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New Plant Introductions

By Nita-Jo Rountree

Rosa 'Tangerine Skies'™ Photo by Star Roses and Plants.

Throughout my gardening life, I've anxiously awaited the January issue of gardening magazines featuring that year's new plant introductions. My frantic search would immediately ensue because I wanted to be the first to find and grow the newly introduced plants. I finally realized that many of the introductions were being marketed to growers who had to grow the plants for another year or two before they would be available to the

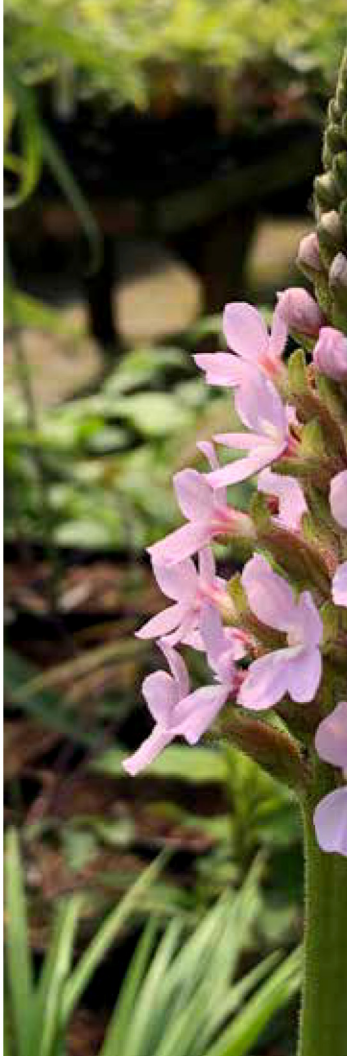


Clematis florida hybrida 'Taiga' Photo by T&L Nursery.

public. And, occasionally, they're duds.

In this article, the following plants will be available in 2020; they have been adequately trialed and are proven performers:

Actaea (*Cimicifuga*) *japonica* 'Hillside Splashdance'— This gem popped up at Hillside Nursery, www.hillsidenursery.biz,

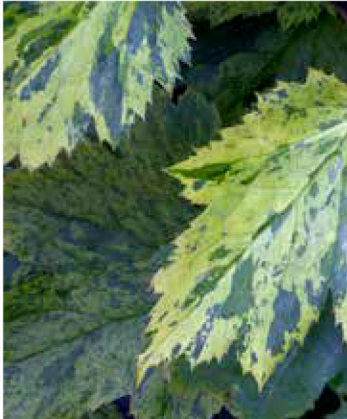


Styliidium graminifolium (Grass Trigger)

a number of years ago, and they've finally amassed enough stock and are excited to offer it for sale in 2020. The large leaves have amazing variegation in shades of chartreuse and light and dark greens and really light up a shady area. The bottlebrush-looking white flowers reach two to four feet tall.

Styliidium graminifolium (Grass Trigger Plant) is fascinating on multiple levels. Foremost is that it is extremely attractive both in clean, architectural foliage and in impressive spikes of pink flowers. Kelly Dodson of Far Reaches Farm, www.farreachesfarm.com, will be introducing the plant in 2020. He says, "This Australian native has a fascinating pollination mechanism: the unique flowers are triggered by pollinating insects." The trigger stays cocked until an insect probes the flower. It then springs upwards and deposits pollen onto the head or back of the insect, which then flies off to pollinate another flower. Cool! The flower spikes rise up to fifteen inches tall from a basal rosette of leaves in sun or light shade.

Clematis florida hybrida 'Taiga' was introduced at the 2017 Chelsea Flower show and has finally made it to this side of the Atlantic. At Chelsea, it shocked the plant world with blooms unlike any seen before on a clematis. The stunning doubled flowers have unique spiky sepals that open purple with yellow-green tips. It blooms on old and new wood, so it continues blooming all summer long. Only growing to eight



Actaea (Cimicifuga) japonica 'Hillside



Plant). Photo by Kelly Dodson.

feet high and three feet wide, it's perfect for a container or in the garden in full sun to part shade.

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Corsage' is so new that even Wikipedia doesn't know about it! Ozzie Johnson, a frequent plant exploring buddy of Dan Hinkley's, found this beauty at a garden center in Japan. Even though it's technically a lacecap, you'd never know it because the doubled full-blooming sepals cover the fertile flowers within. Bloom color begins blue, purple, or pink (depending on soil pH) and slowly ages to green. Kristin VanHoose of Hydrangeas Plus, www.hydrangeasplus.com, says, "I've never seen anything like it. It blooms for a very long time, so we had fresh blooms all through September." It reaches five feet by five feet and grows in part sun to part shade.

Heucherella 'Peach Tea', introduced by Terra Nova Nurseries, www.terravanurseries.com, has large, peachy-red leaves that contrast

beautifully with its creamy white flowers. Several years ago, *H.* 'Sweet Tea' was all the rage, so of course, I bought several.

Amazingly, they're still alive! *H.* 'Peach Tea' has similar breeding, and is hardy, vigorous, and compact, making it perfect for the edge of the border or in a container. *H.* 'Peach Tea' is twelve inches high and twenty-two inches wide with a flower height of seventeen inches in full sun to part shade.

Rosa 'Tangerine Skies'TM—is a climbing rose bred by Kordes of Germany, known for their ground-breaking disease-resistant breeding. Small for a climber, it grows to eight feet high and four feet wide, so it can be grown as a large shrub, on a low fence, or on a pillar. The buds are classic-shaped that open into huge, exceptionally



Splashdance'. Photo by Hillside Nursery.



Heucherella 'Peach Tea'. Photo by Terra Nova Nurseries.

fragrant, beautiful tangerine flowers. This rose is a prize winner!

Happy plant hunting!



Hydrangea macrophylla 'Corsage'. Photo by Hydrangeas Plus.