

garden gate's top picks

new plants 2010

New plants are a favorite topic here at *Garden Gate*, as well as with our readers. And for good reason! Every year, breeders come up with new and exciting flower or foliage colors and smaller or taller versions of favorite plants. Some varieties are even more cold-hardy or heat-tolerant. This year is no exception. We found some new twists on old favorites like the petunia and zinnia at right. Or check out some of the improved cultivars, like the river birch with whiter bark than other varieties or the hydrangea with huge pink and white blooms on page 22. There are plenty of other tough new varieties you may want to try, too. Keep reading to learn more about why we like them.

Don't get discouraged if you can't find your favorites right away, though. New plants, especially the woody plants on this list, will be hard to find (and more expensive) for a year or two. It takes time for nurseries to grow enough stock for everyone who wants one.

Can't get enough new plants? No problem. Visit our Web extra to check out 10 more of this year's exciting new introductions. Now let's take a look at some new plants! □

— Sherri Ribbey



Check out our **slide show** of 10 more exciting new plants!



Big Kiss White Flame gazania

Gazania splendens

Bring on the heat!

Gazanias don't mind.

The new Big Kiss™ series of gazanias is the perfect solution to those hot, dry areas where other annuals shrivel up and die. Sturdy stems support 4½-inch-wide flowers that are larger than other varieties. Like most gazanias, the flowers of this new variety close at night and on cloudy days. Big Kiss comes in two colors: White Flame, above, and Yellow Flame.

Group a few Big Kiss gazanias along the edge of a hot, sunny sidewalk or grow some in a container on your deck.



- Type** Tender perennial
- Size** 8 to 10 in. tall and wide
- Bloom** Spring to fall
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness** Cold: USDA zones 10 to 11
Heat: AHS zones 12 to 1
- Introducer** Goldsmith Seeds
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?** Bigger flowers!



Pretty Much Picasso petunia

Petunia hybrid

Practically everyone has grown petunias — but not like this one! Pretty Much Picasso™ has a unique color combo. These chartreuse and purple flowers were a big favorite among our garden visitors. Though this trailing petunia gets a bit leggy by midsummer, we found that cutting it back made it more compact and full of flowers. It's easy to do: Just trim the stems back by as much as half when they get too long. Then feed the plant with an all-purpose, water-soluble fertilizer. You'll see blooms again in a week or so.



- Type** Annual
- Size** 8 to 12 in. tall, 24 to 36 in. wide
- Bloom** Spring to fall
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: Annual
Heat: AHS zones 12 to 1
- Introducer**
Proven Winners®
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?**
The wildest color combination to come along in years



Zahara Starlight Rose zinnia

Zinnia marylandica

Zahara® zinnias are a relatively new series of tough little plants that can tolerate hot, dry conditions and resist powdery mildew. They come in a nice range of colors, too. There's white, red, yellow, coral and more. The newest addition to this group is a real standout, though — pink-striped Zahara Starlight Rose. You'll get the most intense pink stripe with full sun, cool nights and a liquid fertilizer every seven days. Even though our plants were grouped tightly together with salvia and petunias in containers, they didn't show any signs of powdery mildew.



- Type** Annual
- Size** 12 to 18 in. tall and wide
- Bloom** Spring to fall
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: Annual
Heat: AHS zones 12 to 1
- Introducer**
Simply Beautiful®
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?**
Pretty color pattern



Jumping Jack viola
Viola 'Balvijac'

Cool spring weather is prime garden time for violas. But once it starts getting hot, these pretty little plants tend to give up. Not Jumping Jack — this new viola has staying power. While it peaks in spring, this viola keeps producing colorful blooms even through the heat of summer. Water Jumping Jack regularly the first year you grow it. But the following year it will get along with occasional watering like other perennials. Just give it a drink during dry spells. If you do notice that the plants have stalled a little in the heat, cut them back by about half to encourage more blooms. You don't have to worry about reseeding, either. Jumping Jack stays in a nice tidy clump.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 6 to 8 in. tall, 6 to 10 in. wide
- Bloom** Spring to fall
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun to part shade
- Hardiness** Cold: USDA zones 5 to 10
Heat: AHS zones 10 to 1
- Introducer** Ball Horticultural Co.
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?** A heat-tolerant viola!

Younique Lilac astilbe
Astilbe 'Versililac'

It's no wonder so many people like astilbe. It's one of the few showy flowers that does well in shade. Younique Lilac™ is no exception. You can jazz up your shade garden with its big feathery lilac pink flowers. Younique Lilac has more flower scapes, or stems, per plant than other varieties so you'll have plenty of those colorful flowers to enjoy. And if this color doesn't strike your fancy, try one of the others in the series: deep pink, pale pink or white. In addition to the pretty flowers, the foliage stays in a tidy mound.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 16 to 20 in. tall and wide
- Bloom** Early to midsummer
- Soil** Moist, well-drained
- Light** Full sun to full shade
- Hardiness** Cold: USDA zones 4 to 9
Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer** Walters Gardens
- Source** Local garden centers or www.PerennialResource.com to find a retailer near you
- What's new?** Even showier than most astilbes

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Ball Horticultural Company (viola); courtesy of Walters Gardens, Inc. (astilbe)



'Tequila Sunrise' geum Geum hybrid

This new geum picks up the slack when tulips and daffodils start to fade in late spring. Single to semi-double yellow flowers brushed with red top off 18- to 24-inch dark red stems. Deadhead spent blooms to encourage side branches to develop more quickly and you'll have flowers for up to four weeks. 'Tequila Sunrise' is a sterile hybrid so it won't reseed like some geums do. The flowers are small, 1 to 1½ inches in diameter, so group three or more plants together for the best show.

Flowers aren't the only good thing about this geum. The attractive mound of round, puckered leaves looks good even when it isn't flowering.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 8 to 10 in. tall (foliage), 10 to 12 in. wide
- Bloom** Spring
- Soil** Moist, well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 5 to 10
Heat: AHS zones 10 to 1
- Introducer**
Intrinsic Perennial Gardens
- Source** Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm and Nursery
www.songsparrow.com
800-553-3715

What's new?
Good-looking flowers that last for 4 weeks



'Purple Rooster' bee balm Monarda didyma

Bee balm is a great native plant for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds, and it's deer-resistant, too. The big problem is that a lot of varieties have a real problem with powdery mildew. This dusty white fungus usually shows up around midsummer and makes plants look ratty. 'Purple Rooster' is so resistant you can plant this taller bee balm in the middle of the border without any worry. The foliage stays clean and green all season long. Topped off with large, deep-purple flowers, 'Purple Rooster' will make a big impact in your garden.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 36 in. tall, 26 in. wide
- Bloom** Summer
- Soil** Moist, well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 4 to 9
Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer**
Walters Gardens
- Source** Local garden centers or www.PerennialResource.com to find a retailer near you

What's new?
Great mildew resistance and deep purple flowers

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Intrinsic Perennial Gardens (geum); courtesy of Walters Gardens, Inc. (bee balm)



**'Crystal Pink'
tall sedum**

Sedum spectabile

Sedums are some of the most low-maintenance plants you can grow, so make sure you try this new variety. A lot of other tall sedums tend to sprawl outward as summer progresses, but 'Crystal Pink' stays standing tall. There's no need for pinching or staking. Those sturdy stems are topped off with clear pink flowers that are magnets for butterflies and other insect pollinators. Leave the flowers standing for added winter interest.

Grow 'Crystal Pink' along with other butterfly-attracting beauties, such as coreopsis, yarrow and purple coneflower.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 16 in. tall and wide
- Bloom** Summer to fall
- Soil** Poor, well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 4 to 9
Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer**
Terra Nova Nurseries
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?**
Clear pink flowers on stems that don't flop

**'Susquehanna'
foamflower**

Tiarella cordifolia

Got shade? No problem for this new foamflower. It's the smallest of several new varieties of native foamflower. This species spreads by runners instead of forming clumps, as other types do. Whether your garden's soil is dry or moist, 'Susquehanna' can spread up to 24 inches in a single season, making it an excellent ground cover. Those dainty white flowers emerge in late spring on 6- to 8-inch stems and float above the foliage. The photo above shows its spring foliage look, which is a little lighter. As the summer progresses, the markings get larger and darker.



- Type** Perennial
- Size** 2 to 4 in. tall (foliage), 24 to 36 in. wide
- Bloom** Late spring to summer
- Soil** Average to moist, well-drained
- Light** Full to part shade
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 4 to 9
Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer**
Dunvegan Nursery
- Source** Lazy S's Farm and Nursery
www.lazyssfarm.com
- What's new?**
Fast-growing flowering ground cover for shade

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Terra Nova Nurseries, Inc. (tall sedum); courtesy of Sinclair A. Adam, Jr. (foamflower)



Bijou clematis
Clematis 'EVIPO030'

If you think every clematis needs a trellis to climb, think again. This new variety only grows a foot or two tall. You can grow it up a small obelisk if you'd like, but it also makes a nice ground cover. It forms a mound, loaded with big 3- to 4-inch purple flowers. Bijou also looks good in a hanging basket — you'll have friends asking what that new trailing flower is. But don't toss it out with the annuals — this clematis is plenty cold-hardy. Just plant it in the ground before a hard frost. Bijou is part of pruning group B, which means you remove only dead or damaged stems in early spring.



- Type** Perennial vine
- Size** 12 to 24 in. tall, 12 in. wide
- Bloom** Midspring to fall
- Soil** Moist, well-drained
- Light** Full sun to part shade
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 4 to 9
Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer**
Raymond Evison Clematis
- Source** Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm and Nursery
www.songsparrow.com
800-553-3715
- What's new?**
A tiny vine covered in big flowers

'Lucky Star' gladiolus
Gladiolus hybrid

There has always been one thing lacking that would make glads the perfect cut flower — fragrance. 'Lucky Star', a cross between good old-fashioned floral types and Abyssinian glads (*Gladiolus callianthus*), solves that dilemma. The name may sound familiar, because it was originally introduced in 1966 but was lost to the retail market. Now it's been rediscovered and is available for sale again. The light, sweet fragrance of 'Lucky Star' is most noticeable on hot, humid evenings. You might even see night-pollinating moths hovering nearby ready for a sip of nectar.



- Type** Bulb
- Size** 48 in. tall, 3 to 6 in. wide
- Bloom** Late summer
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness**
Cold: USDA zones 8 to 10
Heat: AHS zones 12 to 1
- Introducer**
Old House Gardens
- Source** Old House Gardens
www.oldhousegardens.com
734-995-1486
- What's new?**
Fragrance from a gladiolus!

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Raymond J. Evison (clematis); courtesy of Old House Gardens (gladiolus)



City Slicker river birch

Betula nigra 'Whit XXV'

River birches are sought after for their beautiful peeling bark, and City Slicker® won't disappoint. The bark is some of the lightest of any variety. And you don't have to wait long to see it, either: The bark starts peeling on branches as small as 1 inch in diameter. Our tree was small when we got it but it's grown steadily through four years of hot, humid summers and cold, snowy winters. Glossy dark green leaves are a welcome change from the usual pale green seen on other varieties. In fall they turn yellow-gold. This tree will be available in limited numbers in 2010, with an increasing supply in following years.



- Type** Tree
- Size** 35 ft. tall, 35 ft. wide (single stem — wider for multistem)
- Bloom** NA
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun
- Hardiness** Cold: USDA zones 5 to 9 Heat: AHS zones 9 to 1
- Introducer** Lacebark Inc.
- Source** Sooner Plant Farm www.soonerplantfarm.com 918-453-0771
- What's new?** Lighter bark and glossy dark green leaves



Vanilla Strawberry hydrangea

Hydrangea paniculata 'Renhy'

This new hydrangea will knock your socks off! Vanilla Strawberry™ sports big 12-inch flowers that start out creamy vanilla white and gradually change to soft pink, then deep strawberry pink. Its unique color combination isn't just a flash in the pan, either. These beautiful flowers remain looking good for up to four weeks, and strong red stems keep them upright where you can see them. New blooms provide a multicolored show from summer to fall. Pruning is easy; in late winter to early spring, cut off any damaged stems.



- Type** Shrub
- Size** 6 to 7 ft. tall, 4 to 5 ft. wide
- Bloom** Summer to fall
- Soil** Well-drained
- Light** Full sun to part shade
- Hardiness** Cold: USDA zones 4 to 8 Heat: AHS zones 8 to 1
- Introducer** Bailey Nurseries
- Source** Local garden centers
- What's new?** Great big flowers that change color

PHOTO: Courtesy of Bailey Nurseries, Inc. (hydrangea)

6 bonus new plants



Lucky™ Pure Gold lantana *Lantana camara*

TYPE Tender perennial

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Solid yellow flowers; good branching produces a compact habit; 12 to 16 in. tall, 12 to 14 in. wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; well-drained soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 9 to 11, heat-tolerant in AHS zones 12 to 1

INTRODUCER Ball Horticultural

SOURCE Local garden centers



Illusion™ Emerald Lace sweet potato vine *Ipomoea batatas*

TYPE Tender perennial

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE More compact than other varieties; 8 to 10 in. tall, 24 to 36 in. wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; well-drained soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 8 to 11; heat-tolerant in AHS zones 12 to 1

INTRODUCER Proven Winners®

SOURCE Garden Crossings
www.gardencrossings.com, 616-875-6355



'Eternal' snapdragon *Antirrhinum* hybrid

TYPE Tender perennial

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Variegated leaves; pink flowers in spring with a repeat in fall; 12 in. tall, 10 in. wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; moist, well-drained soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 7 to 9, heat-tolerant in AHS zones 12 to 1

INTRODUCER Skagit Nursery

SOURCE Local garden centers



'Route 66' coreopsis *Coreopsis verticillata*

TYPE Perennial

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Red and yellow flowers summer to fall; more red in fall (in photo); 24 to 28 in. tall, 20 to 24 in. wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; well-drained soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 5 to 9, heat-tolerant in AHS zones 9 to 1

INTRODUCER ItSaul Plants

SOURCE Great Garden Plants
www.greatgardenplants.com, 877-447-4769



'Pink Lemonade' blueberry *Vaccinium* hybrid

TYPE Shrub

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Pink berries that are good to eat; need two plants for pollination; red fall foliage; 5 ft. tall and wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; moist, well-drained acid soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 4 to 7, heat-tolerant in AHS zones 7 to 1

INTRODUCER Briggs Nursery

SOURCE Local garden centers; very limited release this year so it may be hard to find



Pumpkin Patch™ rose *Rosa 'Wekmongros'*

TYPE Shrub; floribunda type

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE Caramel-orange flowers spring to fall; fragrant; 5 ft. tall, 2 to 3 ft. wide

HOW TO GROW IT Full sun; moist, well-drained soil; cold-hardy in USDA zones 5 to 8, heat-tolerant in AHS zones 8 to 1

INTRODUCER Weeks Roses

SOURCE Regan Nursery
www.regannursery.com, 800-249-4680

PHOTOS: Courtesy of ItSaul Plants (coreopsis); courtesy of Briggs Nursery (blueberry); courtesy of Weeks Roses (rose)