Colorado State University

FLOWER TRIAL GARDEN

From the Desk of Dr. Klett

The 2020 Annual Trials have just about come to an end with colder weather expected this week and weekend. We have been composting some of the more tender trial plants that were damaged by the snow storm and cold weather right after Labor Day. We still have visitors daily since some of the more hardy annuals still look good. We are working on completing the 2020 Annual Trial Garden Report which should be emailed to you by around October 28, 2020.

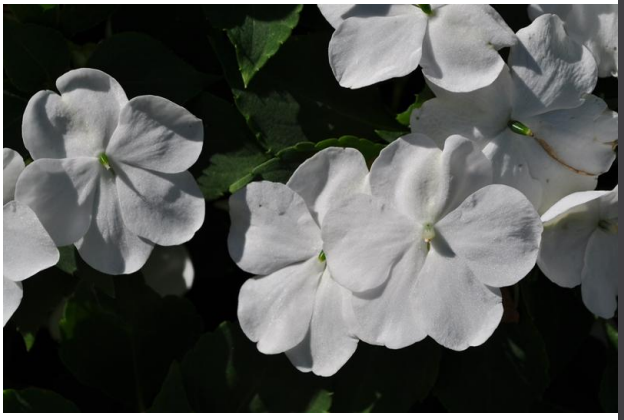
The Cool Season Trials were planted on October 15, 2020 and hopefully will get established well before really cold weather arrives.

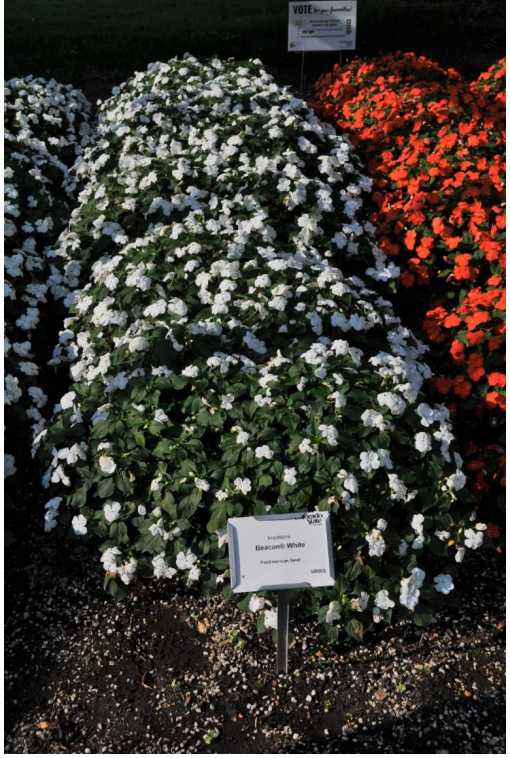
I want to thank all of our cooperators for helping to make the 2020 Colorado State University Annual Trials the success they were during this very unusual 2020 season. Thanks especially to the Annual Garden Coordinator Lauryn Schriner and her two student workers Emily Gritter and Basil Blume for all their hard work to make the garden the success it was in 2020. I welcome comments and improvements which can be emailed to me at jim.klett@colostate.edu.

2020 "Best Of" Winners, Part II of II

The results are in and the 2020 "Best Of" winners have been chosen! The following represents half of the complete list of winners with photos. In order to keep the newsletter a more manageable size the photos and text of the first half of the list was sent out in the September issue but they are also listed at the end of this section. The complete list and photos is also on our website www.flowertrials.colostate.edu. Look for the 2020 "Top Performer" perennials in the November newsletter!

Impatiens – 'Beacon® White' from PanAmerican Seed
Abundant, clear white blooms covered the plants which really brightened up a shady location. Dark green foliage helped make the flower color even more bright. Plants had a very uniform growth habit and had the added plus of being disease resistant to downy mildew.

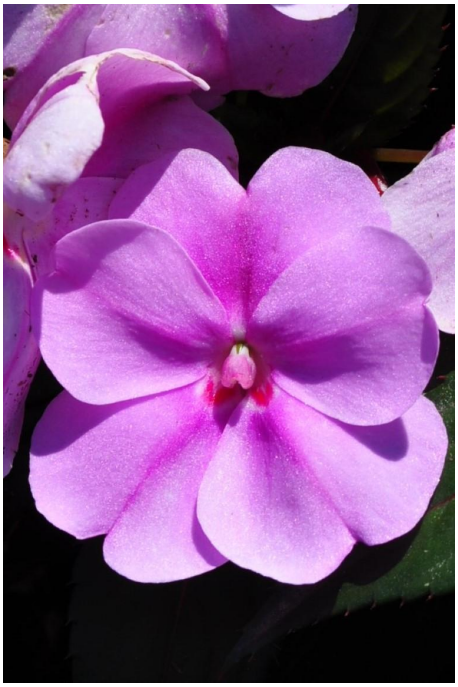




Lantana – ‘Hot Blooded™ Red’ from Syngenta
Vibrant flowers had at least 3 different colors that ranged from deep red to tangerine. Plants had a beautiful and uniform growth habit with abundant flowers on top of plant producing a lot of flower power.

Lobelia – ‘Glow™ White Lightning’ from Danziger
Vigorous plants combined with prolific flowering that continued throughout the heat of a record setting summer. The abundant white blossoms were on plants that maintained great uniformity.

New Guinea Impatiens – ‘SunPatiens® Vigorous Lavender Splash’ from Sakata
Dark green foliage made a great flower to foliage contrast that helped make the lavender flowers really stand out. Plants were vigorous but maintained an attractive and uniform growth habit.



Pentas – ‘BeeBright™ Violet’ from Syngenta
Flowers lived up to their name with abundant violet flowers that were a favorite of the bees. Plants were noted to be superior due to uniform, compact growth habits and dark green foliage.

Petunia (container, vegetative) – ‘SuperCal® Royal Red’ from Sakata
Blooms were a fantastic dark cherry color which impressed the evaluators with “stop in your tracks” flower power. Color was held even as the flowers faded. Plants were very vigorous and were well branched that resulted in an excellent growth habit

Petunia (ground, vegetative) – ‘ColorRush™ White’ from Ball FloraPlant
Large flowers were a good clean white color and very abundant. Plants were vigorous, uniform and had excellent flower power.

Petunia (ground, seed) – ‘Easy Wave® Violet’ from PanAmerican Seed
Violet flowers covered vigorous plants that had a great spreading growth habit that resulted in a vibrant blanket of blooms. Plants held up well under adverse conditions and maintained good uniformity even with some shade.

Portulaca – ‘ColorBlast™ Double Orange *2’ from Westhoff
Showy flowers were noted for vivid shades of orange and double petals. Plants were vigorous and had excellent uniformity.

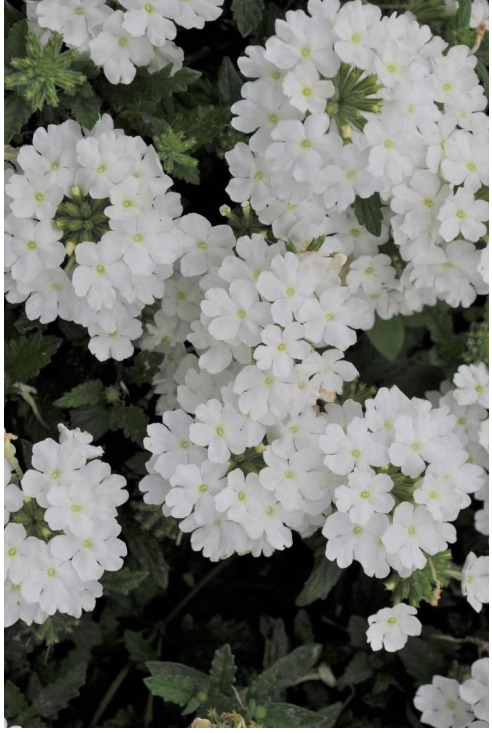
Salvia – ‘Mystic Spires’ from Ball FloraPlant
Dependable flowering and great growth habit made this a winner both in 2020 and in previous years. Vigorous plants were stately and upright with abundant dark purple flowers. Foliage was clean and glossy. This was another bee friendly plant that was often buzzing with excitement with pollinators.

Scaevola – ‘Abanico Power Laguna Blue’ from Benary+
Plants had impressive vigor and produced large flowers that covered the plants. The showy, blue blooms held their color and were weather resistant. This entry was grown in a container but would work well in the ground.

Thunbergia – ‘Sunny Susy® Yellow Dark Eye’ from Benary+
The vigorous plants made great climbers and were perfect for either a trellis or hanging basket. Flowers were a very vibrant lemon yellow with a nice dark brown throat for added contrast.

Verbena (container) – ‘Estrella™ Blueberry Improved’ from Westhoff
The big, blue flowers stood out against the dark foliage for an impressive overall appearance. The semi-trailing habit worked well in containers but would also do well in the ground. Plants were bred for mildew resistance and looked clean all season.

Verbena (ground) – ‘EnduraScape™ White’ from Ball FloraPlant
Plant would be great for landscapes due to vigorous growth, large plants and mammoth blooms. Showy, white blooms paired well with many other garden plants. Plants ‘buried their dead’ blooms to keep a fresh appearance all season.



Vinca (container) – ‘Valiant™ Pure White’ from PanAmerican Seed
Flowers lived up to their pure white name and the large blooms created a lot of flower power. Plants were vigorous, well-structured and filled the container. The glossy, dark green foliage made a good contrast with the white blooms.

Vinca (ground) – ‘Virtuosa Lavender’ from Sakata
Plants were vigorous and produced abundant large, soft lavender flowers that had a white eye for added interest. The compact and uniform plants did well in the ground but would probably also look great in a container.

Zinnia (container) – ‘Preciosa™ Orange’ from American Takii
Bright, clear orange flowers eventually faded to an attractive gold color but were fully double and very prolific. Plants were bred to be more compact with superior branching and they filled the container producing excellent flower power.

Zinnia (ground) – ‘Magellan™ Orange’ from Syngenta
Large orange flowers were very prolific and very showy. Plants were vigorous, sturdy and did not lodge with overhead watering. Overall appearance was impressive with the vibrant color and uniform growth habit.

"Best Of" Winners Previously Mentioned in the September Newsletter:

Best of Show – Dahlia 'Lubega® Dark Velvet' from Benary+
Best Novelty – Colocasia 'Heart of the Jungle™' from Proven Winners
Best New Variety – Centaurea 'Snowy Owl' from Terra Nova
Best Container – Petunia 'Bee's Knee' from Ball FloraPlant

"Best Of..." by Class

Angelonia (container) – 'Serenita® Pink' from PanAmerican Seed
Angelonia (ground) - 'Archangel™ Raspberry' from Ball FloraPlant
Begonia (container, vegetative) – 'Dreams BK Collection Vermillion Red®' from Beekenkamp Plants
Begonia (container, semi-trailing, vegetative) – 'Solenia Red®' from Beekenkamp Plants
Begonia (container, seed) – 'BIG Bronze Leaf Deep Rose' from Benary+
Calibrachoa – 'Cha-Cha™ Frosty Lemon' from Ball FloraPlant
Celosia (container) – 'Sol™ Lizzard Leaf' from Pan American Seed
Celosia (ground) – 'Bright Sparks™ Burgundy' from Syngenta
Coleus (container) – 'Main Street Beale Street' from DummenOrange
Coleus (ground) – 'FlameThrower™ Cajun Spice' from Ball FloraPlant
Combination – 'Kwik Kombos™ Pink Lemonade Mix' from Syngenta
Dahlia - 'Lubega® Dark Velvet' from Benary+
Geranium (interspecific) – 'Calliope® Large Dark Red' from Syngenta
Geranium (zonal) – 'Super Moon Red' from Selecta One

Update from Cool Season Trial Coordinator - Lauryn Schriner

We planted our cool season trial plants in the ground on October 15, 2020. We have 60 varieties of arabis, primula, aurinia, pansy, viola and flowering kale from five different companies. It will be exciting to see what the new outstanding cool season annuals will be!

Cool Season Trial being planted (top). Planting day with CSU students Lauryn Schriner, Basil Blume, Emily Gritters and Tate Erickson (bottom photo, left to right).

Notes from Annual Flower Trial Student Coordinator - Lauren Schriner

The trial gardens are coming to the end of another season. We are busy ripping out beds and composting dead plants, making space for and planting the cool season trials. The crew has been busy with the new school semester but has done an amazing job getting the garden cleaned up from the 2020 season.

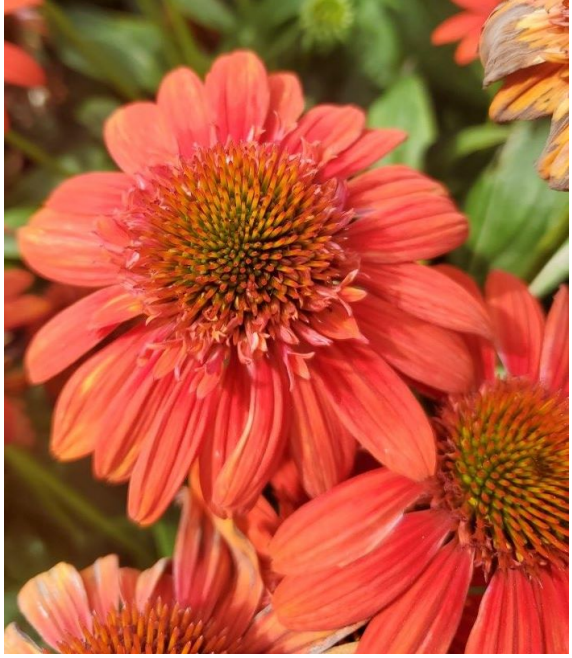
The final report is about finished and getting the last few edits made. The committee has had their fall meeting to address the current season and get prepared for the new upcoming season. It was an exciting and different trial

season to be involved with. I want to thank everyone who visited the trial gardens this year and helped evaluate all the amazing varieties entered in for the 2020 trial season.

Comments by Student Perennial Trial Coordinator - Rebekah Savage

Beautiful fall October weather has allowed the Perennial Trial Gardens to continue to thrive. Many of the perennial cultivars are still in full bloom, including, *Rosa*, *Echinacea*, *Miscanthus*, and *Veronica*. The stunning, forever blooming *Viola* 'Halo Golden Yellow' has been covered with blooms since spring. *Miscanthus* 'Tiger Tail' had an excellent first year and is donned with large plumes of creme colored flowers. Since the first snow of the season in September, no additional snow or cold weather has disturbed the garden. As the weather changes, the gardens will be cut back. Until then, please soak up the last blooms of a wonderful 2020 season.

Rosa 'Cherry Frost'



Echinacea 'Sombrero Fiesta Orange'

View from the Crew - Tate Erickson

Tate Erickson is a first year Environmental Horticulture student, new to Fort Collins and Colorado. Tate grew up in Rapid City, SD and has been active in horticulture all his life, starting with his mother's house plants that weren't cared nearly enough and landscaping the flower beds around the yard. His interest continued to grow when he started a lawn mowing business in middle school. He spent his high school years working in a large local greenhouse operation participating in all aspects of the business. Tate has always been the one to check if any greenhouses and nurseries are along routes in trips, hoping to add to his growing collection of over 130 houseplants. On top of his horticulture passion, Tate is active in photography, the outdoors, yoga, and creating art.

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