

Highlights from Darwin Perennials Day



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News and commentary for the perennial market



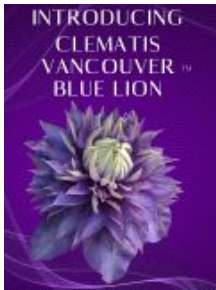
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024

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Perennial PULSE

News and commentary on the global perennial plant market



COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- Darwin Perennials Day
- Agastache Summerlong
- Delosperma Violet Flare
- Digitalis Lemon Cream
- Delphinium Red Lark
- Coreopsis Uptick Gold



Darwin Perennials Day

Last week I attended Darwin Perennials' 14th Annual Perennials Day. The sizzling perennial introductions weren't only hot because they were new, they were even hotter with the 90+ degree weather on that day.



More than 500 attendees from 150 companies weathered the heat and spent the day walking through the numerous trial beds, exploring the New Variety Showcase, checking out products from over 25 perennial suppliers and networking with their peers.

Although I can't possibly share everything Darwin Perennials Day had to offer in the newsletter, I can share a few of the highlights or perennials that caught my attention.



Agastache Summerlong Series

Perhaps the most talked about new perennial was the Summerlong series of agastache from Darwin Perennials. There are five exciting varieties in the series: Coral, Lilac, Lemon, Magenta and Peach.



Summerlong Lemon



Summerlong Peach



Summerlong Lilac



Summerlong Coral

First things first, these are *Agastache mexicana* cultivars, which unfortunately means they are not as cold hardy as many of us would like. Currently, Darwin has them listed as being hardy to Zone 7. Although this limits their use as a perennial in the landscape in northern parts of the country, the flower power and ease of production definitely makes them formidable candidates for spring, summer and even fall color programs in the North, while they are heat-loving and will perform well when marketed as either a perennial or annual in the South.

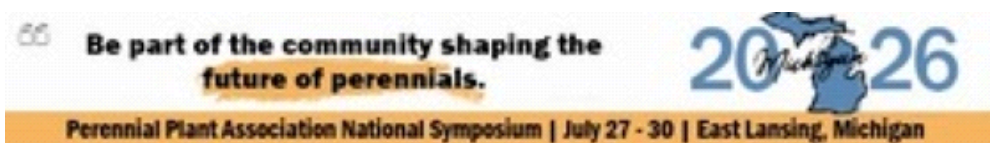
The Summerlong series blooms early and continuously, offering extended sales windows and great garden and container performance. They form dense, colorful mounds growing 16- to 22-in. tall. Their beautiful bright flowers are excellent at attracting pollinators and consumers. If you sell plants, the Summerlong series has a place in your product line regardless of your geographic location.



Delosperma Ocean Sunset Violet Flare



I must admit that I've taken a liking to delosperma over the past couple of years. Ocean Sunset Violet Flare from Darwin Perennials just makes me appreciate them even more. Not only does it produce an abundance of flowers, the Ocean Sunset series has the largest delosperma blooms on the market. That's a lot of flower power. It grows just 4- to 6-in. tall and is hardy to Zone 5. With its intense vivid, iridescent purple-pink flowers, drought tolerance, deer resistance and low maintenance, Ocean Sunset Violet Flare is an outstanding perennial for landscapes and containers.



Digitalis Arctic Fox Lemon Cream



It seems like the majority of the new perennials nowadays are selected for their medium or compact growing habits. It's sometimes hard to find just the right plant for backdrops or when height is needed in the landscape. This is only one of the reasons I like Arctic Fox Lemon Cream—it's not super tall but has respectable 2-ft. tall flower spikes. Arctic Fox Lemon Cream produces numerous stems loaded with light yellow flowers and it keeps blooming throughout the summer. Not only is this a great perennial for perennial beds, it makes a great thriller in large combination pots. Here are a couple more images to further show Lemon Cream's awesome appearance.

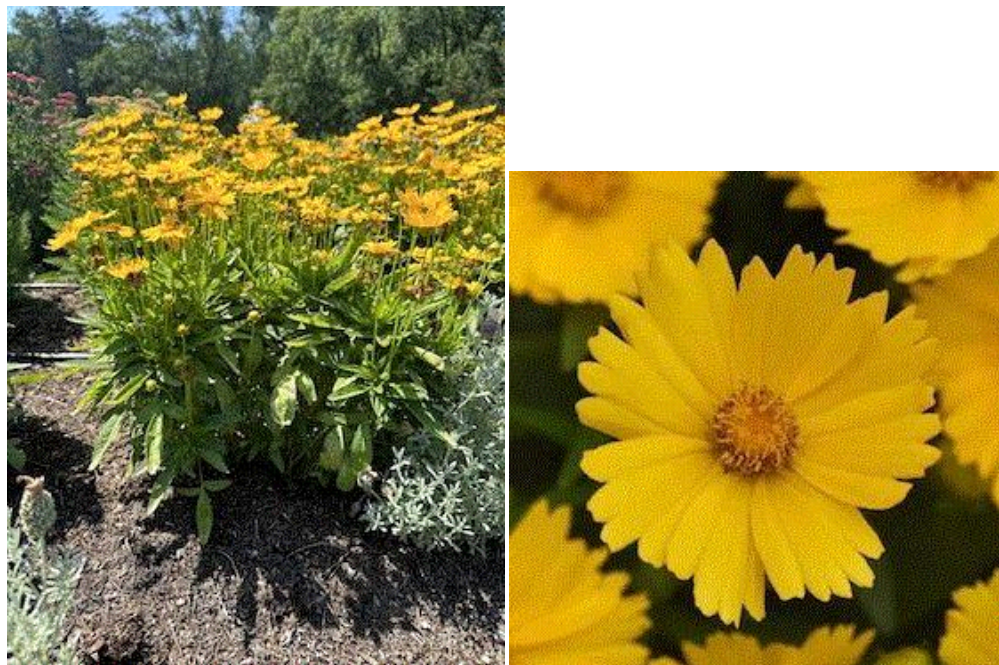


Delphinium Red Lark



Speaking of taller perennials, check out Delphinium Red Lark. It's not a new introduction this year, but was introduced a couple of years ago. This image from the trial bed does not do the plant justice. Red Lark develops unique coral red flowers reaching a modest 2 ½-ft. tall. This hybrid cultivar is produced by tissue culture, providing excellent uniformity, sterility and more longevity compared with seed strains. Red Lark is a great eye-catching garden perennial that also makes an excellent cut flower. Hardy to Zone 5.

Coreopsis Uptick Gold



As you can see, there were lots of great new perennials on display at Darwin Perennials Day. Before I sign off for the week, I thought I'd close out the newsletter with one final new perennial. It's none other than *Coreopsis Uptick Gold*. Uptick Gold is the newest addition to the series (there are now six colorful cultivars in the series). It covers itself with large, solid golden yellow blooms. Uptick Gold forms nice tidy, 16-in. mounds, flowers continuously all summer long, is very mildew resistant and is cold hardy to Zone 5.

Thanks for reading this edition of *Perennial Pulse*. My email is paul@opelgrowers.com if you have any comments, article suggestions or if you'd just like to say hello.

Best regards,

Paul

Paul Pilon
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Director of Growing—Opel Growers

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