

Julia
Hofley



new Annuals for 2012



Burpee Home Gardens

Coleus 'Wasabi'

Feathery-edged foliage gives this new coleus an unusual texture. The chartreuse leaves deliver a thriller extraordinaire for your container. It has a graceful vase-shape yet grows vigorously with strong stems. The color holds

true without fading or spotting and also serves as a backdrop canvas to many other colors, both in a container or a flower bed. This coleus was consistently rated as one of the highest scoring coleus in U.S. trial gardens. You don't

often find a plant that can create as much drama on the shady patio.

Height: 18-26 inches. Spread: 16-28 inches. Part sun to shade.



Proven Winners

Petunia 'Supertunia White Russian'

Last summer, I found myself hovering around this plant as often as I could at America's largest annual plant show in Columbus, Ohio. I was pulled in by the dramatic richness of this black and white petunia. It was full and lush, not leggy—the claim to fame of the Supertunias, which are known for their compact habit.

Butterflies and hummingbirds love it since it blooms all summer until a hard frost. It is claimed to not need deadheading, which is a statement for any petunia. The dark chocolate eye paired against the antique, creamy white truly conjured the image of looking into a White Russian cocktail.

Height: 6-10 inches. Spread: 24-36 inches. Full sun.

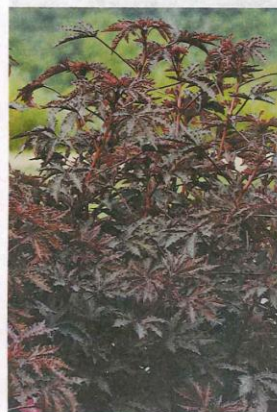
Osteospermum 'Fire Burst'

One of the most memorable plants I saw last summer at the trade shows was the well-branched and compact Cape daisy (*Osteospermum*) 'Fire Burst.' When you see photos of it, you think it must have been color enhanced because it couldn't actually be that color! But I saw it myself and it's a real head-turner. The flower opens to a coppery yellow and then matures to a coppery red, all centered by a purple eye. With this unique range of hues happening all at once, it really sizzles.

Height and spread: 12-18 inches. Full sun.



Sakata Seed America



Ball Horticultural Co.

Hibiscus 'Mahogany Splendor'

I always get excited about a new plant that could be a stately specimen or a foliar screen and that is what hibiscus 'Mahogany Splendor' is all about. Every part of this plant is dark burgundy. The serrated, glossy leaves have been compared to a Japanese maple. Oddly, it is both drought- and heat-tolerant, yet flourishes waterside or even directly in a pond. Perfect for gardeners who need a dramatically dark thriller for a large container, or an effective foliar hedge for privacy. It tolerates pruning well so you can keep it to the height you need. Many hibiscus are grown for their flowers, but with this one, it's all about the amazing foliage.

Height: 3-5 feet. Spread: 24-30 inches. Full sun. Note: In the garden center's greenhouse you may find the leaves to be more green in color. Once moved to full sun outside, it will achieve its deep mahogany color.

NEW ANNUALS continued on page 36

newAnnuals for 2012
continued from page 34

Osteospermum 3D Series

This breakthrough osteospermum won two Medal of Excellence awards and was called the most significant new introduction of the Spring Trials. What really had my attention all summer was the constant oohs and aahs that it garnered from our visiting garden guests just before they asked, "What's that?" It really is a uniquely beautiful flower. When you think of the science behind making an anemone-type flower with stiff center rays that force the outer petals to stay open 24 hours a day because they cannot close due to the center, you too will be in awe. Traditionally, osteospermums tend to close up during cloudy mornings and into the early evening, so you don't always get to enjoy the flower show. This 3D Series is groundbreaking and will change the way osteospermums are hybridized. Available in purple, pink, and silver.

Height: 10-14 inches. Spread: 18-24 inches. Full sun.



'3D Pink'



'3D Silver'

Ball Horticultural Co. (2)



Cuphea 'Cuphoric Pink'

Delicate-looking, fan-shaped pink and deep lavender blossoms cover the semi-arching stems and tiny leaves on this heat-tolerant blooming machine. As a pleasantly mounded "filler," it will grace any combination planter with a flower-filled fullness while at the same time having diminutive detail.

Height and spread: 12-15 inches. Full Sun.



Syngenta Flowers (2)



Proven Winners

Calibrachoa 'Superbells Cherry Star'

In the urns by our front door, I chose calibrachoa 'Superbells Cherry Star' as the "spiller" for my combination planting and was not disappointed.

The branches were strong through all the windstorms we had—the flowers never looked wind-whipped. The blossom's unique yellow star not only stood out on its bright cherry backdrop, but it consistently held its variegation throughout the entire season.

It was such a durable plant, that when I went to change out the pots to fall flowers, I picked colors that would coordinate with 'Superbells Cherry Star' because this trailer had no idea it was autumn and that it should be winding down. It maintained an attractive appearance into November.

Height: 6-10 inches. Spread: up to 48 inches. Full to part sun.

NEW ANNUALS continued on page 38

newAnnuals for 2012

continued from page 36



Burpee Home Gardens

Petunia 'Suncatcher Pink Lemonade'

This petunia changes the game for yellow petunias by having a yellow center with gradual soft pink edges. The lush habit remains compact—that translates to not having to pinch stringy stems back in late summer in order to keep its good looks. The flowers cover the stem completely and hold their unique color combo of yellow and blush pink under all conditions. Butterflies and hummingbirds will enjoy this choice.

Height and spread: 8-12 inches. Full sun.



Julia Hofley

Dahlia 'Dahlinova' Hypnotica Cherish Pink'

This dahlia was laden with big, bi-colored pink and white flowers, reminding me of the upholstery on a well-worn chintz chair that you dive into at your grandma's house. It isn't burdened by the large, blousy blooms because it is well-branched with strong stems and is able to support itself. This well-shaped plant consistently blooms with abundant flowers all summer and into fall. It scored well in trial gardens with its great garden performance. Like most dahlias, the more you cut the flowers for arrangements indoors, the more flowers it will produce. A true win-win for the gardener!

Height: 20 inches. Spread: 16 inches. Full to part sun.



Proven Winners

Verbena 'Lanai Twister Pink'

This mounding/trailing verbena defines "pretty in pink" perfectly. Its unique bicolor flowers display dark pink to white in the same cluster—it could be a model for a fine prom dress for a Southern belle! At the same time, Lanai verbenas are known to be tough and easy to grow. Deadheading improves repeat flowering.

Height: 6-10 inches. Spread: 20-24 inches. Full sun.



Julia Hofley (2)

Mandevilla 'Strawberry Lemonade'

Yet another breakthrough plant this year that defies what we know about mandevillas. This one stopped me in my tracks, as I am a big fan of variegated foliage. The variegation took on different colors itself: mint green, cream, and white all flushed with pink when the foliage emerges. The profusion of funnel-shaped flowers stood out with deep pink and an amazing egg yolk-colored throat. Being a vine, this mandevilla needs support with a trellis or obelisk. However, Monrovia states that it could be clipped into a mounding plant shape or even planted in a hanging basket and the vines allowed to trail down. This one is going to create a rush hour for hummingbirds.

Height: 6-8 feet long. Full to part sun.

Julia Hofley is an avid plant collector, freelance garden writer, lecturer, and independent sales rep (E-mail: julia@julasbiglife.com).