

HONORING HORTICULTURAL GREATS ■ ORGANIC SEED STARTING ■ GREAT HOME GARDENS

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The Magazine
for Northeast
Gardeners

FLOWER power

**The Hottest
New Veggies
& Perennials**

**Exclusive
Michael Dirr
Book Excerpt**

**2007 Readers'
Choice Poll
Winners**



Spring 2008

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THE MAGAZINE FOR NORTHEAST GARDENERS

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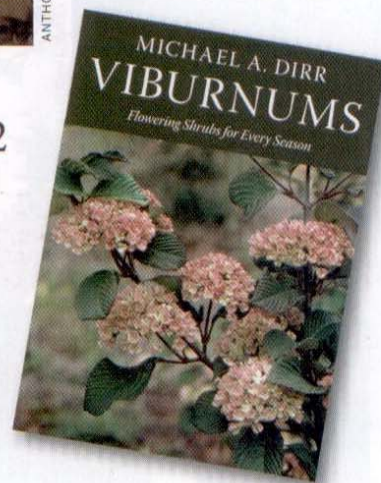
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HOT PERENNIALS *for 2008*



Phlox 'Volcano Candy Stripe'

BY TIM KANE

As a Nation, except when it comes to Britney Spears, we seem to have the attention span of a gnat. How else can you explain how quickly we clamor for 'the next great thing' only to see it fade from our consciousness and into obscurity within a matter of weeks or months?

Gardeners certainly haven't escaped this affliction. We are drawn like moths to a streetlamp when the latest, greatest new plants come along, but who remembers these 'great plants' by the following fall? Rapid fire breeding and hybridizing mean that perennials tend to lead the barrage of newness in the plant world, unleashing waves of introductions each year onto an audience of horticultural thrill seekers. Many times it seems like the thrill of the introduction outweighs the thrill of actually using these plants in the garden! Here's hoping everyone pays attention to these featured new perennials for 2008, not just for their novelty, but for the outstanding qualities they will bring to the garden.

Phlox 'Volcano Candy Stripe'

The best series of Garden Phlox available anywhere gets even better with the addition of this striking new selection in 2008. 'Volcano Candy Stripe' will wow you starting in early July with cones of deep pink flowers that are striped along the center of each petal with a streak of pure white. The bloom is profuse and its bloom time is lengthy meaning that the show in the garden is absolutely spectacular!

Like all of the six previously introduced varieties of Volcano Phlox, 'Volcano Candy Stripe' has more going for it than amazing flower power. Its dense, compact form makes 'Candy Stripe' and its relatives far more carefree in the garden as does its incredible resistance to powdery mildew, the scourge of all the other thousands of Garden Phlox varieties on the market. 'Volcano Candy Stripe' will even re-bloom in the fall if cut back right after flowering ends in the summer months. It's a plant, like all the other Volcano Phlox, that has nearly single-handedly revived a group of traditional but highly problematic garden plants and restored that group to its rightful, colorful place in the garden.

'Volcano Candy Stripe' is perfect for the middle or back of your garden with its 24 to 30 inch height and is tough and durable with its Zone 4 hardiness. Group a bunch in a sunny location with good airflow and moist yet well-drained soil. By the way, did I mention that, like all the other Volcano Phlox, 'Volcano Candy Stripe' is extremely fragrant? There's just no end to the superlatives this stunner will bring to your garden.



TERRA NOVA NURSERIES INC.

Scabiosa 'Ultra Violet'

Scabiosa 'Ultra Violet'

The Scabiosa market has been dominated by two selections for a decade: 'Butterfly Blue' and 'Pink Mist'. While they flower a long time in the garden, each has a color that is somewhat underwhelming. 'Ultra Violet' will never be accused of this fault. Its flower color can be best described as riveting. Starting in mid-to-late May, the most astonishing, screaming, electric violet, pincushion flowers you've ever seen will begin to open, rising above a dense, spreading bun of basal foliage. Even better, the outstanding flower color will not cut down on the amount of flower time. 'Ultra Violet' will give you nearly a full summer of color, blooming from mid-to-late May until mid-to-late August.

At 18 to 24 inches tall by 18 inches wide when in bloom, 'Ultra Violet' is a perfect plant for grouping in the front or middle of a sunny garden to produce a stunning wave of color, but even a single plant will enliven any landscape. While it is a sturdy Zone 4 hardy, this plant will have more trouble with poor drainage than cold when it comes to making it through the winter. Be sure to provide it with excellent drainage in the form of added sand to the soil because wet feet in the winter will be the kiss of death for this free-flowering, brassy-blooming machine.

Hemerocallis 'Summer Valentine'

Experience a true color breakthrough with this All-American Daylily selection that is not only brilliant, it performs incredibly in the landscape. A tight mound of rich green, strap-like foliage gives rise to flower stalks that open in late June revealing four to five-inch diameter flowers of lush pink with a stunning magenta-colored eye and a ruffled, picotee petal edging. What a looker and what an easy plant to grow. Hardy to Zone 5, this Daylily will thrive alone or in groups in partial-to-full shade.

Echinacea 'Tiki Torch'

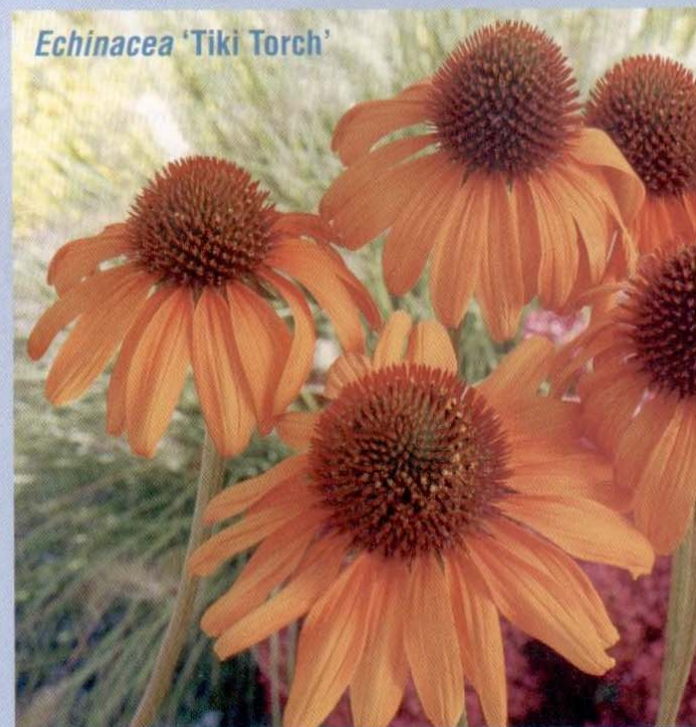
There are so many new Echinacea it's hard for even a good one to stand out from the crowd. Not a problem for 'Tiki Torch'! With its big, blazing, pumpkin-orange flowers that keep on coming from July into September, it's hard to miss! Its outstanding flower scent makes it ideal for cutting while its beefy form gives it excellent, carefree garden durability. It truly is the best orange Echinacea available. Hardy to Zone 4, at 24 to 30 inches tall, it's perfect for massing at the back of any garden and it attracts butterflies and birds, too.

Hemerocallis 'Summer Valentine'

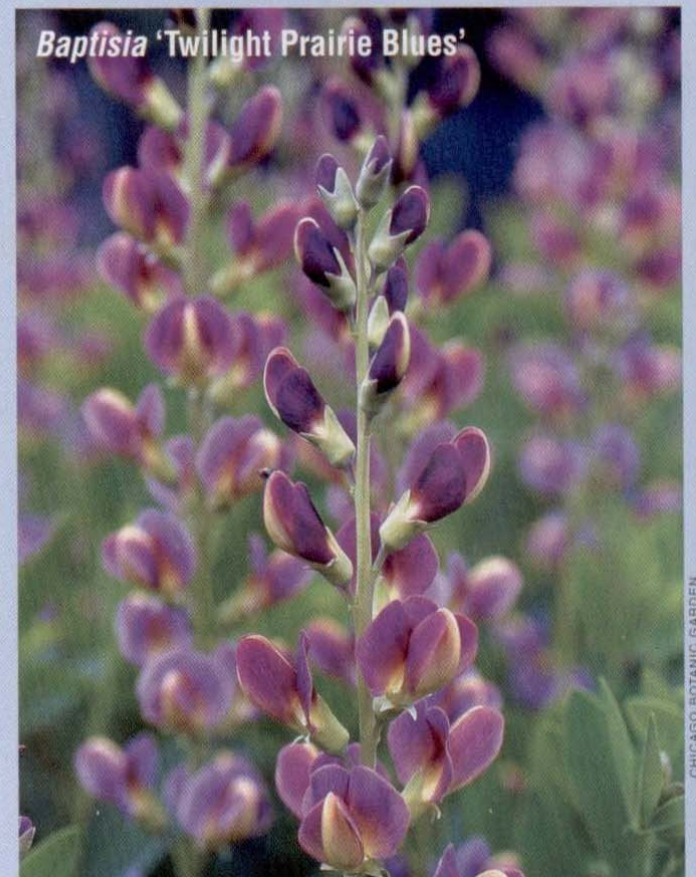


ALL-AMERICAN DAYLILY

Echinacea 'Tiki Torch'



Baptisia 'Twilight Prairie Blues'



CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

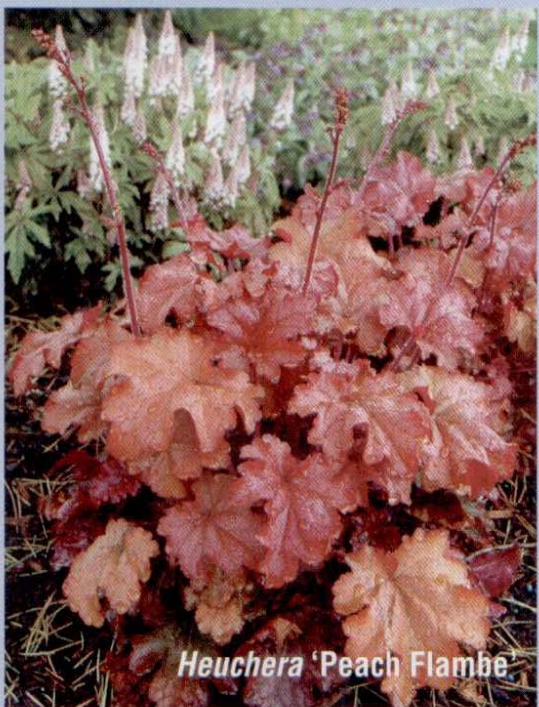


Heuchera 'Midnight Rose'

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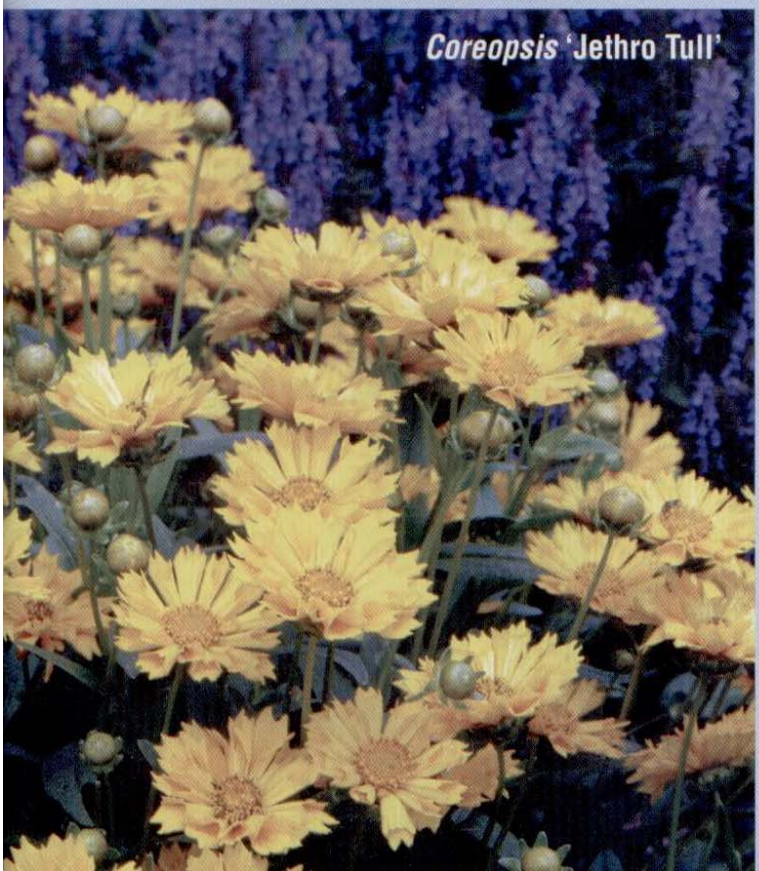


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Heuchera 'Peach Flambe'

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Coreopsis 'Jethro Tull'

NORTH CREEK

Heuchera 'Midnight Rose'

There's always a mind-numbing array of new Coral Bells each year, but which ones should you try in your garden? By all means, try 'Midnight Rose,' it's a stunner! Picture *Heuchera* 'Obsidian,' with its dark burgundy foliage, spattered with neon pink-colored speckles like it got caught in a shower of paint at a Peter Max gallery and you have 'Midnight Rose.' Spectacular in partial or full shade, it cries out for massing in the front of a garden, is hardy to Zone 4 and easy to grow. It's even drought tolerant and deer resistant.

Heuchera 'Peach Flambe'

How can you not like 'Peach Flambe'? Not only is it a smorgasbord of tasty color, its color changes with the temperatures, making it a color chameleon besides. Leaves emerge blazing, brilliant peach accentuated by bright red venation. These colors soften in the heat of the summer only to become more riveting in fall's cool temperatures. It's mesmerizing and will always hold your interest while brightening the front of any partial-to-full shade garden into Zone 4. And, don't worry about drought or deer because 'Peach Flambe' shrugs off both.

Baptisia 'Twilight Prairie Blues'

Baptisia has always been a carefree marvel in the landscape and this new cross of two native species is even more reason to celebrate. Emerging stems form a stout bush by May with each stem topped by spikes of buds that unfurl amazing, two-toned, purple-hooded flowers with bright yellow keels. The bloom lasts into early July on a plant that resists drought and loves sunny, well-drained sites. This member of the pea family is very low maintenance but its four by five-inch size means you need to give it some room. 'Twilight Prairie Blues' is hardy to Zone 4.

Coreopsis 'Jethro Tull'

If your wish is carefree, extended bloom in the garden, 'Jethro Tull' will rock your world. It's a cross between 'Early Sunrise' and 'Zamfir' that has produced a plant that is far better than the parents. Long blooming to a fault, it supplies a constant stream of golden yellow, daisy flowers with uniquely fluted ray ends from late May into September. Any sunny area with well-drained soil is fine for this tolerant beauty that's hardy into Zone 5. At 15 to 18 inches tall and wide, it's a perfect plant for massing in the middle of your garden.