

Colorado State University



From the Gardens...



The 2023 Trial Season is nearing the end. Last Friday night/Saturday morning, we had temperatures that dipped below freezing for a bit. And that was enough to turn several beds 'brown' in the trials with the usual tender suspects (e.g., dahlias, lantana, coleus, begonias, ornamental sweet potatoes) succumbing to the cold temperatures. Some species are still going strong, especially those with some protection in the shade house and under trees—or those just a bit more resilient to the cold temps. We will likely have at least another week of color out there before the next cold night.

The annual reports are coming together, as you read this. The Annual Trial Report should be finished by the end of October and will be shared after the final edits. The Perennial Trial information is also being compiled and that report will be available later this fall, aiming for the last week of November/first week of December. The Perennial Trial subcommittee will meet in mid-November to discuss Top Performers. Stay tuned...!

The Trial Garden Advisory Committee also met last Friday, October the 13th. (No Jason Voorhees sightings or black cats or other unlucky phenomenon, took place that I was aware of.) The meeting was productive and a success, with lots of good conversation about the 2023 trial season and what can be tweaked for the 2024 season! Thanks to Ashley and the folks at Tagawa Greenhouses for hosting the group at their meeting facility, and for providing wonderful breakfast fare and delicious Hawaiian BBQ lunch. After the meeting, Bill Kluth took a small group of the board around the Tagawa facilities. Thanks for hosting us!

I hope you all are getting to enjoy the wonderful fall weather! And hope you have a great Halloween! Halloween is one of my favorite holidays! One could argue that I probably am more a fan of fall altogether, as pumpkins are one of my favorite plants/fruits. And, pumpkins *are* a major component of celebrating Halloween with jack o' lanterns. If I had not gone down the ornamental horticulture path, I probably would have done something in vegetables and working with pumpkins and squash. Probably not turnips—the *original* jack o' lanterns, though. They just aren't as flashy.

As always, if you have thoughts, ideas, suggestions, or just want to give a shout out, let me know! Email me at chad.miller@colostate.edu

2023 "Best Of..." Winners! Part II

The results are in and the 2023 "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 are also on our website www.flowertrials.colostate.edu. Look for the 2023 "Top Performer" **perennials** in the November newsletter.

Best Lantana, container – Hot Blooded™ Red from Syngenta®

This is a super uniform plant with abundant flowers that come in predominately red, but yellow, and

orange add to the nice multi-color effect. Tolerates heat and drought. It is a sterile selection and won't spend energy setting seed so it has a very long bloom period.



Best Lantana, ground - Lucky™ Sunrise Rose from Ball FloraPlant®

This is a dependable performer and is a winner from multiple years in the past as well as 2023. The bright flowers had a harmonious mix of colors often found in a sunrise. Plants were very uniform, and flowering was very abundant all through the season. It was very popular with the pollinators.



Best Lobelia - Early Springs™ Sky Blue from Ball FloraPlant®

A tight, uniform and compact habit was maintained throughout the entire season. Sky blue flowers were bright and flowering continued strong in the heat even into September.



Best Marigold (container) – Cresta™ Gold from Syngenta®

Growth habits were very attractive throughout the season and had consistent blooming throughout the summer. Plants had nice dark foliage and relatively large yellow flowers that proved to be a very showy combination. This entry was in semi-shade and had no problems and still looked good.





Best Marigold (ground) – Big Duck® Yellow from AmeriSeed®

Large flowers and consistent flowering made this a solid performer. The upright plants are considered semi-dwarf while still maintaining large blooms.





Best Osteospermum - 4D™ Berry White from Selecta One®

Unique flower shape was one attribute that made this a standout. The extra-large purple centers stand out above the petals for an extra dimension and keep the flower open 24-7 instead of many others that close in the evening. Blooms are a beautiful combination of purple and light lavender shades of white. It was noted for staying in bloom for a long time, even during the heat of the summer.





Best Petunia, (seed) container – Easy Wave® Yellow from PanAmerican Seed®

Even late in the season, it was recognized for the many soft yellow flowers covering the plant. Blooms also had a deep yellow center for a nice two-tone effect. Plants had good vigor and were disease free even late into the season.



Best Petunia, (vegetative) container – Itsy™ Magenta from Syngenta®

Small flowers created a very cute and delicate overall appearance. Plants had a nice tight, cascading habit in the container and were covered with blooms which seemed to bury its dead. It could be considered as a substitute for calibrachoas.



Best Petunia (mini) ground – Supertunia Mini Vista® Pink Star from Proven Winners®

The entire Supertunia Mini Vista® series had excellent performance in the ground where each one created a near-solid blanket of flowers. The series has many different colors but the one that lasted the best late into the season was Pink Star. It was noted for its attractive pattern of pink and white in addition to the very uniform appearance and strong blooming.

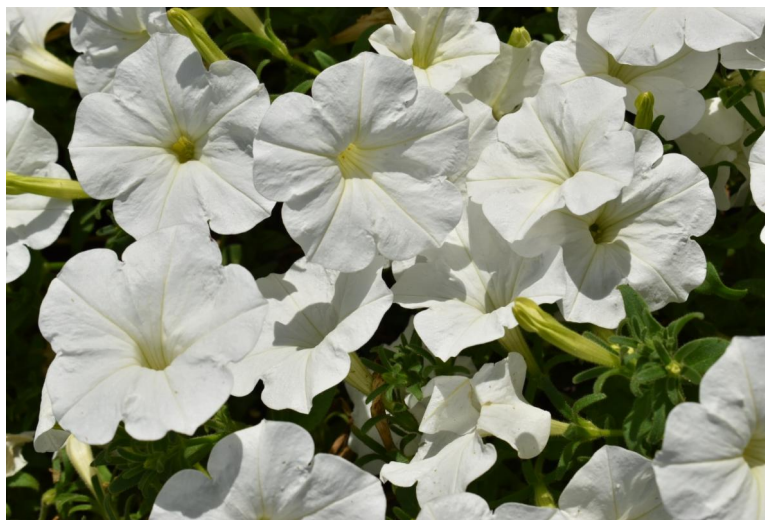


Best Petunia (seed), ground - Easy Wave® Blue from PanAmerican Seed®
Plants had good vigor and were covered by flowers. The deep blue/purple blooms were recognized for not fading and holding their color even in the intense sunlight. Growth habit was uniform, and plants maintained their shape and did not crash late in season.



Best Petunia (vegetative), ground - SureShot White from Ball FloraPlant®

Covered in clean white flowers, it was difficult to see the foliage. Plants were vigorous and held up through the season without any disease problems. Flower power was very impressive, and it did not require any deadheading.



Best Rudbeckia, container – Sunbeckia® Juliana from Bull Plant Genetics

Big, clean yellow flowers with a light green eye covered the plants. The size, color and large number of blooms made this a showstopper that evaluators loved. It was also noted for its sturdy growth habit, so it resisted flopping open.



Best Rudbeckia, ground – Sunbeckia[®] Luna from Bull Plant Genetics
Large blooms were attractive due to their sheer size but it was also a favorite due to the interesting colors of yellow and dark red. Flowers were also noted to having a progression of color as it matured that was also very attractive and unique. Plants were very healthy, and flowering was prolific.





Best Salvia - Mystic Spires from Ball FloraPlant®

Deep blue/purple flowers covered the plants and made it a magnet for pollinators and hummingbirds. The sturdy plants were well branched and free flowering as well as being very uniform. No dead heading was required making it a very low maintenance plant.





Best Sun Impatiens - SunPatiens® Compact Rose Glow from Sakata® Seed America

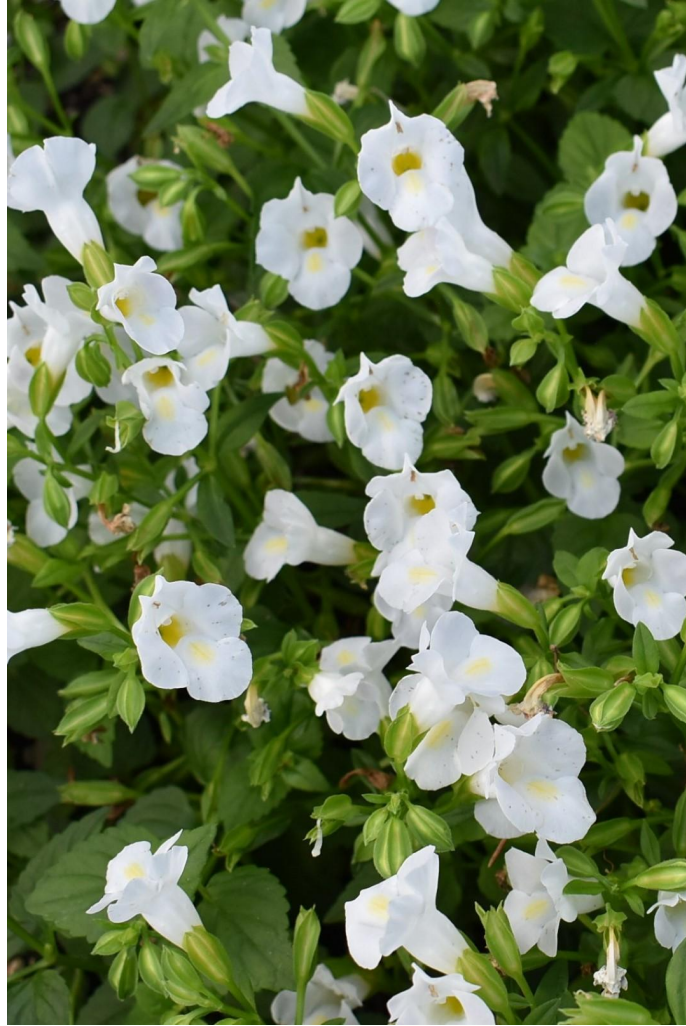
The uniform canopy of solid flowers looked nearly perfect. The dark green foliage was barely visible but offered a nice contrast with the super vibrant rose colored flowers. Plants have a nice compact, mounding habit and grow well in either sun or shade.



Best Torenia - Summer Wave[®] Bouquet White from Suntory

Vigorous plants were very floriferous even into September and maintained a nice green color to the foliage. Flowers were prolific and a crisp white color. Growth habit was very uniform overall, and it would make great plant for the shaded areas.





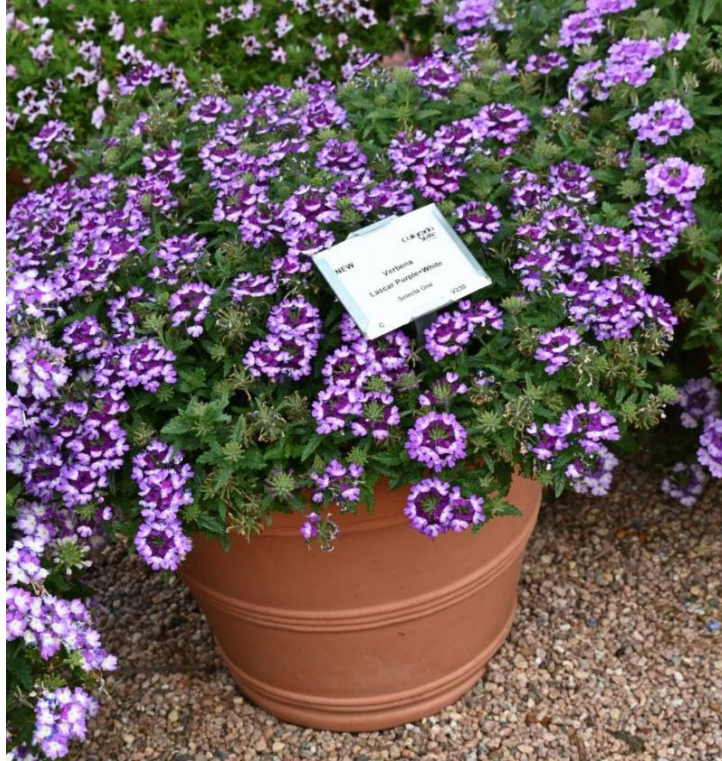
Best Verbena, ground – Superbena® Pink Cashmere™ from Proven Winners®

Plants had great vigor with impressive branching and large clusters of soft pink flowers. It created a nice groundcover as it blanketed the area. The large umbels of flowers are held above the foliage and are multiple shades of soft pink for added interest.



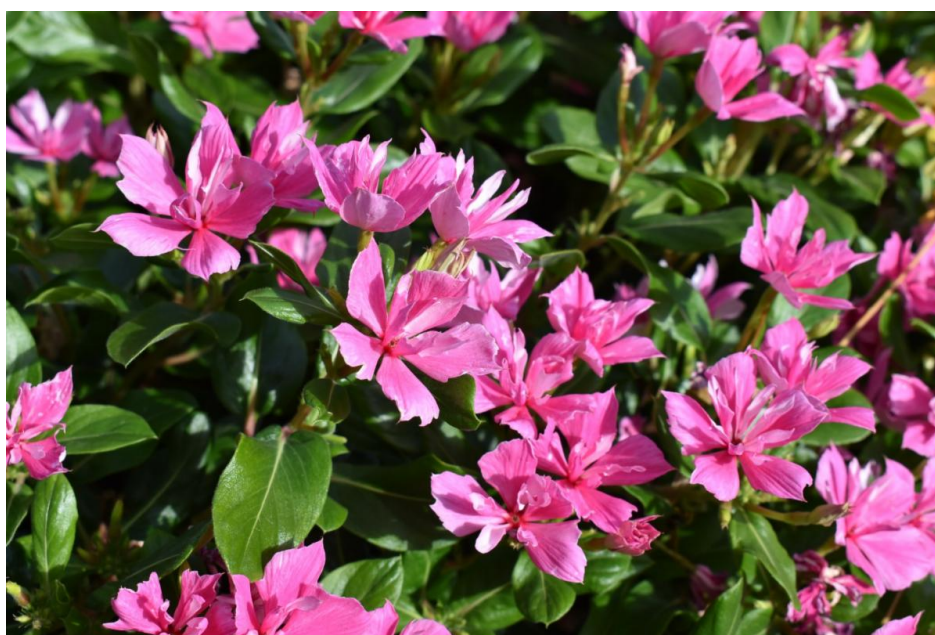
Best Verbena, container – Lascar™ Purple+White from Selecta One®

Purple and white create a very attractive progression of color from dark to light shades as it matures. Flowering was very prolific. It looked great in a container with a very uniform and tight growth habit in addition to the deep green foliage.



Best Vinca (vegetative) – Soiree® Double Pink from Suntory

A unique flower form with two layers of frilly petals made this stand out from the pack. It was very impressive in both the ground and containers with a lot of color in both. It was noted that the pink color holds up well in the sunlight and the plants were very uniform and made a great overall appearance.



Best Vinca (seed) - Cora[®] XDR Punch from Syngenta[®]

Flowers had a vibrant color which held up in the sun. Petals overlap to create a unique appearance. No dead heading was required which makes it a very low maintenance plant. It is bred to be disease resistant.



Best Zinnia – Zydeco™ White from Syngenta®

The Zydeco™ series placed three entries in the top five for this category that indicates superior reliability across the series. The white entry ranked the highest and had a nice clean color with flowers held high above the leaves. It would look great in a cottage garden. Plants had attractive foliage and did not have any signs of mildew even in late in the season.



Other winners on the list featured in previous newsletter:

- Best of Show** – Dahlia Dahlegria™ Apricot Tricolor from Syngenta®
Best New Variety – Stonehedge Rose Bronze Leaf from Benary®
Best Novelty – Centaurea FanciFillers™ Chrome Fountain from Westhoff
Best Angelonia - Aria Alta Red Raspberry from Dummen Orange
Best Begonia (Rex type) - Spacestars Avior® from Beekenkamp Plants
Best Begonia (shade, seed) container- Megawatt™ Rose Bronze Leaf Improved from PanAmerican Seed®
Best Begonia (sun), container - Stonehedge Rose Bronze Leaf from Benary
Best Begonia (sun), ground – Stonehedge Light Pink Bronze Leaf from Benary
Best Begonia (shade), ground – Dragon Wing® Red Bronze Leaf from PanAmerican Seed®
Best Begonia (vegetative) – BK Collection Vermillion Red® from Beekenkamp Plants
Best Bracteantha - Granvia Pink from Suntory
Best Bidens - White Delight™ Improved from Danziger
Best Calibrachoa – Cha-Cha™ Yellow from Ball FloraPlant®
Best Coleus – FlameThrower™ Sriracha from Ball FloraPlant®
Best Combo – MixMasters™ Lucky Charm from Ball FloraPlant®
Best Dahlia – Dahlegria™ Apricot Tricolor from Syngenta®
Best Geranium, container - Moxie!™ Hot Pink from Syngenta®
Best Geranium (interspecific) ground – Mantra™ Bright Red from Syngenta®
Best Geranium (zonal) ground - Galaxy™ Pink from Ball FloraPlant®
Best Impatiens, ground - Impara® XDR White from Syngenta®
Best Impatiens, New Guinea - Super Sonic® Orange Ice from Syngenta®

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