



Julia Hofley

# New Annuals FOR 2011

## Petunia 'Black Velvet'

They say, "Everything goes with black" and when you first see **'Black Velvet'** in the garden centers, you will do a double take to make sure you are seeing what you think you are seeing. This breakthrough-colored petunia is the world's first black petunia. It has an upright and mounded habit, is tightly branched, and will add a new depth to a combination planter, complementing many colors that you may choose to add. 10 to 12 inches tall and wide. Full sun.



Ball Horticultural



Proven Winners

'Superbells Blackberry Punch'

## Calibrachoa

### 'Superbells Coralberry Punch' 'Superbells Blackberry Punch'

Calibrachoa's thrive in full sun and do not require deadheading—their badge of honor in the flower world. It's easier to grow them in a container because you need to maintain good drainage and provide them with monthly fertilizer. If they get leggy later in the summer, trim them back. They will reward you bountifully well into the fall.

**'Superbells Coralberry Punch'** can complement an array of companion plants with its coral edges and darker eye. It will get 8 inches tall and up to 30 inches wide. With trailing branches that cascade over the rim of a container, this non-stop flowering spiller is sure to slow down a passing hummingbird or butterfly for a lunch break.

**'Superbells Blackberry Punch'** is so unusual, with a dark pink edge and contrasting eye that is intensely deep purple. Prepare yourself for a drama queen on your patio or at your entrance. This plant simply stopped me in my tracks when I first saw it. You will find the inner artiste in yourself when you arrange a container with it—have fun with this one!



Proven Winners

'Superbells Coralberry Punch'



Walters Gardens, Inc.

## Colocasia 'Thailand Giant'

From seed collected in Thailand comes this larger-than-life exotic for the not-so-timid gardener. This huge strain of the giant elephant ear will surpass all expectations a gardener could have of creating their own little oasis in paradise. Although each seedling will differ slightly, each leaf grows approximately 5 feet long by 4 feet wide, creating a massive plant with attractive glaucous green foliage. Although grown mostly for the foliage, 'Thailand Giant' may also be adorned with clusters of large, scented lily-like flowers. Part shade to part sun. Up to 9 feet tall and wide.



Ball Horticultural

### Coleus 'Redhead'

Coleus are truly the patchwork quilt of annuals, with an array of colors available to the discriminating gardener. So the tough part is making a choice when you are looking at a greenhouse bench full of well-grown coleus.

'Redhead' is aptly named. We grew it in morning sun last year in a mixed container of coleus; it literally glowed at certain times of the day. It has a uniform, well-branched habit that flowers late, so all that glorious color is not interrupted by the need to deadhead like so many other coleus all summer long. As a matter of fact, I never needed to deadhead this plant all the way through the middle of October. One of the university trials grew it in full sun to rave reviews and reported that it made a stunning hedge. What a great idea! If you are looking for a sultry, low-maintenance plant with non-stop color and performance, pick the 'Redhead.' Full sun, part sun, or shade. 18 to 24 inches high and 16 to 28 inches wide.



Ball Horticultural

### Petunia 'Phantom'

Another striking new addition to the chichi petunia runway this year. This stunning bicolor petunia has distinct yellow stars on a black canvas backdrop that is blushed around the edges with dark purple pink. This new color combination is sleek and sophisticated while at the same time giving the gardener a fresh crayon color to play with if they choose to integrate it into a container with other plants. 'Phantom' has an upright, mounding habit that requires no pinching. Good weather resistance means it doesn't look like it's been dragged behind a truck after it rains. It looks best in full sun and grows 8 to 12 inches tall and wide.

### Pennisetum 'Princess Caroline'

**Pennisetum 'Princess Caroline'** is a truly beefy, dark purple ornamental grass from the University of Georgia's Athens Select program. We planted a couple of these out in a sunny, large dahlia bed last summer, and from small plugs they grew to 3- by 3-foot stunning accents amongst the floriferous dahlias. They never flowered, which was fine—that kept the focus on the clean, dark purple blades that balanced the busyness of the multi-colored dahlias. The growing season in Michigan is not long enough for this plant to flower, but it may flower in warmer climates.

If you are looking for a dramatically dark backdrop plant in a very large container or in a bed, this plant won't disappoint. Full sun.



Athens Select

*continued on next page*

continued from previous page



Ball Horticultural

### Canna 'Tropical Bronze Scarlet'

The first dwarf, bronze-leaved canna grown from seed, **'Tropical Bronze Scarlet'** will provide the gardener with a dramatically new "thriller" for their containers or garden beds. Nothing beats a healthy canna leaf as a tropical backdrop to your plantings, but add onto that the rich scarlet flowers held above the bronze-burgundy foliage and you have south-of-the-border sizzle. Full sun. 18 to 30 inches tall and 16 to 18 inches wide.



Proven Winners

### Phlox 'Intensia Blueberry'

Another award-winning annual, phlox **'Intensia Blueberry'** not only makes a good "filler" for the middle of the container, it will inspire butterflies to grace you with their presence. It opens a darker purple and fades to different shades of lighter purple and "blue," creating a lovely hue of multi-shades all at once. The breeding of this plant is from south Texas, making it extremely heat tolerant. That translates to staying power all summer long in Michigan. 10 to 12 inches tall and 8 to 12 inches wide. Full sun.



Ball Horticultural

### Begonia 'Gryphon'

The gryphon is a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle, and the body of a lion, pronounced "griffin." The begonia **'Gryphon'** is supposed to epitomize the same majestic beauty with the strength and durability of said gryphon. This hybrid begonia is more tolerant of stressful conditions than Rex begonias so it has more staying power and will live happily on your shady porch or indoors as a houseplant. The regal foliage is silver with green veins and are palmate, creating an elegant tropical look that upstages the copper-colored flower spikes. Shade or morning sun, 14 to 16 inches tall and 16 to 18 inches wide.