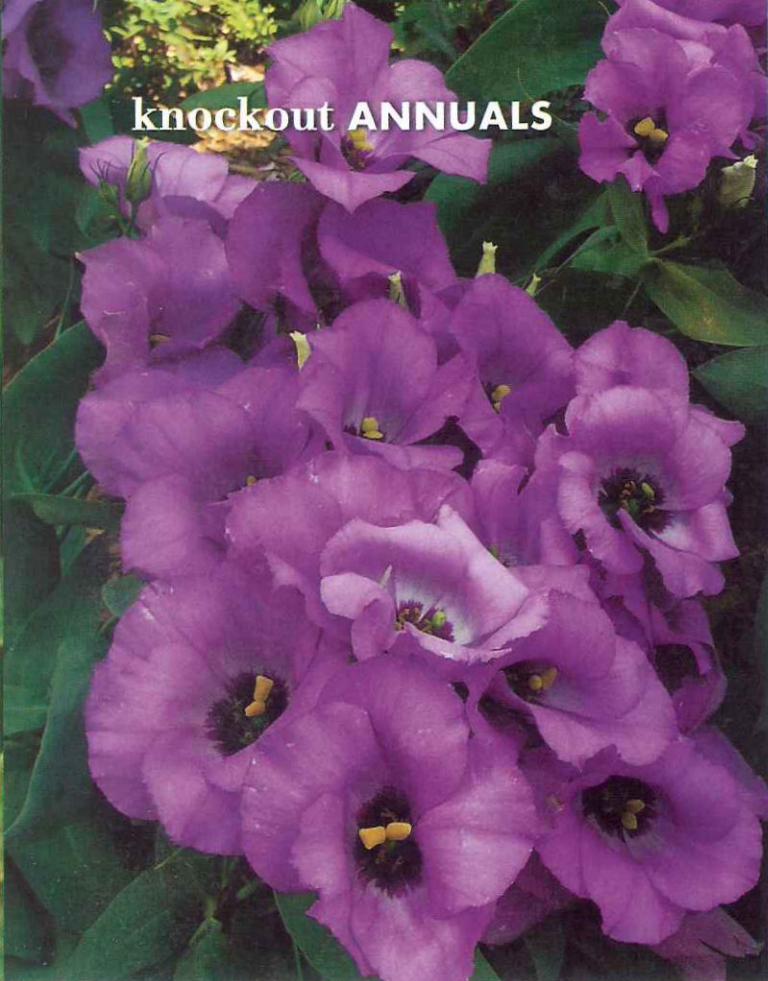
Care for impatiens is simple — just give them at least part shade and keep them moist. There's no need to deadhead, the flowers drop off clean. And if the plant becomes leggy, just prune it back by about a third or so.



try THESE!

Yellow flowers: 'Jungle Gold' (in photo)
Double blooms: 'Rosebud Purple'
Dwarf plant: Firefly™ series

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Lisianthus *Eustoma grandiflorum*

HEIGHT: 18 to 36 inches **WIDTH:** 12 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun
SOIL: Well-drained, neutral to alkaline **HEAT TOLERANT:**
 AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Long-lasting cut flowers

Add lisianthus to your list of favorite annuals so you can enjoy these elegant, cup-shaped flowers in your own garden. And if you like, cut a few to bring indoors. They're a very long-lasting cut flower.

Lisianthus flowers come in shades of lavender, pink, purple, red and white. There are also bicolors, as well as double blooms that look similar to roses. Taller cultivars may need staking, or you can pinch the tips back on young plants once or twice to stimulate sturdier branching. Removing spent flowers will keep more coming until frost.



try THESE!

Compact and heat tolerant: 'Florida Blue' (in photo)
White with pink edge: 'Sapphire Pink Rim'
Creamy yellow blooms: 'Echo Yellow'



Angelonia *Angelonia angustifolia*

HEIGHT: 2 to 4 feet **WIDTH:** 9 to 12 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun
SOIL: Well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1
BEST FEATURE: Versatile in containers or in the ground

Angelonia — it sounds like a plant sent from heaven, doesn't it? While it has a heavenly look, it's really tough and can thrive in heat and drought. Give it a sunny spot in the border or in large containers, remove flower spikes as they fade and it'll bloom from early summer until fall.

Be careful not to over-fertilize or your plants will end up with weak stems, lush foliage and few flowers.

In general, plants don't need staking. But if they grow too tall, don't be afraid to cut them back to a side branch — they'll reflower in about two weeks.

You'll find cultivars with flowers in shades of purple, lavender, pink and white.



try THESE!

Rose color: 'AngelMist™ Dark Rose' (in photo)
Deep purple: 'Carita™ Purple'
White with purple streaking: 'AngelFace® Bicolor'



Pineapple sage *Salvia elegans*

HEIGHT: Up to 6 feet **WIDTH:** 3 feet **LIGHT:** Full sun to part shade **SOIL:** Alkaline, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURES:** Pineapple-scented foliage; bright-red blooms

This shrubby plant is full of surprises: Fuzzy leaves that smell of pineapple when you rub against them and bright-red tubular flowers that bloom all summer. You'll find that no passing butterfly or hummingbird can resist them.

Pinch pineapple sage tips back in early summer to encourage more bushy growth and lots of blooms. Keep the soil on the dry side, as this plant doesn't like it wet. If the weather is extremely hot, give it an occasional deep watering to keep those flowers coming. The leaves are edible and can be used raw in cold drinks and salads.

Pineapple sage is extremely easy to propagate. In fact, you can simply root cuttings in water.



try THESE!

Gold foliage: 'Golden Delicious' (in photo)
Pink flowers: 'Frieda Dixon'
Tangerine-scented: 'Tangerine'



Ornamental pepper *Capsicum annuum*

HEIGHT: 18 to 20 inches **WIDTH:** 16 to 19 inches **LIGHT:** Full sun **SOIL:** Moist, well-drained **HEAT TOLERANT:** AHS zones 12 to 1 **BEST FEATURE:** Brightly colored fruit

Peppers have broken free from the vegetable garden! While these ornamental types are usually edible, they're grown more for their small, colorful fruits that look great in flower beds or containers. Some even have colorful foliage, too.

This is an easy plant to grow, needing very little water or fertilizer. However, just like edible peppers, it does need lots of hot weather before it'll bloom and set fruit. That means you shouldn't set your pepper plants outdoors in the spring until the weather has turned quite warm — about the same time you would plant tomatoes.

Like all peppers, be careful if you bite into one of these colorful fruits — most are extremely hot!



try THESE!

Deep purple leaves: 'Black Pearl' (in photo)
Variiegated foliage: 'Jigsaw'
Yellow to red fruit: 'Holiday Flame'