



Hort Notes

An educational newsletter with research-based information for businesses and individuals involved in selling, planning, designing, servicing, and enjoying landscapes and gardens.

Volume 12, Number 15
September 17, 2001

Current Monitoring Checklist: http://www.umassgreeninfo.org/fact_sheets/ipmtools/2400_2999_GDD.html

PLANT PHENOLOGY: OVER 2800 GROWING DEGREE DAYS

UMass Extension **Conferences** Coming Soon!

➤ **Protecting the School Environment: Adopting IPM and Complying with the Children and Families Protection Act**

October 22
Mullins Center - UMass, Amherst

This one day educational conference is for those individuals responsible for developing and implementing an integrated pest management (IPM) plan for school grounds and facilities. This includes grounds managers, school and community officials and employees, and others interested in complying with the Children and Families Protection Act.

➤ **Challenges Facing the Green Industry - 2001 Business Short Course**

November 8
Sea Crest Resort - N. Falmouth, MA

Topics will address these Green Industry challenges: Training Spanish-speaking Workers, Exploring European and E-Commerce Markets, Plant Materials, Shade Tree Insect Pests, Purchasing Practices, Indigenous Plants, and Controlling Invasives.

For more information, call (413) 545-0895 or go to Conferences and Workshops (<http://www.umassgreeninfo.org/programs/conferences.html>).

Perennial Plant Association Symposium Plant Forum - New and Underused Perennials

The 19th annual symposium of the Perennial Plant Association (PPA) was held July 29th - Aug. 4th, in Crystal City, Virginia. Over 900 perennial plant industry professionals attended this year's meeting which featured lectures, propagation, retail and design seminars as well as nursery, design and garden center tours. One of the highlights, and most anticipated of the symposium sessions, is the New Plant Forum. At the New Plant Forum session, PPA members are invited to introduce and share their views on new and underused perennial plants.

The following is a partial list of the plants highlighted at this year's PPA meeting. To receive a complete list of plants, please send a SASE to : New Plant Forum, UMass Extension, French Hall, 230 Stockbridge Rd., Amherst, MA 01003.

Deborah C. Swanson
UMass Extension Educator - Landscape, Nursery and Urban Forestry Program

Campanula 'Pink Chimes' PPAF

Height: 15 inches Spread: 15 inches Zones: 4-9

Lovely pink bells on a compact plant; prolific blooms without falling over. Wonderful for the front of the border and great in summer containers. Propagate by tissue culture and division. Quick grower with a compact habit. No known disease or pest problems.

Availability: Terra Nova Nurseries, 503-263-3150

Dianthus Star Series

'Arctic Star', 'Brilliant Star', 'Pixie Star', 'Spangled Star'

Height: 7 inches Spread: 7 inches Zones: 5-9

The Star series of *Dianthus* are described as Alpine *Dianthus* since their parentage and performance owes much to that species. However, they are more complex than *Dianthus alpinus* and should not be so described. The common characteristics of the series are: compact, mounding foliage that is fine and generally glaucous; flowers held 3 inches above foliage; day neutral, perpetual flowering, most heavily budded in spring; varying degrees of perfume, somewhat reminiscent of cloves. Individually 'Arctic Star' has the largest flowers in the series; fully double, white, can reach 2 inches in diameter. 'Pixie Star' and 'Spangled Star' have smaller, single flowers, diameter 1-1.5 inches. 'Brilliant Star' is semi-double. Due to their compact, mounding habit, these are excellent front of the border perennials. Propagate from cuttings.

Availability: Plant Haven Introduction (PPAF) - source list available, 866-887-5268

Geranium 'Rozanne'

Height: 12 inches Spread: 20 inches Zones: 5-7

Continuous bloom from May to October, heat tolerant, excellent foliage. Use as ground cover in landscape. Also does well in decorative pots.

Availability: Blooms of Bressingham and Yoder

Geranium x cantabrigiense 'Westray' PPAF

Height: 12 inches Spread: 12 inches Zones: 4-9

'Westray' exhibits all the long-blooming and carpeting characteristics of this original cross between *G. macorrhizum* and *G. dalmaticum*. The near-sterile flowers, which are mid-pink and good sized are long-lasting and profuse. They are held erect above the foliage, which achieves a moderately dense 12 inch diameter during the first growing season. A versatile landscape plant, worthy of inclusion in the border or in a rock garden or as a ground cover. Exhibits an early show of dense soft color which is soon visible at a distance, with-out being intrusive or dominating other plant material.

Availability: Plant Haven Introduction (PPAF) - source list available, 866-887-5268

Heliopsis helianthoides 'Prairie Sunset'

Height: 5 feet Spread: 2 feet Zones: 3-9

Purple stems, red eye around the disk, with yellow outer petals. Blooms for an extended period. Use in meadows, perennial gardens, and for naturalizing. Clump forming, fast grower, drought tolerant. Self sows but does not breed true. Full sun to light shade, dry to moist soil, high heat and humidity resistance. Wind resistant, does not flop, disease free.

Availability: Prairie Nursery, 608-296-3679

Hibiscus 'Fireball' PPAF

Height: 4 feet Spread: 3 feet Zones: 4-9

Very refined cut leaf with a purplish blush on the leaf. Red veining on stems enhance the overall appearance. Cherry red flowers. Use as a specimen, back or middle border, or mass planting. Propagate from cuttings or tissue culture.

Availability: Walters Gardens, Inc., 800-752-1879

Iris cristata 'Eco Bluebird'

Height: 6-8 inches Spread: 12-18 inches Zones: 5-8

A consistently strong performer with vigorous growth and many flowers, which are cornflower blue with orange throats. Use in woodlands or shade / part-shade areas. Propagate by division.

Availability: North Creek Nurseries, 610-255-0100 and Eco Gardens

Panicum virgatum 'Northwind'

Height: 6-7 feet Spread: 2-3 feet Zones: 2-9

A very upright blue selection with excellent yellow fall color. Does not flop. Plant in full sun, moist to dry soil; tolerates wet. Propagate by division.

Availability: North Creek Nurseries, 610-255-0100, and Midwest Groundcovers, 847-742-1790

Tiarella 'Seafoam' PPAF

Height: 11 inches Spread: 14 inches Zones: 4-9

Cut and marked leaves are secondary to the massive display of creamy flowers. Fast growing, clumping perennial. Full to partial shade. Wonderful early blooming addition to the front or mid shade garden. Tissue culture propagation. No known disease or pest problems.

Availability: Terra Nova Nurseries, 503-263-3150

Trillium chloropetalum 'Volcano'

Height: 1.5-2 feet Spread: 1-2 feet Zones: 6-8

First major offering of tissue culture trillium. Taller, larger, darker red flower. Propagate from division or tissue culture. Use in shade borders and woodland gardens.

Availability: Sunny Border Nursery, 860-828-0321

Questions from You

Q. Recently, I have included the herbicide Scythe into my weed management program. On a few occasions it did not effectively control the treated weeds. What could be the problem?

A. Scythe* is a contact type herbicide and kills only the part of the plant contacted by the spray solution; therefore good spray coverage is very important. Poor spray coverage, especially of the buds and growing points, can result in insufficient weed control. Additionally, since the compound is not

translocated (moved within the plant) control of perennial weeds should not be expected. Other weed management products that have the same requirements and would perform similarly include Reward* and products containing acetic acid and/or lemon juice.

Q. One of my clients has a very shady area in which I have tried unsuccessfully for three years to establish a lawn. I have tried both tall and fine fescue. I suspect the area may be too wet for a lawn to establish and thrive. Pruning and thinning the trees is not an option. Is there anything else I can do?

A. One option may be to install a drainage system. However, this solution may not be appropriate for all situations and may be cost prohibitive. Another option may be to seed the area to roughstalk bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*). Roughstalk bluegrass is a turf species that performs well in shady, wet sites. Breeding advances have resulted in several varieties that are denser and darker than the common types and can produce an attractive turf cover when grown in shady moist environments. The species readily goes dormant in areas of full sun and under low soil moisture conditions. Seeding in these area should be avoided unless adequate irrigation is available. The species can be mixed with other cool-season turfgrasses. However since it is stoloniferous, clonal patches may develop.

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Disclaimer: Where trade names (*) are used for identification, no product endorsement is implied nor is discrimination intended against similar materials. The authors have assembled the most reliable information available at time of printing. Due to constantly changing laws and regulations, UMass Extension can assume no liability for recommendations.

HORT NOTES is a horticultural newsletter published bi-weekly from March through October by UMass Extension. Subscriptions are \$15.00 (18 issues) per year. Make check or money order payable to *University of Massachusetts*, and mail it to *HORT NOTES*, French Hall, 230 Stockbridge Rd., UMass, Amherst, MA 01003-9316. When writing to request a change of address or to renew a subscription, please include the mailing label.

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