

**Heroes and Villains in the Garden**  
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Every year about this time gardeners start looking towards the future and make decisions about what to do in their yards and gardens during the upcoming growing season. They start reading intently the many seed catalogs that arrive almost daily. They share seeds with friends and neighbors. They look for new and better landscape plants. I am no exception to this rule. Recently, I read an article in *Birds & Blooms* entitled "New Plants for 2011" and thought I would share these new plants with you.

**Superbells Coralberry Punch calibrachoa** (*Calibrachoa hybrid*) is an annual *Calibrachoa* hybrid with cheerful coral flower and burgundy throats. This Proven Winners selection from the Superbells® collection has showy flowers that bounce back after a rainy or dry period and look great in containers and hanging baskets. Hummingbirds are attracted to season long coral-colored blooms.

**Coconut Ice sunflower** (*Helianthus annuus* 'Coconut Ice') is a new sunflower and the first true white sunflower. Burpee Home Gardens introduced this awesome sunflower which starts out as a creamy white fading to white as it matures. Flower heads are 4 to 8 inches across on top of a 5 to 6 foot tall plant. Coconut Ice works well as a cut flower and looks just like a coconut as the season heads toward fall.

**Little Devil ninebark** (*Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Donna May') is hardy in zones 3 to 7. A Bailey Nurseries introduction with deep-burgundy foliage is an easy to grow low-maintenance shrub. Perfect for the smaller yard as the shrub only grows to a height of 3 to 4 tall and wide and displays small white-link flowers in June.

**American Hero hosta** (*Hosta* 'American Hero') is a Walters Gardens introduction in honor of military families. A portion of the proceeds is donated to Project EverGreen for US Troops. This hosta has wide dark-green margins with a creamy-white center speckled to green. It grows 12 inches high and 22 inches wide. It is a tough and durable hosta for zones 3 to 9.

**Black Velvet petunia** (*Petunia x hybrid*) is the first black petunia introduced by Ball Horticulture. It is a perfect plant for containers and works well with other sun-loving plants. Its unique black color makes it a wonderful backdrop to brightly hued flowers.

**Garden Glow dogwood** (*Cornus hesseyii* 'Garden Glos') is a plant that shines in all seasons. It is a red-twigged dogwood with lime-green foliage in summer turning burgundy and pink in the fall. In winter, the bright-red stems will show through the snow giving it nice winter interest. It is a slow growing shrub to a height of 2 to 3 feet and wide, perfect for smaller landscapes.

Source: *Birds and Blooms* website, [www.birdsandblooms.com](http://www.birdsandblooms.com)

Again, it is that time of the year to select plants for the 2011 growing season. I have only begun to scratch the surface with the plants presented here. For more information feel free to call me at 605-394-2188 or drop me an e-mail at [ricky.abrahamson@sdstaate.edu](mailto:ricky.abrahamson@sdstaate.edu).