

Landscape

The Magazine for Landscape & Turf Professionals

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**Root Damage:
A SLOW KILLER**

SHOP TALK TIPS

**Drought
Tolerant Plants**

**Creating a
Successful
Business During
Tough Times**

Deer Resistant Plants

**Landscape
Newcomers**



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Landscape Newcomers

These six new variety introductions for 2009 offer a sneak peek into the superior plant genetics available for summer landscape installations in South Carolina.

By: Leslie Kirk and Don Eberly

Come summer, busy landscape designers, managers, and contractors often realize they have not found the time to familiarize themselves with all of the new plants varieties available to the industry. However, being acquainted with new and exceptional varieties is essential to unveil fresh ideas to both residential and commercial clients. When finding new plants, it is also a key factor to satisfy unique

aesthetic and performance needs in difficult areas.

With the heat, humidity and drought so prominent during the summer months in South Carolina, breaking down new plant material into categories may help in identifying the value of each new plant and how it can well-suit future installation projects. Some of the newest plants are improvements upon older varieties and offer higher heat tolerance, while others nobly attempt to solve long-term maintenance problems such as lower water requirements. It can be inspiring to find plants that shine among the hundreds of new colors and selections on the market.

"As growers, we must put-out premium



Linda Guy, new product development director for Novalis Plants that Work and Carolina Nurseries

plant selections each year, and the task is getting more interesting as energy prices increase and consumers and businesses have to decide where to spend and where to save," says Linda Guy, new product development director for Novalis Plants that Work, a

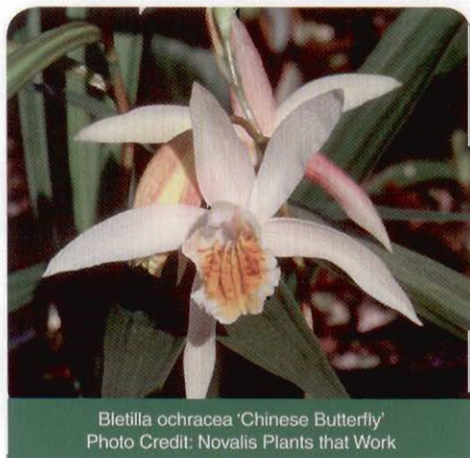
national plant brand available through Carolina Nurseries and other network growers. "In order to offer our landscaper customers what they need, our network of growers has been focused on supplying superior plant genetics trialed regionally. For example, plants that can be used by SCLTA member landscapers have already been tested in, and are appropriate for, South Carolina."

Likewise, climates are changing and

consumers are becoming more aware of their own carbon footprints, so growers' attentions have turned toward developing more sustainable options for the horticultural world. "Many of today's new varieties are bred for disease resistance to reduce the use of harmful pesticides," says Dan Heims, president and co-owner of Oregon-based Terra Nova Nurseries. "Heat and humidity tolerance also reduces wasteful watering, which is all too important today, when concern for our resources is high and restrictions are common."

Plant experts like these develop plants that accommodate consumers' quest for unique, striking varieties that capture attention and follow important trends related to outdoor plant preferences. Many of these offerings also support landscapers' needs with new tolerance for pest pressures and weather extremes. In the end, knowing about the latest plant variety developments leads to a more informed installation project and successful maintenance job.

Six Summer Favorites for 2009



Bletilla ochracea 'Chinese Butterfly'
Photo Credit: Novalis Plants that Work

With few plants in the orchid family suited for the outdoors, *Bletilla ochracea* 'Chinese Butterfly' offers uncommon landscape possibilities. "Exclusive to the Novalis Plants that Work collection for 2009, 'Chinese Butterfly' features creamy-yellow flowers, accented by a dotted, maroon lip. These flowers are poised on delicate wands, blooming well into summer," says Guy. This variety is an exquisite shade perennial. Over time,

'Chinese Butterfly' will form large clumps to provide a large presence in the landscape, and it combines very well aesthetically with ferns. Hardy to USDA Zones 6b-9, 'Chinese Butterfly' reaches 12 to 15 inches tall. It is ideal for mulched, woodland gardens and prefers moist, well-drained soil.

Silver Vase, Incorporated offers an eco-friendly *Vriesea* 'Splendrite' bromeliad, grown clean and green under set IPM practices to provide pesticide residue-free plants. 'Splendrite' has a double stem, which offers added value for landscapers, with the perception of getting two plants for the price of one. As a double stem variety, 'Splendrite' offers a hardier plant that has enough energy and nutrients to sustain two spikes and live longer. It will bloom for a minimum of 8 weeks. Its bright-red blooms with variations of deep green and pale olive foliage make 'Splendrite' a novelty offering in high-temperature climates. Keep plants out of direct sun and water once every 10 to 14 days, when the media is dry. This is also an ideal variety for interiorscapers with large interior beds to fill in office buildings and complexes.

Often referred to as Northern Bush Honeysuckle, *Diervilla sessilifolia* 'Cool Splash' is an inaugural variegated form of *Diervilla* and will stop passers-by in their paths. Panicles of yellow trumpets cover this striking, variegated foliage, which will add



Vriesea Splendrite Bromeliad
Photo Credit: Silver Vase, Inc.

a whole new dimension to the landscape. "Cool Splash' is a densely branched deciduous shrub that forms underground suckers, which develop into colonies over time," says Guy. "When it is planted en masse in certain settings, like woodland gardens, it is absolutely spectacular." Hardy to USDA Zones 4-9, it reaches an average height of 2 to 3 feet and thrives in part shade and moist, well-drained soil. The plant is part of the Novalis Plants that Work collection.

"As the first tomato red *Echinacea* on the market, 'Tomato Soup' is expected to be a top summer landscaper pick for 2009," says Heims. "The plant features stunning, 5-inch, tomato red flowers that bloom in stark contrast with a deep black eye." A well-branched perennial, 'Tomato

Soup' will reach up to 3 feet tall and nearly as wide at maturity, showing excellent vigor until frost. Hardy to USDA Zones 4-9, 'Tomato Soup' has a clumping, upright habit that makes it easy to grow in full sun with good drainage. Blooming is prolonged by deadheading.

"Few plants are as charming in the landscape as *Dianthus gratianopolitanus* 'Petite,'" says Fran Hopkins, president and founder of Stepables, a line of creeping perennials. "This drought-



Diervilla variegata 'Cool Splash'
Photo Credit: Novalis Plants that Work

tolerant creeper features light gray foliage that fits snugly on the ground and covers completely, wherever it goes." Tiny pink



Echinacea 'Tomato Soup'
Photo Credit: Terra Nova Nurseries

flowers bloom on short spikes in early summer. Dianthus 'Petite' fills in perfectly around taller perennials, between pavers or as a lawn substitute. It should be planted in soil or gravel but needs sharp

drainage to be fully content. It is hardy to USDA Zone 4 and reaches only 1 inch in height, offering an alternative to turf. Plants should be spaced 6 inches apart in full to part sun for best results.

Tiareella 'Mystic Mist' is an excellent plant for four-season landscape intrigue. Bred by Terra Nova Nurseries for vigor, this Tiarella offers landscapers bright-green foliage with white, speckled variegation and red veins from spring to



Dianthus gratianopolitanus 'Petite'
Photo Credit: Stepables

fall. In spring, white, foam-like flowers bloom. "This vigorous foamy bells selection is wonderful as an accent or planted as a group, with striking pink tones apparent in fall and winter that add a little extra burst of color to a landscape design," says Heims. With a clumping habit, the plant reaches 5 inches tall with flowers stretching to 9 inches, and an 11-inch spread. 'Mystic Mist' is hardy to USDA Zones 4-8 and requires part shade and moist, well-drained media. **LM**

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