

Perennial Highlights from the California Summer Trials



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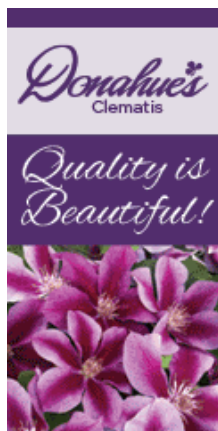
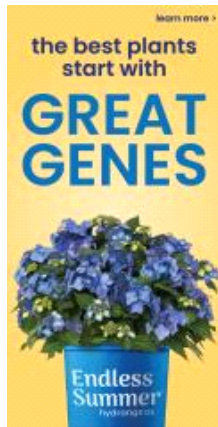
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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

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Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market



CAST 2021

Last month, I spent several days traveling in California to visit the trial locations at the California Summer Trials (CAST). As promised, I'm sharing some of the highlights of the great new perennial introductions that caught my eye. Below are the standouts I saw at PlantHaven, Green Fuse, Darwin Perennials and Kieft Seed.





PlantHaven

Cuphea Hummingbird's Lunch



Before I begin, I'd first like to ask for forgiveness, as the first plant at [PlantHaven](#) that caught my eye is not a perennial for most of you. This great cuphea is only hardy to Zone 8.

Now that I got that out of the way, let me tell you about Hummingbird's Lunch. This aptly named plant produces loads of bright cherry-red tubular flowers and blooms continuously throughout the growing season. As you can see, it makes a great basket, but also makes awesome patio containers or landscape plants.

Salvia Bodacious Hummingbird Falls



Since you were so forgiving with the last plant, I thought I'd push the boundaries and tell you about another great plant that's a perennial in Zone 8 and higher, but is definitely not a perennial for those of us in colder climates.

Bodacious Hummingbird Falls is the world's first hanging basket salvia, according to PlantHaven. It produces tons of nectar-rich, dark blue blooms with black calyxes. With its rounded habit, excellent branching and floriferous nature, it's no surprise Bodacious Hummingbird Falls is catching the attention of both hummingbirds and gardeners alike.

Rose Scentifall Lemon



Alright, I'll move on from the Zone-8 plants and onto a great Zone-5 plant. You should have seen PlantHaven CEO Robert Bett's reaction when he asked me which plant grabbed my attention the most and I quickly answered Rose Scentifall Lemon. He was caught off guard that I didn't select a perennial. Are roses perennials? Maybe they're marketed as woody ornamentals, but they do come back each year, which allows me to consider them as perennials in this newsletter.

Sure, the numerous lemon-yellow flowers caught my eye, but it was the sweet aromatic fragrance that captivated my senses. I can't even begin to describe the pleasant aroma, but, believe me, it was wonderful. With each light breeze, the flowers gave off a little more of the appealing scent.

Scentifall Lemon is highly resistant to diseases and repeat flowers. It was displayed as a hanging basket, but would make a stunning container or landscape plant. Give Scentifall Lemon a try—your senses won't be disappointed.

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Green Fuse Botanicals

Hydrangea Game Changer

After visiting the CAST trial locations and seeing all of the great new introductions, I'm typically asked what plants stood out the most. As with previous years, this year had a lot of great new perennials with various attributes and usually my response to this question is something like, "There were a lot of cool new perennials, but nothing game changing." This year I won't be able to give my usual response because there was a game changer—it's Hydrangea Game Changer from [Green Fuse](#).



Game Changer Pink Hydrangea



Game Changer Blue Hydrangea

The Game Changer series are interspecific hybrids that don't require vernalization and can be grown from unrooted cuttings to beautiful flowering plants in as little as 12 weeks. This is significantly less time than traditional hydrangeas require. The lacecap flowers are both attractive and trendy. There are currently three colors on the series: Blue, Pink and White.

The Game Changer series is versatile and can be used as container or landscape plants (or both) and is cold hardy all the way down to Zone 5. I'm thinking the Game Changer Hydrangea could be just that—a game changer.



Darwin Perennials

Coreopsis UpTick Red



The Uptick series has become incredibly popular in recent years. There's a lot to like about these coreopsis cultivars—they're very floriferous and produce loads of bright, bold flowers. This year, **Darwin Perennials** is adding one more color to the series: Uptick Red. Look at the intensity of the red on the flowers. Very eye-catching and has the same mounded habit as UpTick Yellow & Red. It grows 14-in. tall and is cold hardy to Zone 5.

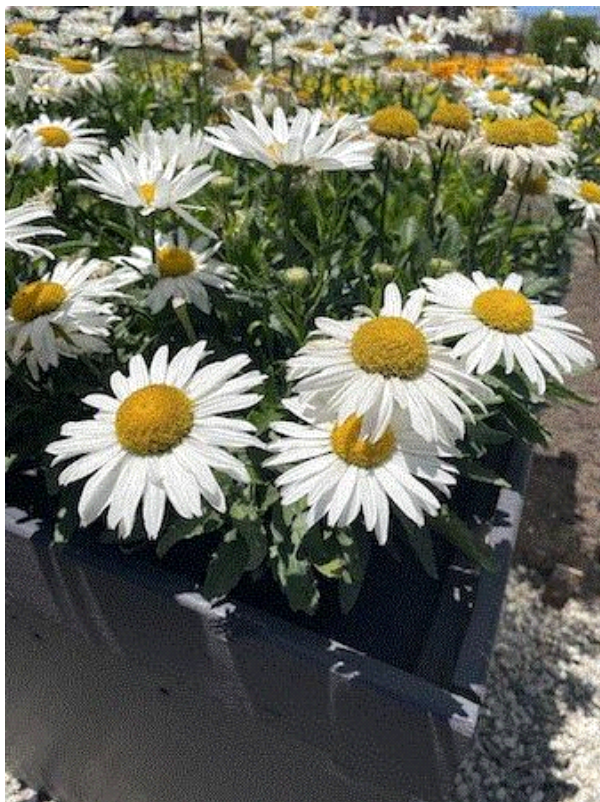
***Phlox paniculata* Super Ka-Pow Coral**



Darwin is also adding a great new cultivar to its Super Ka-Pow series of *Phlox paniculata*—it's Super Ka-Pow Coral. It sure packs a punch with its super-sized, vibrant coral blooms. Compared with competitive varieties on the market, it has better branching and great powdery mildew resistance. Super Ka-Pow Coral grows just 20-in. tall and puts on colorful summer displays throughout USDA Hardiness Zones 4 to 9.

Kieft Seed

Leucanthemum White Lion



Kieft Seed has a great new shasta daisy introduction—White Lion. It's truly a first-year flowering perennial. Not only does it not require vernalization, but White Lion can be grown into bloom under natural daylengths without photoperiodic lighting. This allows growers and retailers to have blooming plants available early in the season or to program it throughout the season, including for fall sales. Hardy to Zone 4.

I hope you enjoyed this sampling of the new perennials that were introduced at CAST. By no means is this it; there were lots of great new perennials on display. I'll share some of the standouts from the other trial sites in the next newsletter, as well as many other introductions in future issues. Stay tuned.

What's Happening Here?

In the last issue, I shared this image of a delphinium and asked for your help determining what happened to this plant.



To quickly recap, the symptoms occurred on numerous plants this spring. They appeared on the same area or place on the plants and the new growth that followed appeared normal.

I received fewer responses than I expected. This is probably due to the combination of the pandemic passing and due to summer vacations. I take no offense. Believe me, I'm happy for things to get back to normal, too.

The responses I received were:

- Due to some type of event
- A response to a pesticide or chemical application
- Sun hitting water droplets on the leaf and scalding/burning the leaf
- Stress event, such as heat or cold
- Virus
- Some type of crop application (pesticide/fertilizer)

I don't actually know the cause of these symptoms. However, based on where they were located on the plant and how the new leaves above them appeared normal, I suspect the symptoms were caused by some type of event that occurred a couple of weeks before I saw them. I'm not certain what that event was; I'm leaning towards an environmental event or response. My second guess would be a reaction to some type of chemical. Sorry I couldn't narrow this down any further.

Thanks for sending in your responses.

There's Still Time ...



... but barely. AmericanHort's Cultivate'21 begins this weekend. One of the industry's top events is back with its popular in-person event. If you've attended Cultivate in the past, you already know what a great opportunity it is to see what's new, attend educational sessions and to network. This year, there will be over 650 trade show exhibitors, more than 100 educational sessions, workshops, tours and more. Appropriate health and safety precautions will be followed in each area.

If you attend Cultivate'21 this weekend, be sure to stop by the OHP booth (# 2747) and say hello. I look forward to seeing you there. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Cultivate'21.

Hybrid National Symposium



Later this month, the Perennial Plant Association (PPA) will be hosting its National Symposium. This year, the PPA is offering a hybrid format. There will be a virtual symposium bringing world-class education through technology being held July 27-29, 2021. The second feature of the symposium are regional in-person PPA Pop-Ups being held at various locations nearly every week beginning August 5, 2021 through September 16, 2021.

There's not a better place to learn about perennials than the PPA Hybrid National Symposium. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about it.

Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. My email is ppilon@ballpublishing.com if you have any comments or suggestions.

Take care,

Paul Pilon

Editor-at-Large—*Perennial Pulse*

Technical Manager—OHP, Inc.

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