

NEWS RELEASE

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New Plants Win 2017 Green Thumb Awards



The five best new plant varieties for 2017 have won 2017 Green Thumb Awards presented by the Direct Gardening Association (formerly called the Mailorder Gardening Association). Honored in the Plants, Bulbs and Seeds division were the Purple Pillar™ Rose of Sharon (*H. syriacus* 'Gandini Santiago' USPP 25,568, Can PBRAF) from Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Flowering Shrubs, Invincibelle® Ruby *Hydrangea* (*H. arborescens* 'NCHA3' USPP 20,765, Can 4,159) from Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Flowering Shrubs, Hesperaloe parviflora "Coral Glow" PPAF from High Country Gardens, Four O'Clock 'Orange Crush' from Select Seeds Co., and Calendula 'Snow Princess' from Select Seeds Co.

Winners of the 2017 Green Thumb Awards were chosen by an independent panel of garden writers and editors. The winning products were selected based on their uniqueness, technological innovation, ability to solve a gardening problem or provide a gardening opportunity, and potential appeal to gardeners.

The Green Thumb Awards recognize outstanding new garden products available by mail or online. The awards are sponsored by the Direct Gardening Association (DGA), the world's largest nonprofit association of companies that sell garden products directly to consumers via catalogs and websites. For more information visit www.directgardeningassociation.com.

2017 Green Thumb Award Winners ~ Plants, Bulbs and Seeds ~

Purple Pillar™ Rose of Sharon

(*H. syriacus* 'Gandini Santiago' USPP 25,568, Can PBRAF)

Proven Winners ColorChoice Flowering Shrubs

Purple Pillar™ is a totally unique rose of Sharon; it naturally grows as a narrow column instead of a wide, spreading plant. It gets to be just 2-3' (.6-.9m) wide and 10-16' tall. Think of what you could do with that: screens, hedges, patio containers. Anywhere you need a little privacy and/or color in a narrow space, this plant is a great choice. Like most all hibiscus, it will be best in full sun. It is hardy to USDA Zone 5. Available in one quart pot (\$17.99) and one gallon pot (\$39.99) in spring 2017 from Proven Winners, 1-815-899-1973, or www.provenwinners.com.





**Invincibelle® Ruby *Hydrangea* (*H. arborescens* 'NCHA3' USPP 20,765, Can 4,159)
*Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Flowering Shrubs***

This dark burgundy red flower buds of Invincibelle® Ruby opens to a two-toned combination of bright ruby red and silvery pink. The foliage is extra dark and stems are strong, making this new hydrangea a gem in any garden. It is a strong re-bloomer that will be an excellent addition to any garden. Like other smooth hydrangeas, it flowers on new growth and so blooms every year without fail. Available in one quart pot (\$17.99) and one gallon pot (\$39.99) in spring 2017 from Proven Winners, 1-815-899-1973, or www.provenwinners.com.



**Hesperaloe parviflora 'Coral Glow' PPAF
*High Country Gardens***



Hesperaloe parviflora "Coral Glow" PPAF (Coral Glow Texas Yucca) blooms from late spring through fall, with six-foot-tall spikes of glowing coral-orange flowers. This plant is ever-blooming because it is essentially sterile; instead of putting its energy into growing seeds, it flowers all summer long. A cross between a red and yellow Texas Yucca, Hesperaloe parviflora 'Coral Glow' PPAF is an HCG exclusive introduction. A hummingbird magnet, it has been an outstanding performer in founder and chief horticulturist David Salman's Santa Fe garden. Drought resistant/drought tolerant plant (xeric). 5-6 ft. tall x 3-4 ft. wide. Full Sun; Zones 5-9; \$15.99 for a 5" deep pot. There are only 400 plants available for spring 2017 and is anticipated to sell out quickly from High Country Gardens, 1-800-925-9387, www.highcountrygardens.com.



Four O’Clock ‘Orange Crush’ *Select Seeds Co.*

A cottage garden favorite, Four O’Clock ‘Orange Crush’ (a.k.a Orange), has gorgeous saturated orange trumpet shaped flowers with pleated star markings that add a hint of salmon pink as the flower matures. The sweetly fragrant blooms open in the afternoon through the evening, and are pollinated by night flying moths. A vigorous bushy habit with dark green healthy foliage is completely covered summer until frost with clustered flowers. 2’ tall x 2’ wide. Annual to tender perennial, hardy in zones 8-10, Four O’Clock has tubers that may be dug in colder climes to store and replant in spring, and is easy to grow from seed planted after frost danger in mid-spring. There are approximately 1000 packets of Four O’Clock Orange Crush available for \$2.99 per pack from Select Seeds Co., 1-800-684-0395, or www.selectseeds.com.



Calendula ‘Snow Princess’ *Select Seeds Co.*



This new introduction from a renowned seed farm in the Netherlands is a swirl of butter yellow buds and freshly opened petals that when fully open, are snow white brushed with yellow on the reverse. Just as the elusive white marigold burst on the scene in the 1960’s, this new introduction is the first white Calendula ever and is sure to attract gardeners’ attention! The 1.5’ across double blooms show off cinnamon hued centers. A reliably double flowered form that is tall and graceful and easy to grow, ‘Snow Princess’ makes a floriferous addition to spring and fall gardens in warmer areas, and adds all season color in cooler

summer areas, or where nights are cool. Deadhead for continued bloom. 20” tall by 1-1.5’ wide. Hardy annual. There are approximately 500 packets of Calendula ‘Snow Princess’ available from Select Seeds Co. for \$2.99 per pack, 1-800-684-0395, or www.selectseeds.com.