




# Celebrate 2025 With These Perennial-of-the-Year Selections



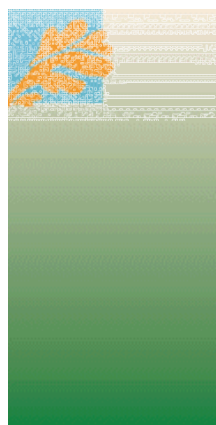
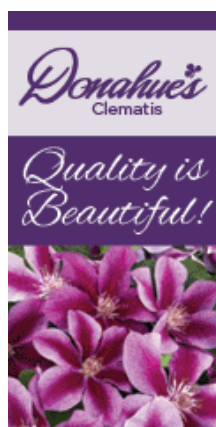
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#### COMING UP THIS WEEK:

It's 2025  
PPA's Perennial of the Year  
PW's Perennial of the Year  
Year of the ...  
Winter Trade Events

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## It's 2025



I can't believe it's already Week 2 of 2025. As I start the first newsletter of the new year, not only would I like to wish you a Happy New Year, but I'd like to thank you for being a loyal subscriber in 2024 and in previous years if you've beared with me for longer. How many of you have been with me since the first newsletter in 2014? Can you believe it's been nearly 11 years since the very first newsletter was sent out on **February 7, 2024**. A newsletter would certainly not survive 11 years if nobody read it.



So, once again, thanks to you for reading *Perennial Pulse* twice a month for nearly 11 years, and while I'm at it, I'd like to continue my sappy moment and give a special thanks to Bossman Beytes and the entire staff at Ball Publishing for inviting me to be part of their wonderful team and for all the support and editorial lessons they've provided over the years. Ya'll rock!



## PPA's Perennial of the Year

It seems it's becoming a tradition to start to the first newsletter of the year off with featuring the [Perennial Plant Association's](#) (PPA) 2025 Plant of the Year. I guess it wouldn't be right for me to break a tradition then. Drum roll, please ...

The PPA's 2025 Plant of the Year is ...

*Pycnanthemum muticum*



Photos: Chicago Botanic Garden.

*Pycnanthemum muticum* most commonly known as clustered mountainmint (less commonly as blunt mountainmint or short-toothed mountainmint) is not a mainstream perennial (at least not yet), but does have many appealing attributes.

Clustered mountainmint is in the mint family and does have scented leaves, but is not a true mint (*Mentha spp.*). It's a must-have perennial for pollinator gardens as it attracts tons of pollinators—it truly is a pollinator magnet. It grows 24- to 36-in. tall and spreads by underground rhizomes, but less aggressively than the true mints. *Pycnanthemum* covers itself with heads of tiny white to light pink blooms in the summer and continues flowering for several months. The aromatic foliage of this Zone-4 perennial is unpalatable to deer and rabbits.



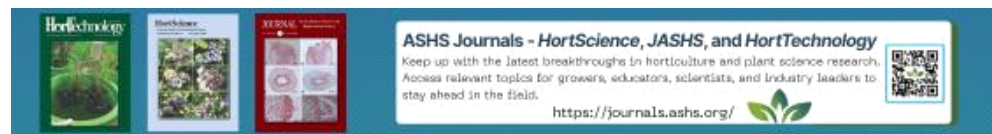
## Proven Winners' Perennial of the Year

PPA isn't the only organization that promotes a perennial of the year. Each year, Proven Winners selects a perennial from its offerings to feature as the National Perennial of the Year. These plants have been chosen for their proven excellence and ability to be used successfully nationwide by growers and gardeners alike.

The Proven Winners 2025 National Perennial of the Year is ... **Brunnera Jack of Diamonds**.



Jack of Diamonds is a giant version of the very popular cultivar Jack Frost. Jack of Diamonds has huge 9- to 10-in. overlapping leaves. The leaves have heavy silver overlays with vivid, wide, dark green veining. It produces cute clusters of baby blue, forget-me-not type flowers in mid-spring.



## Year of the ...

Besides the great individual perennials that were selected as plants of the year above, **National Garden Bureau (NGB)** selects a few plants in different categories to be their "Year of the ..." plants.



Rather than selecting an individual cultivar, they select an entire genus to promote each year. These plants are chosen because they're popular, easy-to-grow, widely adaptable, genetically diverse and versatile.

Growers and retailers can easily take advantage of the extra promotion these plants receive each year. Several perennials made the cut this year. NGB has designated 2025 as the "Year of the **Asclepias**."



With the Monarch butterfly being on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN) vulnerable list and the recent increase in interests in protecting pollinators, I think asclepias is an awesome selection for 2025. Did you know that asclepias is the only host plant for Monarch caterpillars?

Growers, landscapers and gardeners are mostly familiar with various cultivars of *Asclepias tuberosa*, such as the straight species or Hellow Yellow, and varieties of *Asclepias incarnata*, including Cinderella and Ice Ballet. Most growers aren't aware there are easily at least 15 other species of asclepias out there that can be used in landscapes and native plantings.

**Asclepias Possibilities**

<i>Asclepias asperula</i> ssp. <i>asperula</i> (Spider Milkweed)	<i>A. purpurascens</i> (Purple Milkweed)
<i>A. asperula</i> ssp. <i>capricornu</i> (Antelope Horns)	<i>A. speciosa</i> (Showy Milkweed)
<i>A. cordifolia</i> (Heartleaf Milkweed)	<i>A. subulate</i> (Rush Milkweed)
<i>A. eriocarpa</i> (Woollypod Milkweed)	<i>A. sullivantii</i> (Prairie Milkweed)
<i>A. exaltata</i> (Poke Milkweed)	<i>A. syriaca</i> (Common Milkweed)
<i>A. fascicularis</i> (Narrow-Leaved Milkweed)	<i>A. tuberosa</i> (Butterfly Milkweed)
<i>A. hirtella</i> (Tall Green Milkweed)	<i>A. verticillata</i> (Whorled Milkweed)
<i>A. humistrata</i> (Pinewoods Milkweed)	<i>A. viridiflora</i> (Green Comet Milkweed)
<i>A. incarnata</i> (Swamp Milkweed)	<i>A. viridis</i> (Green Milkweed)
<i>A. latifolia</i> (Broadleaf Milkweed)	

I encourage you to take advantage of the extra consumer awareness this initiative provides and to use the information below to promote asclepias in your perennial programs and IGCs.

- A FREE downloadable presentation of the "Year of the Asclepias" can be found on NGB’s SlideShare account.

- Interesting and informative “Did You Know?” signs and posters are available on [NGBs 2025 Year of the Asclepias](#) plant page.

## Winter Trade Events

The beginning of the New Year marks what I like to call the winter trade show season. A few events have already passed, but there are numerous upcoming opportunities to attend. Consider attending one or more of the following events to learn about new products, innovations, growing practices and to network with your peers. Simply click the name of the events below to learn about each of them.

January 21-23, 2025	<a href="#">Great Lakes Trade Expo</a> Grand Rapids, Michigan
January 21-23, 2025	<a href="#">Northern Green</a> St. Paul, Minnesota
January 22-23, 2025	<a href="#">CNLA Winter Symposium</a> Plantsville, Connecticut
January 22-24, 2025	<a href="#">Gulf States Horticultural Expo</a> Mobile, Alabama
January 28-31, 2025	<a href="#">IPM Essen</a> Essen, Germany
January 28-29, 2025	<a href="#">InVigorateU</a> Bloomington, Illinois
January 28-29, 2025	<a href="#">Total Pro Expo &amp; Conference</a> Edison, New Jersey
January 29-30, 2025	<a href="#">SC Green Conference &amp; Trade Show</a> Columbia, South Carolina
February 4-5, 2025	<a href="#">Plantarium Grown-Direkt Spring Edition</a> Hazerswoude/Boskoop, the Netherlands
February 6-7, 2025	<a href="#">Jacksonville Landscape Show</a> Jacksonville, Florida
February 6, 2025	<a href="#">Norcal Landscape &amp; Nursery Show</a> San Mateo, California
	<a href="#">HortiContact</a>

February 18-20, 2025

Gorinchem, the Netherlands

February 19-21, 2025

MyPlant & Garden

Fiera Milano, Italy

February 26, 2025

Landscape New Jersey  
Trade Show & Conference

Secaucus, New Jersey

February 26-28, 2025

iLandscape

Schaumburg, Illinois

My email is [paul@opelgrowers.com](mailto:paul@opelgrowers.com) if you have any comments, article suggestions or if you'd just like to say hello.

Best regards,



Paul Pilon

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Director of Growing—Opel Growers

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