2015 Flower All America Selections

**Impatiens — Bounce Pink Flame ‘Baloufink’**

Flower Award Winner

Impatiens Bounce looks like an Impatiens walleriana in habit, flower form and count, but is completely drouth midly resistant. These impatiens will last from spring all the way through fall. Bounce Pink Flame has a massive amount of stunning bright pink-bicolor blooms with tons of color to brighten your garden. It can be planted in shade or sun. This selection is available in plant form only.

**Impatiens — SunPatiens Spreading Shell Pink Flame**

The truly unique genetic background of SunPatiens Spreading Shell Pink delivers unsurpassed garden performance with season long, soft pink flowers that never slow down. Strong root stock hold quickly after transplanting and these impatiens thrive under high heat, rain and humidity. The AAS Judges loved these vigorous spreading plants that keep their shape all summer, plus, they do just well in full sun as in shade. These low-maintenance plants are perfect for gardeners looking for impatiens that are resistant to downy mildew. This selection is available in plant form only.

**Petunia — Trilogy Red**

Bedding Plant Award Winner

The Petunia series has a new color with this stunningly rich, vibrant red version! Trilogy petunias are known for their compact dome-shaped habit sporting large non-fading blooms throughout the season. The plants cover and recover themselves in upright blooms providing a constant mass of color in flower beds, baskets, and containers. Gardeners in high heat areas will appreciate the heat-tolerance of this variety and all gardeners will like how quickly Trilogy bounces back after a rain.

**Salvia — Summer Jewel White**

Bedding Plant Award Winner

A third color in the popular Summer Jewel series, White brings a much-needed color to compact salvias. This dwarf sized, compact plant has a prolific bloom count throughout the season. As a bonus, the blooms appear almost two weeks earlier than other white salvias as used as comparisons. Judges noted how the bees, butterflies and hummingbirds loved the larger flowers, making it perfect for a pollinator garden. Because of the compactness and number of flowers, Summer Jewel White is great for large landscaped areas, as well as containers and small beds.

Source: All America Selections

www.all-americaselections.org

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**Keeping Nuisance Wildlife from Bird Feeders**

My parents have multiple bird feeders set up in areas around their home where they can easily watch and enjoy many species of songbirds. Feeding birds is a fascinating hobby that connects families and children with nature. We can watch bird behavior, listen to their calls, appreciate their beauty and take pause to enjoy nature right in our own backyards.

It is always a challenge for bird feeding enthusiasts to try to attract the wildlife we want at our feeders without encouraging unwarranted nuisance wildlife. Here are some tips to try if you are trying to prevent wildlife problems at your feeders.

Choose the best location for your feeders: Squirrels, raccoons and other animals can access feeders by climbing up or leaping onto your feeders from perches. Using a pole to hang your feeder gives you the most control over dealing with unwanted species. Place them 6 feet high and 8 feet away from the nearest branch, deck rail or fence. Squirrels should also be at least 6 feet from plants or structures that could conceal predators like cats. You can also use a drop below or below the feeder to keep animals like squirrels from getting to it.

Do not use grease on poles to prevent animals from climbing. Greasing a pole is ineffective because eventually the grease gets tacky and makes it easier for animals to climb up. Grease will harm wildlife by matting feathers and fur.

Minimize fallen seed: Birds will scatter seed as they feed. The fallen seed will attract squirrels, mice, voles and more. Seed scattering happens for several reasons:

- While birdseed requires birds to remove and discard the shells or hulls to get to the meat or kernel of the seed, just like when we eat sunflower seeds.
- Inferior seed mixes contain filler seeds and grains that birds do not eat. Birds sort through the seed they end up on the ground where they attract rodents and other unsavory animals.
- Mixed seed blends forces birds to “sweep” through the seed to look for their favorites. Cardinals prefer sunflower and safflower seed and will sweep out the millet. Sparrows will sweep out the sunflower seed to get to the millet.
- To prevent seed from falling onto the ground, use a tray hung directly below the feeder to catch the seeds the birds scatter. Clean your trays regularly to prevent mold growth — at least weekly. Use a tray with drainage holes or one with drainage grooves. Use mosquito-wire screen to allow for optimal drainage. These require less cleaning and are more sanitary.
- You can also minimize fallen seed by adjusting the type of seed you are using. Learn about the birds you want to attract and what their preferences are for seed. Black-oil sunflower seeds are preferred by many desirable birds. To really prevent waste, purchase hulled sunflower. While this is more expensive, you aren’t buying the hulls and will have less waste.
- What about adding repellents to food to keep away squirrels and other animals? We don’t recommend the use of repellents for a number of reasons. Hungry animals will tolerate the repellent if the alternative is starvation. Proper placement of feeders and using physical barriers will work better than taste and smell repellents when managing your bird feeding stations.

Choose feeders especially designed to prevent nuisance wildlife access and damage: There are many feeders available designed to impede or prevent damage from squirrels. Some feeders are designed for a specific bird like hummingbirds, clinging birds that can easily grip the side of a feeder or hold a specific seed like thistle seed. Some feeders have wire cages around them to prevent larger birds like starlings from getting to the seed. You may also have seen feeders with a perch bar that reacts to the weight of the bird and closes the seed hopper if the bird is too heavy. These all help prevent nuisance wildlife if placed properly.

Protecting your birds and bird feeders is always going to be a challenge. What works today, may not work tomorrow. It is persistent and ready to learn and try new techniques. This is all part of the fun and excitement of feeding birds in your backyard.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Nebraska Extension publication “Selective Bird Feeding: Deterring Nuisance Wildlife from Bird Feeders” (EC1783) and other resources are online at http://lancaster.unl.edu/edu/birds.shtml

Earth Wellness Festival

Needs Volunteers

Volunteers are needed for the 2015 Earth Wellness Festival on Wednesday, March 25 and Thursday, March 26 at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. For more information, contact Sara Winn at swinn2@unl.edu or 402-472-0636 by Jan. 30. Visit http://lancaster.unl.edu/ewf to register online.

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Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate

The truly unique genetic background at SunPatiens Spreading Shell Pink delivers unsurpassed garden performance with season long, soft pink flowers that never slow down. Strong root stock hold quickly after transplanting and these impatiens thrive under high heat, rain and humidity. The AAS Judges loved these vigorous spreading plants that keep their shape all summer, plus, they do just well in full sun as in shade. These low-maintenance plants are perfect for gardeners looking for impatiens that are resistant to downy mildew. This selection is available in plant form only.