

HighLights

Trial Gardens and HortResearch at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station

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Published by Dr. Gene Blythe

As we move through June, warm days and warm nights are upon us, testing the heat tolerance of plants in our trials gardens. Now is the time when varieties demonstrate their ability to last into summer or end their performance with the passing of milder spring weather.



'Tidal Wave Silver' spreading petunia from PanAmerican, a 2002 All-America Selections winner, has been the most heat tolerant petunia in our gardens, and is the standard by which we judge heat tolerance of newer varieties. The photo above shows 'Tidal Wave Silver' petunias cascading from elevated growing containers. Microsprinklers in each container provide water.



Last year, Terra Nova Nurseries in Oregon sent several perennials for testing in our 2013 Trial Gardens. One unique selection that performed admirably in our warm climate and returned to grow and flower again in spring 2014 is *Phygellus* 'Lemon Spritzer'. Although recommended by Terra Nova for shade or part shade, we had some plants that did quite well in full sun with only some late afternoon shade. The variegated foliage was attractive, even when plants were not in flower. The Cape fuchsia is named for the resemblance of the flowers to fuchsias, but is actually closer related to snapdragons.

The Fresh Look series of celosia (from Benary) is providing some of the most intense flower colors in our Trial Gardens this month. 'Fresh Look Red', 'Fresh Look Orange', and 'Fresh Look Yellow' are shown to the right. The red and yellow varieties were both AAS winners in 2004. All Fresh Look celosia varieties are well branched with multiple, long-lasting plumes, and have been dependable performers year after year.



Cannas from American Takii's Tropical series are now coming into flower. Shows above are Rose (a 1992 AAS Winner), Red, and Yellow varieties. These dwarf cannas are easily grown from seed.



Cuphea 'Vermillionaire' (above), an upcoming introduction from Proven Winners, is already making a big impression on visitors, the uniform plants covered with orange firecracker-like flowers