



'Purple Flash'

### PanAmerican Seed

'Purple Flash' ornamental pepper is a Fantastic Foliage and Hot Summer Survivors selection. Plants are uniform in size (compact and mounded) and foliage pattern across the crop. This variety is great for combination and small premium pot programs.

Tecoma 'Mayan Gold' is a compact, heat-loving plant that produces large gold flowers and glossy green leaves that add an upscale, exotic look to beds and mixed containers. It can be used as a long-blooming tropical shrub in the south and a summer annual in the north.



'Mayan Gold'

### Proven Winners

New to the Supertunia petunia series are Vista Silverberry and Citrus. Vista Silverberry offers the same great landscape performance as other Vista varieties, with blooms that are silvery white in the heat and blush pink in cooler temperatures. Heat and humidity tolerant, it reaches 16 to 20 inches tall and 24 inches wide, thriving in full sun to part shade. Citrus is an excellent performing yellow variety reach-



'MiniFamous Double Yellow'

ing 8 to 12 inches tall and 18 inches wide. The soft yellow blooms will be an excellent trailer that flowers consistently all season long in full sun.

'Laguna Heavenly Lilac' lobelia offers rich, jewel-tone flowers with the same superior heat tolerance as the rest of the series, flowering early and offering a mounding/trailing habit. It will reach 8 to 10 inches tall with a 12- to 14-inch spread. Full sun to partial shade.

### Selecta First Class

'MiniFamous Double Yellow' is one of two new additions the series. It has the best plant habit of all the doubles yet, outstanding outdoor performance, and it flowers the earliest. MiniFamous Double is the only double flowering calibrachoa available, ideal for any spring annual program.

Four new varieties join the LaRita argyranthemum series, consisting now of nine medium-vigorous varieties. 'LaRita Double Lemon' has double lemon flowers, medium-high vigor, and performs great outdoors.

### Skagit Gardens

Centradenia 'Blushing Cascade' features light pink blossoms that contrast dramatically with dark, reddish bronze leaves. Blooming nearly nonstop all summer, trailing foliage turns an orange and crimson in the fall. Excellent for containers and hanging baskets.

### Syngenta Flowers

'Torrie Blue' torenia is an early blooming variety with great branching on a dense plant habit. Torrie stays in bloom all season long, making it ideal for late summer sales. With its showy, large bicolor flowers Torrie is a hit at retail.

Sidekick ipomoea offers a semi-

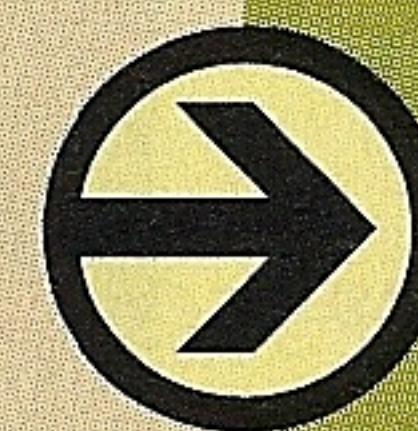


'Torrie Blue'



Sidekick

compact, bushy habit, making it ideal for mixed containers. This versatile grower, available in three colors – black, black heart and lime – is an excellent sun or shade performer. **GG**



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# More Shrubs That Can Be Greenhouse Forced

Here are a few more varieties that will thrive on the bench.

by **ALLAN M. ARMITAGE**

In the last installment, I sorted many common shrubs into "ease of forcing" groups, based on characteristics such as their visual impact in a container and disease problems.

**Group 1:** Would not fit into a mixed container program for the spring, including those with no outstanding features to their foliage or susceptible to disease. Since flowers were only formed on next year's growth, forcing for flowers was out of the question.

**Group 2:** Will work for a spring program, but with numerous problems such as poor form, inconsistency of growth or flowering or unstable variegation.

**Group 3:** These plants work in the greenhouse, but require a bit more time, more marketing, etc.

**Group 4:** Plants that are easily forced and catch the eye. This group proved to be the most uniform, most colorful and most appealing to the eye of the consumer.

We determined the need, if any, for cold for all the shrubs brought into

the program and sensitivity, if any, to photoperiod for many of them. Rooted liners in 32 tray packs were subjected to 33°F to 37°F in coolers for zero, four, six, eight or 10 weeks. Photoperiod treatments (long days or short days) were provided after the plants were removed from the cooler, planted in gallon containers and placed on the bench. The research was conducted on many taxa over a period of three years. No growth regulators were applied.

Here are a few others that fit in Group 4. Due to funding limitations, we did not look at them as closely as other subjects.

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**Buddleia 'Peacock'**

1. **Buddleia 'Peacock':** One of the better butterfly bushes we trialed.

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Weeks in cooler z	Weeks to finish
0	14 ay
6	11 b
8	11.5 b
10	12 b

z 34°F-37°F  
y values followed by the same letter are not significantly different at p=0.05

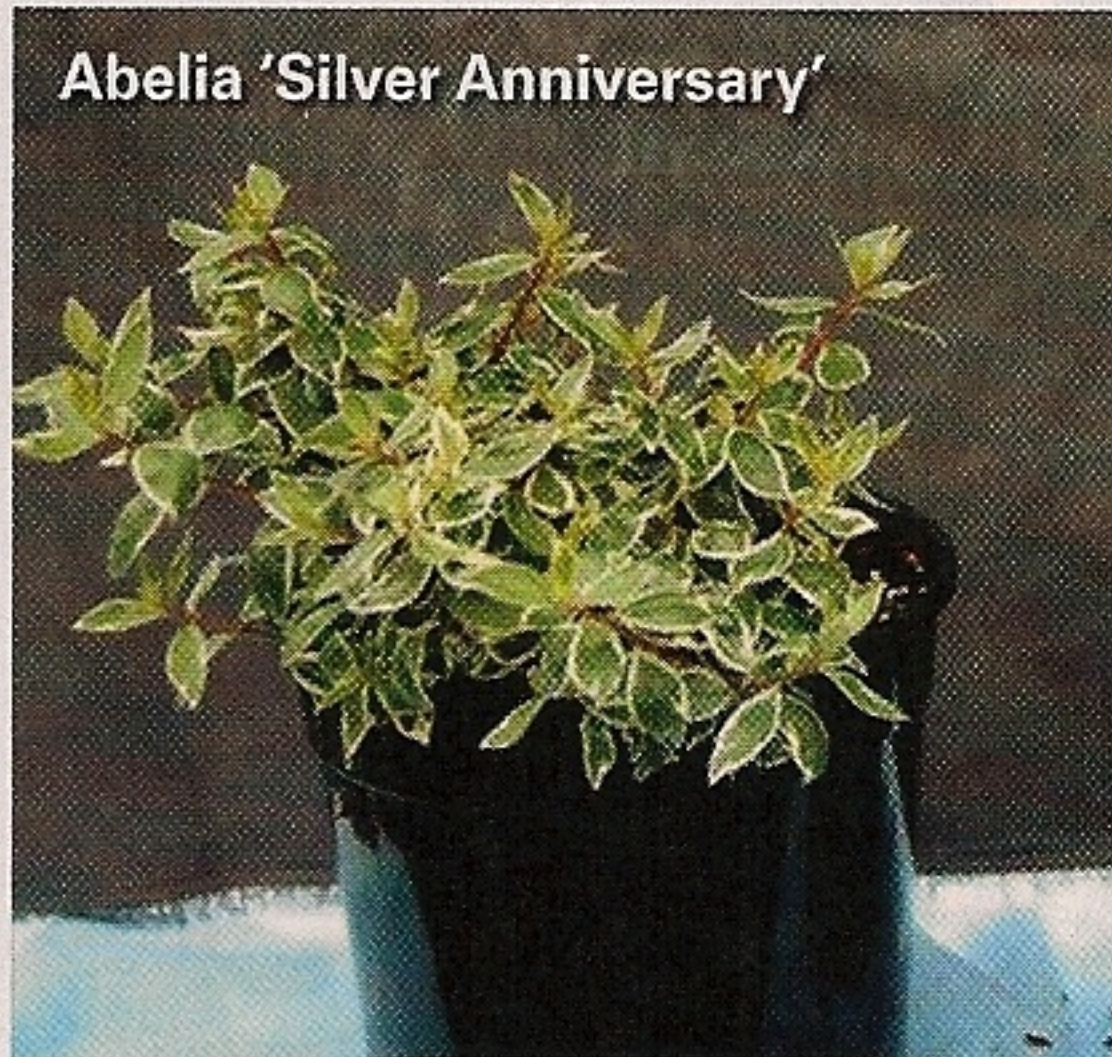
**Comments:** Cold not necessary, this is one of the few shrubs that flower sufficiently on the bench. A short duration of cold reduced the bench time.

**Recommendation:** Receive plants in



November, cool for six weeks. Plant in final containers and place on bench.

**Results:** A marketable plant will finish in 11 weeks in a gallon container.



Abelia 'Silver Anniversary'



Kolkwitzia 'Dream Catcher'

**2. Abelia 'Silver Anniversary':** An excellent variegated shrub for the South. The variegation is appealing and stable. z 34°F-37°F

Weeks in cooler z	Weeks to finish	% death
0	21 ay	0
6	18 b	5
8	never	65
10	never	100

y values followed by the same letter are not significantly different at p=0.05

**Comments:** Do not cool more than 6 weeks, and if long crop time is accept-

able, do not cool at all. Cooling results in rapid death.

**Recommendation:** Receive cuttings in early November, transplant to final containers and place on bench.

**Result:** A marketable plant approximately four to five months after planting in a 1-gallon container.

**3. Kolkwitzia 'Dream Catcher':** One of our favorite shrubs, producing pendulous stems of coppery gold leaves. Very cold hardy. z 34°F-37°F

y values followed by the same letter are not significantly different at p=0.05

**Comments:** Plants require cold or LD (data not shown).

If provided with LD, little cold is needed. However if LD are not possible, cold is required

**Recommendations:** Receive cuttings in November, place in cooler for six weeks and then provide LD (night break lighting) in the greenhouse, or leave in cooler for eight weeks if plants are to be grown under natural winter days.

Weeks of cold	Weeks to finish
0	never
6	17 a
8	12 b
10	12 b

**Results:** A marketable plant in 12 weeks in a gallon container.

In summary, there are dozens of shrubs that can be grown in the greenhouse.

There are many problems; probably the most limiting is the lack of a consistent supply of uniform cuttings. This is where the research efforts should be concentrated in the future.

These articles demonstrably show that forcing shrubs can be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time. The selection is important, as we have also shown that not all plants lend themselves to these practices. I have no doubt the retail market is ready for more shrubs than ever before. With a proper marketing program, good signage and a consistent product, I see shrubs as the next perennials. After all, they are simply "perennials with bark." **GG**

**About the author:** Allan Armitage is a professor, Department of Horticulture, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga. E-mail him at [allan@greenhousegrower.com](mailto:allan@greenhousegrower.com). Armitage has conducted this research with great help from Natalia Hamill, Stephanie Anderson and Michael Plattner. They would like to thank Proven Winners, Bonsall, Calif., and Spring Meadow Nursery, Grand Haven, Mich., for supporting this research.



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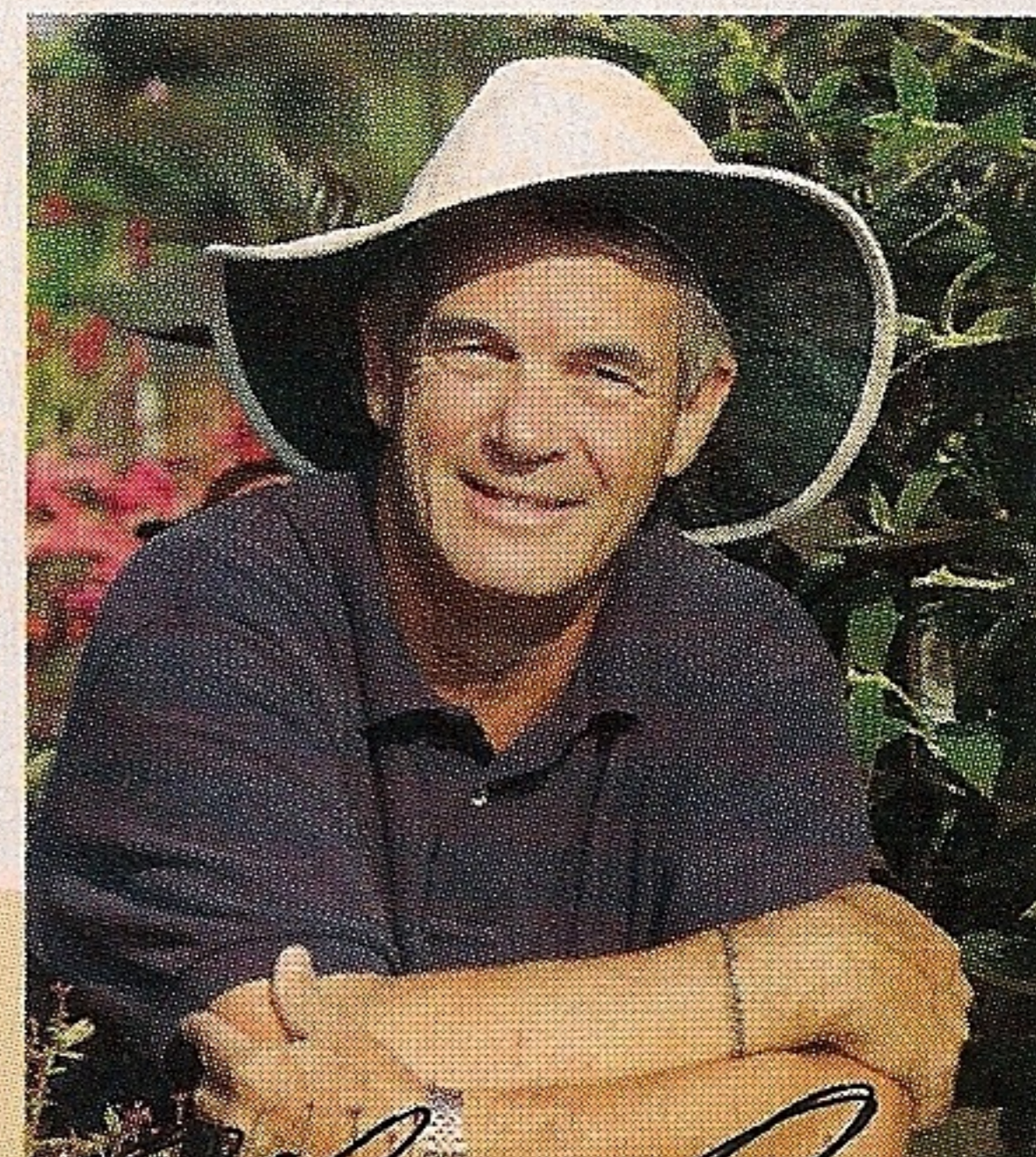
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By: Allan Armitage • allan@greenhousegrower.com

## The Plants That Got Us Here



*Allan Armitage*

I have recently been listening to some interesting comments from growers, marketers and retailers. Everyone agrees that breeding, selecting, evaluating and finally introducing a cultivar take extraordinary time, talent and money. However, we all seem to have accepted the concept, whether true or not, that people don't know anything about – nor care to know anything about – cultivars.

We have accepted the word of marketers that gardening has become less popular because it is perceived as work, whereas landscaping is popular because someone else can do it for us.

We have learned that we not are selling plants but selling a lifestyle, but we can't define what lifestyle means.

No wonder we are confused.

Although those maxims may be true, I still can't get away from the fact that new and great plants will always be necessary, even if no one cares but us. My daughters are definitely cultivar-impaired, but lifestyle rich and they depend on us to provide the right plants, since they don't have a clue. That makes our job of selecting the right cultivar more important than ever.

People are forever asking about the newest and best, and a few old-timers like me can't help but look at a bed of 30 new and different lantanas, for example, and wonder, "How did they get so good?" In many cases, a single introduction propelled a genus to the spotlight, resulting in dozens of new cultivars and significant improvements for the landscaper/gardener and retailer.

In keeping with the fact that cultivars don't just improve on their own, I have thought a good deal about those "plants that made a difference."

Here are my choices for my 10 most significant annuals and perennials

in our business. Most of them could be defined as "the plants that got us here," and therefore tend to be more historic in perspective.

Over many glasses of fine wine, I came up with these lists knowing that:

- Many of these are "historic" and in fact may not be as popular as they once were.
- These are my personal choices, and not backed by sales figures or panels of experts.
- People will disagree.

### Armitage's Choices for the Ten Most Significant Annuals

**Begonia 'Dragon Wing.'** What a terrific plant! It allowed us to finally see the importance of this huge genus, and was the catapult for all non-wax begonias. It worked everywhere and is still immensely popular. 'Dragon Wing' helped the market accept rex type begonias and wonderful new introductions like 'Bonfire.'

**Calibrachoa Million Bells/Lirica Showers.** These two series were the earliest in the legions of calibrachos that have since appeared. People still use Million Bells as the common name for the genus. Even though they were not without problems, they opened the floodgates.

In our trials this year, we have over 50 new cultivars, none of them were even on the market two years ago.

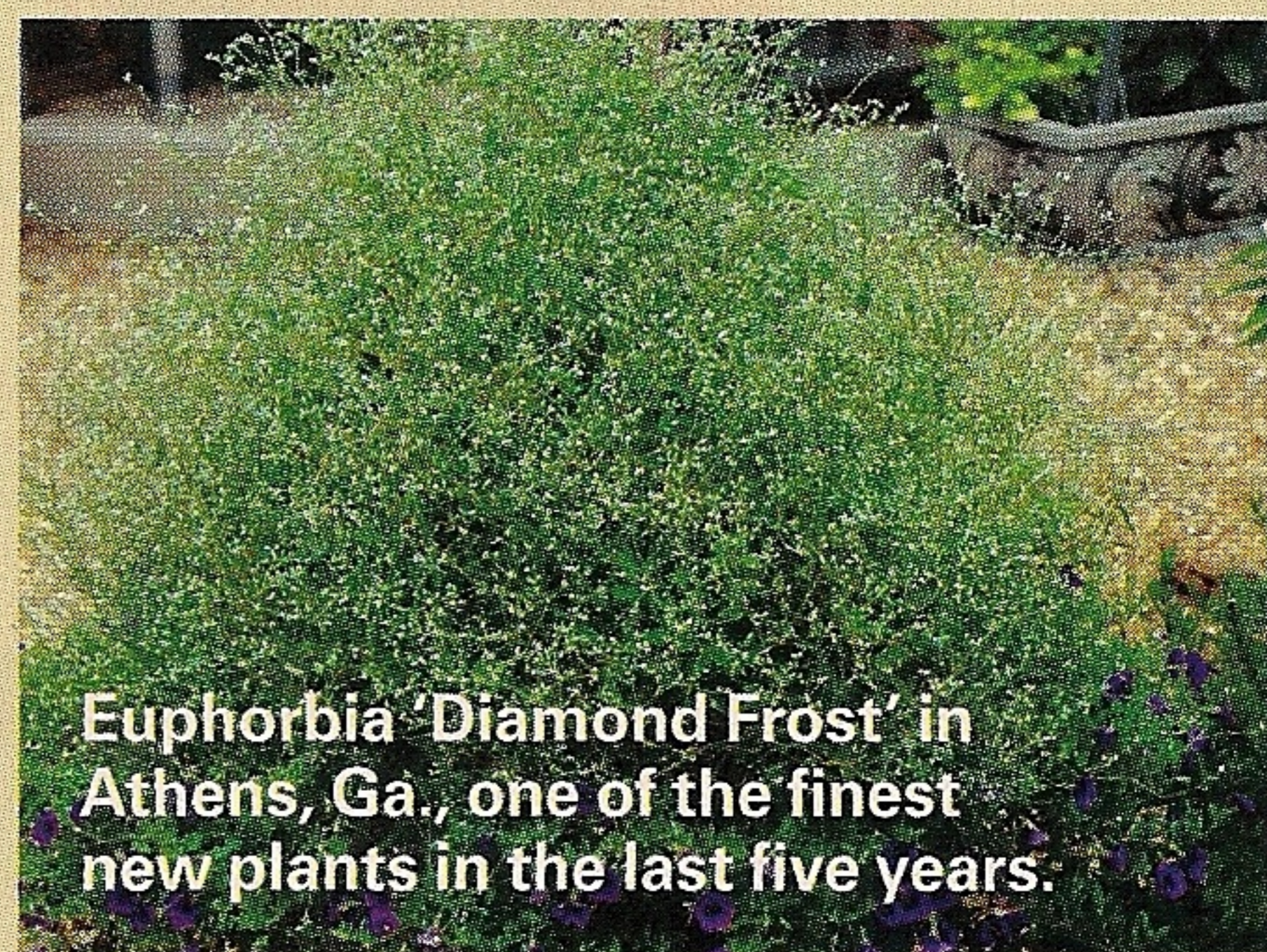
**Coleus Sunlover series.** Introduced



**Begonia 'Dragon Wing' and 'Margarita' sweet potato adorning the city hall in Niagara On The Lake, Ontario.**



**Calibrachoa 'Million Bells Cherry Pink,' one of the many new cultivars from the original series.**



**Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost' in Athens, Ga., one of the finest new plants in the last five years.**

modestly over 10 years ago, this was the first series of coleus to exhibit full sun tolerance everywhere in the country. Although they were soon eclipsed by the Solar series and then dozens more, they helped the concept of sun-coleus grow. Of the original seven in the Sunlover series, a few such as 'Rustic Orange' and 'Red Ruffles' are still popular. The surge in the popularity of sun-loving coleus has been nothing short of phenomenal.

**Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost.'** A plant that appeared out of the blue about five years ago, it has proven to be so good in so many parts of the country that it must be on this list. I notice that other selections from 'Diamond Frost' are in our trials this year, so perhaps it will also be a trailblazer for other