

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1051
Phoenix, AZ

P.O. Box 2500 • Litchfield Park, AZ 85340
Located at 10020 W. Glendale Ave. • Glendale, AZ 85307
toll free 800-840-8509 • phone 623-247-8509
fax 623-247-6354 • email sales@mswn.com

SUMMER HOURS

NURSERY: 6:00 am to 2:30 pm

OFFICE: 6:00 am to 3:30 pm

Monday through Friday. Closed Weekends.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 3 - 6

Winning With Arboriculture, 2003 Annual Conference and Trade Show sponsored by the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture.

Stardust Hotel and Resort, Las Vegas, NV
Information: Contact the Western Chapter office at 530-892-1118 or visit www.wcisa.net

May 16

Desert Horticulture Conference sponsored by the University of Arizona.
Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, AZ

Information: Contact Judy Alexander at 520-573-5155 or visit <http://ag.arizona.edu/deserthort>

May 28 - June 1

Second Annual Lone Star Regional Native Plant Conference, in association with the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference
Pineywoods Native Plant Center, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX

Information: Contact Elyce Rodewald at 936-468-1832 or visit www.sfasu.edu/ag/arboretum/pnpc/index.htm

June 6 - 7

All About Trees Annual Conference and A Day of Tree Climber Safety sponsored by the Arizona Community Tree Council, Inc.
Prescott Resort Conference Center, Prescott, AZ

Information: Contact 480-899-9831

May/June

SOMETHING NEW TO YOU?

Over the last thirty plus years, Mountain States has been recognized as a leader in the introduction of new plants adapted to the harsh climate of the southwest. We take a great deal of pride in the fact that we have brought to the industry scores of plants that were previously unused or at least were under appreciated. We have collected and evaluated numerous plants for suitability, some of which were discarded as unfit. Those we consider to be winners we offer to the green industry.

Many of these plants have come to us by way of friends within the business through trades for other plants, by exploration trips to various deserts and sometimes simply by accident. Occasionally you stumble upon an excellent plant right in your own back yard.

We would like to introduce the following plants or provide additional information if you if you have seen them.

Malpighia glabra 'Mariquita'

One of the plants found in close proximity to home is a compact selection of Barbados cherry that originally came from the Scottsdale garden of prominent author Mary Irish. George Hull, our Director of Research & Development, produced this introduction. We offer this cultivar in Mary's honor under the name 'Mariquita' which literally means Little Mary in Spanish.

Obviously from the common name, Barbados cherry, you might correctly guess that this wonderful plant hails from the tropical Americas. It has a natural range from South and Central America, Mexico, and into southernmost Texas, notwithstanding the islands of the Caribbean. The species often reaches 10 feet or more in height, but this particular selection remains more diminutive in stature, perhaps only reaching 4 feet.

Known as Acerola in the West Indies, this plant was once cultivated for the fruit that contains a rich source of ascorbic acid (AKA, vitamin C) not to mention vitamin A, iron and calcium. In fact, this plant was grown commercially in Hawaii and Puerto Rico until synthetic production of vitamin C eliminated the natural market. Health food stores still market Acerola for the potent antioxidant qualities.

'Mariquita' has small, medium green wavy leaves, which makes it ideal as a compact, informal hedge-type shrub. In addition, from early summer to fall it is adorned with small light pink flowers that faintly resemble those of a crape myrtle. Each 5 petaled flower is about 1/2 inch. These are occasionally followed by a bright red, cherry-like fruit known as a drupe. It is not uncommon to have both flowers and fruit appear at the same time. Typically the tart but edible fruit is one-half to one inch in diameter, but our selection has much smaller fruit. The flavor has been described as sweetly acidic with a slight hint of apple. Barbados cherry may be collected

for preserves or eaten from hand. The fruit is sought by birds and other wildlife as well, so you had better get an early start.

Listed for USDA Zones 9-11, 'Mariquita' is considered evergreen to about 25°F, and is root hardy to 20°F. In colder regions, the plant may be utilized as an attractive potted plant for the patio. It thrives in reflected heat and loves lots of sun. Although considered fairly drought tolerant, the plant may shed leaves in time of extreme dryness. Good drainage is a must for this plant otherwise it has few other requirements. The only problem we have seen on the plant is an occasional attack of aphids on new growth.

Duranta erecta 'Sweet Memory'

Have you been looking for a very large shrub to screen that unsightly view next door? Well we might have just the answer. This fellow may reach 18 to 25 feet in height and almost as wide. It has a big sprawling habit that may appear almost vine like if not for its stature. Also known as golden dewdrop, pigeonberry, skyflower, and angels-whisper *Duranta erecta* is native to tropical America and has naturalized in the Caribbean and Pacific isles, including Hawaii. It is a member of the Verbenaceae family.

The sheer size of the plant sometimes overshadows the handsome qualities of the delicate flowers. The flower color of the species is a pale purple with white forms noted as well. Our cultivar ‘Sweet Memory’ is a medium dark purple with a fine line of white bordering each of the five petals. The dime-sized flowers are produced in short clusters about six inches in length. They are followed by attractive rounded, yellow drupes about 1/2 inch in diameter, hence the name golden dewdrop. Just for insurance sake, the fruit is considered toxic to humans so be cautious about placement. Evidently birds are not affected as they are responsible for seed dispersal.

Most commonly appearing as a multi-stemmed shrub useful as a large screen or windbreak, with some training it may be developed into a specimen tree. The foliage consists of light green leaves approximately 3 inches in length arranged in pairs or in whorls of three. Occasionally the plants are armed with a stout spine located in the leaf axils but ‘Sweet Memory’ is typically unarmed.

Although capable of withstanding considerable drought and tolerant of poor soils, from personal experience the skyflower will appear more lush and flower heavily if watered and fertilized on regular basis during the first year, after which the plant will become more durable. Due to the sprawling nature, ‘Sweet Memory’ will require some pruning if confined to tight areas, so be sure to give this plant some space.

Eremophilas Abound

We have been very proud of the various species of Eremophila that we have brought to the marketplace. We have extensively tested many species over the last decade to ensure suitability

prior to making them available. Our first introduction was Eremophila maculata Valentine™ which has been popularized in numerous landscapes throughout much of the southwest. We are equally excited about two additional “emu bushes”.

Eremophila racemosa is commonly known as the Easter Egg Bush, this jewel of a shrub has a profusion of brightly colored flowers predominately in the spring and continuing intermittently through the growing season. This is a very showy plant as it is most colorful while in flower with its various shades of yellow, orange, pink and purple. Talk about a riot of color! Everyone seems to get excited about this introduction. With a more erect form than the Valentine™, this Eremophila will grow to about 4 to 6 feet tall. Tip pruning following flowering will help to promote bushiness. It also makes an excellent container plant. Listed as hardy in USDA Zone 9 at 25°F it may become more tolerant of frost once established. As with most Eremophilas, it prefers exposure to full sun and relatively well-drained soils.

Eremophila x Summertime Blue™ We have been conducting trials for this plant in our Phoenix nursery for over ten years. The original plant came to us after having been discovered by a nursery friend in his own Australian garden. The result of a cross of Eremophila polyclada and E. divaricata, it surpasses the appearance of either of the parents.

Summertime Blue™ has lilac-blue tubular flowers from spring till the end of summer on a large spreading shrub which will peak at about 6’ tall by around 10’ in diameter. As with our other species it is evergreen, will survive in Phoenix on nearly no additional irrigation, is pest free and fairly quick growing. Being more of a wide spreading selection, room should be provided for

its growth, which might be described as fountain-like. Summertime Blue™ has been thoroughly evaluated for over 10 years and is only available from Mountain States. Plants that may appear similar have not fared as well in trials so be cautious.

Having originated from heavy soils in its native habitat, it is well adapted to the clayey soils of the southwest. Hardy to frost and extended dry periods, this gem will be a great addition to the line-up of emu bushes. Hardy to 25°F it is listed for USDA Zone 9.

There is a wealth of additional information on our web site regarding Eremophilas. Please visit www.mswn.com to learn more regarding this interesting genus.

Acalypha monostachya Raspberry Fuzzies™

This perennial from the Chihuahuan Desert is known as copperleaf, cardinal flower or cardinal feather. Each name is equally descriptive. Its striking copper colored foliage provides a truly unique touch to the landscape. Pink-red blossoms are produced from April through November. It is a member of the Euphorbia family.

Native to west central Texas and northern Mexico it has proven to be a very adaptable groundcover, tolerating poor soils, full sun, heat and moderate cold. Although it typically defoliates after the first frost, spring weather initiates new growth. Plants will quickly recover to create a low growing mound 6 inches tall by 12 inches wide. Plants are normally cut back to ground level to improve the over winter appearance. Raspberry Fuzzies™ prefers well-drained soils and full sun. This Acalypha is hardy to 10°F.

Vines Galore

We often receive requests for information about vines suitable for landscape use. We have two that we would like to add to our catalog.

Parthenocissus sp. Hacienda Creeper™ is a unique compact version of the genus. A deciduous to somewhat evergreen vine with light green, palmately lobed leaves it looks much like the common Virginia Creeper except smaller. Suitable for use as a groundcover, espalier or wall covering this plant is special beyond its size. With fall chilling, the foliage will turn a deep red color. It is adaptable to full sun or part shade, poor soils and some drought. Cold hardy to 0°F, it is placed in USDA Zone 7.

Vitis californica ‘Roger’s Red’ is a woody deciduous vine that was first noticed by Roger Raiche along the Russian River in northern California. By chance he noted the plant in the fall as it displayed an outstanding reddish color as it entwined the native trees. The large rounded leaves begin to turn color as the temperatures cool. In our nursery the color has held quite late into the fall. The flowers are small and fragrant, followed by small berry clusters ripening by late summer.

Although edible, the size and volume of fruit make them more enticing for birds and other wildlife that relish the treat. As with all grapes, this vine has a sprawling, climbing growth habit best suited for trellises. Despite the fact this plant is native to northern California it has proven to be quite drought tolerant. As with many natives, this plant is not permitted to cross back over the border into California, so sales are restricted.

Perennials

Sphaeralcea ambigua Papago Pink™ is a stunning new introduction of globe mallow that is sure to be a hit. It has a sprawling habit with arching stems that can literally contain dozens of silver dollar size pink flowers. Each plant produces an amazing number of stems too, so the effect is dramatic. Once the primary flowering period during early spring is completed, the plants may be cut back to about ankle height to promote density, compactness and more flowers. This native perennial is hardy to 0°F. Check out some of the fine photos we have placed on the opening page of the web site.

Zephyranthes ‘Prairie Sunset’ is a rain lily that is a hybrid of Zephyranthes x ‘Capricorn’ and Zephyranthes candida that is distinguished by its tufts of foliage. Most rain lilies are considered summer dormant, with the thin, strap-like foliage dying back during hot dry periods only to resprout after summer rains. This selection tends to have a more evergreen quality, looks more attractive than the other species available, and actually grows in the full sun better than the other species. ‘Prairie Sunset’ will sprout crocus-like flowers that fade from apricot to a pale pink. Zephyranthes literally means flower of the wind in allusion the gently swaying blossoms. As with most rain lilies, this plant loves to be pot bound. The usual plant size is 12” tall by 15” wide. ‘Prairie Sunset’ is hardy to 10°F.

To see photos of these plants and more, check out our website at: www.mswn.com

On a personal note...

Jean Coté, our sales rep for Nevada and Arizona, would like to send a personal message to all of the customers and friends of the nursery who have showered her with prayers, wishes of encouragement, cards and emails during her recent battle with cancer. Jean has completed her last regimen of chemo and looks forward to getting back out in the field. She has her mobile phone fired up (623-764-1027) and will be looking forward to seeing you all in person during the coming months. Again, Jean would like to send a heartfelt thanks to everyone for their support, including her family and especially her husband Rich, who have been her best friends during this past year. Welcome back Jean!

Welcome Back, Janet!

Mountain States Nursery is pleased to announce that **Janet Rademacher** has rejoined the nursery staff. Janet took a hiatus from the nursery nearly two years ago to pursue other interests in the nursery industry.

General Manager Bart Worthington indicated “We are extremely pleased to have Janet rejoin our staff. She will work closely with Dennis Swartzell to expand our potential in the Marketing Department. We feel that the presence of these two professionals will allow our company to excel in areas of marketing and customer service”.

Janet has numerous contacts in the field of landscape architecture and will be looking forward to renewing those friendships as well as getting back to promoting good ole desert adapted plants. Welcome back to Janet too!