

AAS FLORASTAR FLEUROSELECT AARS WINNER'S CIRCLE

Here are this year's inductions into *Lawn & Garden Retailer's* annual Winner's Circle from AAS, AARS, Fleuroselect and FloraStar.

BY SARAH PAHNKE

The award-winning varieties selected by All-America Selections (AAS), All-America Rose Selections (AARS), Fleuroselect and FloraStar are judged on many characteristics. Every new variety released on the market does not undergo rigorous trials conducted in test gardens across the United States; however, the winners of the 2003-2004 growing season have completed extensive tests, usually over a two-year period and in multiple locations, where judges use a standardized grading system to evaluate the varieties' traits, including disease-resistance, hardiness, color and novelty. This process ensures that only the most extraordinary plants receive awards.

ALL-AMERICA SELECTIONS

Celosia plumosa 'Fresh Look Red'

is bred to thrive in the varied summer conditions of heat, humidity, drought and rain. Fresh Look Red performs well in full sun and will continue to cover up exhausted plumes by producing new feathery flower spikes and golden foliage throughout the long days of summer. With minimal maintenance and pest-free growth, the plant always looks fresh, does not require grooming and lives up to its name celosia, which means burning, an allusion to the brilliant color and shape of its flowers. Mature plants can reach 18 inches in height and spread 12-20 inches. Although recommended for 5- or 6-inch pots, Fresh Look Red will perform well in mass plantings for landscape use. (Also awarded by Fleuroselect).

In the same series, 'Fresh Look Yellow' blooms in abundance, often covering the plant. By regenerating numerous flower spikes

that cover up spent blooms, Fresh Look Yellow eliminates the need for deadheading. Fresh Look Yellow is extremely heat tolerant, flourishing despite humidity and severe weather, and is a good choice for combination planters and public gardens.

Gypsophila muralis 'Gypsy Deep Rose' forms an attractive mounded plant, with a high number of dark rose, double and semi-double blooms that are large in size, up to ¾ inch. Gypsy Deep Rose, evaluated in greenhouses for bedding plant performance, won the AAS Bedding Plant Award for the plant's many improvements over comparisons. It performs best in full sun, adapts well to container culture and requires little maintenance.

The first purple hollyhock available as a single color, 'Queeny Purple' was the shortest *Alcea rosea* evaluated. It will flower

prolifically the first year from a February or March sowing, with an abundance of frilly-edged, "powder puff" type blooms in light purple. Mature plants grow to a height of 20-30 inches. As a compact branching plant, it is suited for smaller garden spaces and performs well in pots.

Differing from all other single grandiflora petunias, 'Limbo Violet' (not pictured) has a unique combination of large flowers on a compact plant. Limbo Violet grows in mounds, which, at times, are completely covered with intense, dark violet, 3-inch or larger blooms. Growing only 6-7 inches tall and spreading 10-12 inches, Limbo Violet was selected for its improved plant habit when grown as a bedding plant; it is early to flower, the habit is restricted, it recovers quickly from severe weather and it is virtually maintenance free. ♦



Left to right: celosia 'Fresh Look Red'; celosia 'Fresh Look Yellow'; gypsophila 'Gypsy Deep Rose'; hollyhock 'Queen Purple'.

ALL-AMERICA ROSE SELECTIONS

Featuring dark green foliage, floribunda 'Day Breaker' is bushy upright with bright, multi-shade flowers in yellow blending to pink and apricot. From pointed and shapely buds, its spiraled blooms grow to 4 inches in diameter, with 30-35 petals per flower. This medium-height rose exhibits a moderate tea fragrance and makes a great addition to any garden because of its vigor and strength. Day Breaker was hybridized by Gareth Fryer and is being intro-

duced by Edmunds' Roses of Wilsonville, Ore.

'Honey Bloom' is a classic floribunda that has a spicy scent and exhibits excellent disease resistance, including rust and powdery mildew. Its bright, apricot-yellow blooms grow in large, open clusters with fast regrowth on the well-branched bush. Flowers are 4 inches in diameter with 25-30 petals, each flowering from a stem of 12-14 inches. Featuring dark, glossy foliage, plants grow approximately 3 feet in height and spread 2 feet. Honey Rose was hybridized by

Keith Zary and is being introduced by Jackson and Perkins Wholesale Inc., Medford, Ore.

A combination of 'Blueberry Hill' and 'New Zealand', the hybrid tea 'Memorial Day' is a medium-tall, bushy upright that features large, full-spiraled blooms with more than 50 petals per flower. Clothed with rich green foliage, Memorial Day's pink flowers are accented with a lavender wash and grow to 5 inches in diameter. Exhibiting a strong, damask rose fragrance, Memorial Day is a vigorous performer and highly disease resistant. It thrives in

hot weather and is easy to grow. Hybridized by Tom Carruth, Memorial Day is being introduced by Weeks Wholesale Rose Grower, Upland, Calif.

FLEUROSELECT

Coreopsis 'Heliot' is an easy-to-grow perennial whose sunny yellow flowers with dark centers provide garden color from June to November. Unlike most perennials, Heliot has an abundance of flowers within the first year of planting. The single, daisy-like blooms, which



Left to right: 'Day Breaker'; 'Honey Perfume'; 'Memorial Day'; coreopsis 'Heliot'.

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VARIETY INFORMATION

measure 1½–2 inches in diameter, prefer full sun environments. Heliot's compact and uniform habit makes the variety suitable for bedding and pot production. Heliot can proliferate in almost any kind of soil, making it a low-maintenance flower.

A stately annual that grows to 13½ inches high, *Lavatera trimestris* 'Novella' has a constant profusion of large, trumpet-shaped, rose-colored flowers. This dwarf variety has a compact and uniform habit, enjoys a significantly long growing season and associ-

ates well with shrubs and hardy perennials. In the months of July to September, the moderately fast growing Novella will make an attractive, low-growing hedge with its free-flowering and deep green foliage or will add dimension to any container arrangement.

Phlox 'Grammy Pink/White' presents a breakthrough in color patterns with its unique pink and white petals against a contrasting background of green foliage. Grammy Pink/White is an easy-to-grow compact border plant that has a multi-

tude of single, ½-inch blooms. Performing well in both sun and partial shade, the F1 hybrid reaches a height of 6 inches and spreads to 4 inches. This annual is an excellent plant to use in raised beds, patio tubs, edgings and flowerbeds, especially because of its long growing season and continuous flowering.

Celosia Plumosa 'Fresh Look Red' (see AAS Winners, page 56 for description).

FLORASTAR WINNERS

Fortune F1 pot gerbera pro-

vides uniformity and quality among all colors. FloraStar winners, Red with Dark Eye and Orange set a new standard for hybrid gerbera. Each flower's vibrant color is set off by a contrasting center and glossy green foliage. Red and Orange's short stems, medium to large flowers and heat tolerance make these varieties winners for both pot and garden plant production.

For more information, contact the Lawn & Garden Retailer editorial staff at (847)



Left to right: *Lavatera trimestris* 'Novella'; phlox 'Grammy Pink/White'; gerbera 'Fortune Orange'; gerbera 'Fortune Red with Dark Eye'.

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