

All-America Selection Flowers for 2006

Zinnia 'Zowie! Yellow Flame'

Flower Award Winner



'Zowie! Yellow Flame' is the first semi-tall zinnia with a unique bicolor pattern. Each bloom flames with a scarlet-rose center and yellow petal edges. There is no other zinnia with this fiery design. In addition, this bicolor pattern is consistent from one plant to another. As expected, there are more desirable traits from 'Zowie! Yellow Flame.' Gardeners will be glad to learn 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' is easy to grow from seed or young bedding plants. 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' will prove its long flowering season with dazzling blooms from early summer to final killing frost. During this season-long color, 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' blooms can be cut for bouquets. The University of Maryland conducted cut flower trials and found 'Zowie! Yellow Flame' had a flower vase life of up to two weeks.

Salvia farinacea 'Evolution'

Flower Award Winner

'Evolution' is the first Salvia farinacea with lilac flower



spikes. From a distance, 'Evolution' flowers are several shades lighter than its closest comparison. This new color is desirable for garden use as it widens the color choices for blue flowering annuals. Belonging to the mint family, 'Evolution' is easy to grow. Gardeners can begin with seed or young bedding plants with the confidence 'Evolution' will provide continuous color from early summer to the first hard frost. 'Evolution' is low maintenance. No deadheading is needed for all season color. Relatively disease and pest free, 'Evolution' will perform best in a full-sun location. There are two more advantages 'Evolution' offers gardeners. The plants are quite adaptable and can be grown in patio containers or ceramic pots. The lilac flower spikes can be cut, dried and used as everlasting flowers for bouquets, decorations or craft projects. 'Evolution' deserves a sunny spot in your garden for its non-stop color.

Ornamental Pepper 'Black Pearl'

Flower Award Winner

'Black Pearl' is a handsome plant with black foliage. But the standout quality is 'Black



Pearl' looks better as the summer season progresses. The plants branch, producing more clusters of black, pearl-like, shiny peppers. The plant grows taller and wider developing into a black pyramid shape without pinching, pruning or grooming. 'Black Pearl' is exceptionally heat tolerant and requires minimal water and fertilizer. It is easy to grow from seed. There are no serious insect or disease problems. As the plant matures, the black peppers turn red, adding a new color to the plant. While edible, the peppers are very hot. Use with care! 'Black Pearl' is an effective background plant particularly with silver, white or pastel flowering annuals in the foreground. Never out of bloom, 'Black Pearl' has already been selected as a "most popular" new plant by consumers visiting a trial ground. Its foliage, color and low care will attract many gardeners. It performs exceptionally well in containers and deserves to be featured as the centerpiece.

Dianthus 'Supra Purple'

Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Supra Purple' fills garden space with color. This plant is strong and will flower under hot summer growing conditions. 'Supra Purple' plants remain under a foot in height, but they are vigorous and continue flowering through the growing season. 'Supra Purple' plants adapt to different growing conditions. They are recommended for containers and rock gardens.

They will add continuous bloom to a perennial border. 'Supra Purple' was tested as an annual and won the award based on the first year performance, but similar to other dianthus, it may overwinter and flower next spring. The 'Supra Purple' single flowers have highly fringed petal edges. The color is closer to a rosy-purple than the dark, almost black-purple, seen on some plants. 'Supra Purple' may become one of your favorite new plants.

Nicotiana 'Perfume Deep Purple'

Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Perfume Deep Purple' flowers are shaped like stars. The stars shine at night and this is when 'Perfume Deep Purple' begins its performance. The unique quality is the strong fragrance which scents the air in the evening. The fragrance is not wasted during the day when many people are working. The nightly release of the perfume will encourage gardeners to relax and linger in their gardens. The rich, lavish deep purple flower color is another unique trait, distinct from other nicotianas. 'Perfume Deep Purple' is easily grown from seed, young bedding plants or flowering pot plants. Nicotiana needs a sunny location and is perfectly adaptable to container culture.

Diascia 'Diamonte Coral Rose'

Cool Season Bedding Plant Award Winner

'Diamonte Coral Rose' is an improved variety in a class was relatively unknown five years ago. Diascia is native to South Africa. 'Diamonte Coral Rose' flowers are tubular with backward pointing spurs. The five-lobed blooms have broad lower lobes. 'Diamonte Coral



Rose' plants have a spreading habit and are perfectly designed for any container. Planting them close to the lip will encourage the plant to cascade over the side. Needing a full sun growing location, 'Diamonte Coral Rose' combines well with other cool tolerant annuals, such as snapdragons or dianthus. Exceptional garden performance can be expected from 'Diamonte Coral Rose.'


Viola 'Skippy XL Red-Gold'

Cool Season Bedding Plant Award Winner



'Skippy XL Red-Gold' is the first Viola cornuta to earn the prestigious AAS Award. Three improvements were exhibited in AAS trials. The unique combination of colors is first to be observed. 'Skippy XL Red-Gold' flowers are ruby red with a violet red shading below the golden yellow face containing whiskers. This combination is found only on 'Skippy XL Red-Gold'. The flower shape and size are definitely improved. The round 1.5-inch flower is similar to a pansy and larger than many viola blossoms. The lasting and enduring flower color provided by 'Skippy XL Red-Gold' is another notable trait. The freedom of bloom is attributed to the plant's ability to bud and flower under a wide range of temperatures. It is this adaptability that results in continuous bloom.

Source: www.all-americanselections.org



Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Consider planting flowers which may be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, celosia and globe amaranth.

Do not restrict yourself to buying plants in bloom. Petunias that bloom in the pack are often rootbound or overgrown and after planting will actually be set back and cease to bloom for about a month. Plants without blossoms will actually bloom sooner and will grow better as well.

To extend the blooming period of gladiolus, plant early, middle and late-season selections each week until the middle of June. Choose a sunny location and plant the corms 4-6 inches deep and 6-8 inches apart.

Seed bare spots in your fescue or bluegrass lawn.

Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need not be covered. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early-summer.

In a sunny location with poor soil, plant nasturtiums for a colorful show. They require warm soil to sprout and start blooming in about 50 days. Too much water and fertilizer produces excess leaves and few flowers.

When chrysanthemums show signs of life, dig up and divide large plants. Discard woody portions and replant divisions 12-15 inches apart.

Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering next year.

Do not add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the plant become established and it may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading to surrounding soil. Do dig a large planting hole, but fill it with the original soil removed from it.

The last Friday in April is National Arbor Day. Plant a tree or support an organization which does.

Prune spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and spirea after they have completed flowering.

Remove sticks, rocks and other debris from your lawn to prevent damaging your lawn mower or injuring yourself when mowing. Check your lawn mower and other lawn-care equipment in preparation for the coming season.

Easter Lily Care

Mary Jane Frogge
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When buying an Easter lily, look for a plant with flowers in various stages of bloom from buds to open or partially opened flowers. Foliage should be dense, rich green in color and extend all the way down to the soil line. This is a good indication of a healthy root system. Look for a well-proportioned plant, one about two times as high as the pot. You also should check the flowers, foliage and buds for

signs of insects and disease.

At home, keep your lily away from drafts and drying heat sources such as appliances or heating ducts. Bright, indirect light is best with daytime temperatures of 65 to 75 degrees F. Water the plant only when the soil feels dry to the touch, but do not over water. To prolong the life of the blossoms, remove the yellow anthers (pollen-bearing pods) found in the center of each flower.

Do not throw away your Easter lily after it is done blooming. You can save the

bulb and plant it outdoors. Easter lilies can be replanted outside after the blooms are gone. Plant outdoors as soon as the ground can be worked. Select a sunny site with well-drained soil. Set the top of the bulb six-inches below the soil surface. Cut off the old flowers, but leave the stem and leaves. Do not cut back the stem until it dies down in the fall, then cut it off at the soil surface. After the soil surface freezes in late fall, mulch the soil and do not remove the mulch until new growth begins in the spring.