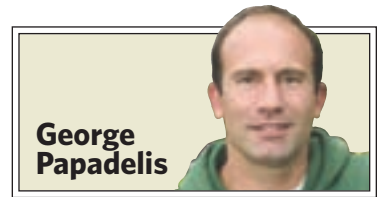


New Annuals FOR 2010



Gomphrena 'Fireworks'

Gomphrena, or globe amaranth, is one of my favorite underused annuals. Nearly round, vibrant flowers are produced on wiry stems from summer thru fall. They thrive in sunny, hot locations and the everlasting flowers can be cut, dried, and used in arrangements that last for years. Readily available varieties are compact, growing about a foot tall. In contrast, 'Fireworks' grows to 36 inches tall. Its rosy flowers are dotted with glowing yellow stamens that give the overall effect of a miniature fireworks display. The tall, thin stems help the flowers move gracefully with the slightest breeze. I received some sample seeds last spring and was pleased to see how many gardeners appreciated its beauty and usefulness.

Tall gomphrena are rarely offered in garden centers for three reasons: 1) growers find it difficult to ship tall, wiry plants, 2) plants will not flower (and therefore not sell) easily until hot summer temperatures arrive, and 3) demand for this plant is unusually low. Like other tall gomphrena, 'Fireworks' can be used as a background plant or focal point



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with other annuals. But I believe it's even more valuable in the perennial garden. Like other seed-grown plants, it is relatively inexpensive. And although it looks like a perennial, it flowers like an annual: it blooms from summer through fall when your perennial bed might need an extra dose of color.



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Sweet potato vine 'Illusion Emerald Lace' 'Illusion Midnight Lace' 'Bright Ideas Rusty Red'

Sweet potato vines have been extremely popular since their introduction just a few years ago. There are several colors from which to choose and two or three leaf shapes. But now, breeders have developed a series with a more compact growth habit *and* finely cut, lacy leaves. The 'Illusion' series comes in a lime green color called 'Illusion Emerald Lace,' and a nearly black variety called 'Illusion Midnight Lace.' Their compact growth habit makes them less of a threat when combined with slower-growing plants. The unique lacy texture adds a new dimension to the palette of sweet potato vines available today.

A different breeder has developed another series with a new color—'Bright Ideas Rusty Red' has unique butterscotch-colored leaves with maroon leaf undersides and veining. This one has the more traditional lobed leaves and grows quite compact at just 6 inches tall and about 12 inches wide. All sweet potato vines thrive in full sun but will tolerate almost full shade as well.



Oro Farms

'Bright Ideas Rusty Red'



Proven Winners

'Illusion Midnight Lace'

'Illusion Emerald Lace' / Proven Winners



Sunpatiens 'Variegated Spreading White'

Seed



Sakata Seed

Sunpatiens 'Compact Coral'

Impatiens Sunpatiens series Impatiens Fanfare series

The Sunpatiens series was originally released to the trial garden circuit for evaluation in 2007. I first observed it that July in a Chicago area display garden. It was thriving effortlessly in full sun where its large vibrant flowers and perfect foliage made a lasting impression. For 2010, it will be available to independent garden centers and growers everywhere. This type of New Guinea impatiens will thrive in full sun and heat when planted in good soil with adequate moisture. There are



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Fanfare 'Bright Coral'

15 varieties in the Sunpatiens series. Seven are considered compact, though they will still get quite large. Six are classified as vigorous, and two are variegated and spreading. The vigorous varieties can grow as tall as 3 feet when watered and fed liberally and the compact varieties will reach a height of 2 to 2-1/2 feet tall.

There is a similar, but less diverse series

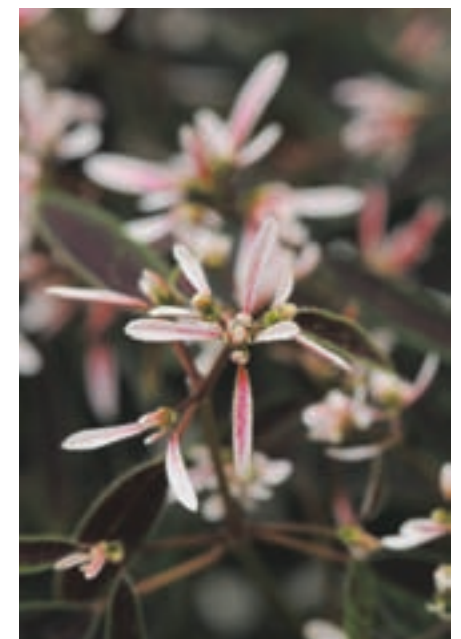
called 'Fanfare.' It offers 6 colors with similar growth habits. I have grown them for two years and used them in full sun with perfect results. Both series produce flowers around 2 inches wide. The one drawback to these is that they are not grown from seed. This means they are usually not available in more economically-priced flats as are the seed-grown impatiens.



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Euphorbia 'Breathless Blush'

This type of euphorbia has quickly become one of the most popular annuals available. Varieties like 'Diamond Frost' and 'Silver Fog' produce non-stop clouds of low-maintenance, dainty white flowers that look good with just about any other plant. For 2010, we have a new bronze-leaved version called 'Breathless Blush,' whose narrow, white petals are suffused with a streak of rose. From a distance, the streak is almost invisible, but up close, it can be used to tie in other plants with rose-colored foliage or flowers. The bronze-centered leaves are also indiscernible from a distance but still provide a variation worth trying in beds or containers. Like the other euphorbia, this one thrives in full or partial sun.



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Petunia 'Sophistica Lime Bicolor'

The 'Sophistica' series has large flowers on more upright plants whose spent blooms may require deadheading. These plants produce interesting but quite inconsistent rose and lime bicolored flowers. Some flowers are mostly lime while others are primarily rose. Some should have the characteristic lime and rose star pattern that makes this petunia stunning. The developers have identified cultural conditions that will affect the consistency of the star pattern. They include fertility, temperature, and the plant growth regulators that are often used by petunia growers. When everything is just right, this plant is a knockout.

George Papadelis is the owner of Telly's Greenhouse in Troy, MI.



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Petunia 'Debonair Dusty Rose'

The 'Debonair' series offers two very new flowers to the petunia palette. 'Debonair Dusty Rose' has large flowers whose rosy outer ring fades gently to a creamy yellow. 'Debonair Lime' has large, pale, lime-green flowers—the first petunia to produce yellow flowers with consistent color throughout the flower. Both of these are produced from seed, which makes it more likely that you will find them in more economical flats as opposed to pots. These are not low and spreading like 'Wave' or "Wave-like" petunias. Instead, like your grandmother's petunias, they grow more upright and produce flowers that may require deadheading. The unique flower colors still makes them worthy additions to beds and containers. They grow best in full or partial sun.



Proven Winners

Lobularia 'Snow Princess'

This new variety may turn out to be the best new annual for 2010. *Lobularia* is the botanical name for good, old-fashioned alyssum. But this one is different. This alyssum is not grown from seed like the alyssum of yesterday. 'Snow Princess' is grown vegetatively, that is, from cuttings. Like many other plants grown from cuttings, this plant is supposedly sterile and therefore puts no energy into seed production, just flower production. It is a very strong grower and flowers profusely through the heat of the summer. In the 2009 plant trials, this was one of the best performers. It is strong enough to flourish in hanging baskets and can also be used in combination planters as a cascading component. For those of you that like white bacopa, 'Snow Princess' provides a similar color and growth habit with superior summer performance. So far, I am very impressed by this plant.



Proven Winners

Petunia 'Pretty Much Picasso'

For lack of better words, 'Pretty Much Picasso' is a freak of nature. For plant lovers, you will probably never forget the first time you see this one. 'Pretty Much Picasso' is a petunia that produces rosy purple flowers consistently edged in green. This is a self-cleaning, strong growing, spreading plant that would be beautiful in hanging baskets or container gardens grown alone or in combinations. A single plant can grow 18 to 24 inches wide and about 12 to 15 inches tall. I think everyone needs at least one of these in the garden as the flowers are both beautiful and unusually interesting. And for those of you who have landscapes featured on a garden walk this year, 'Pretty Much Picasso' is a must.

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