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Enchanting CALIBRACHOAS

These distinctive, vivacious and radiant varieties were standouts from the 2019 summer trials.



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Oh, what changes we have seen in the calibrachoa world since the breakthrough breeding and introduction of the calibrachoa Million Bells series by Suntory in 1993. This new category of plants is now a significant and momentous genus in multiple international breeding programs, and this has resulted in hundreds of exciting new varieties with multifarious application in large packs, quarts, combinations and hanging baskets.

We have a vast range of forms, colors and patterns available in every tone and hue, including stars, doubles, singles, two tones, stripes, dark eyes, multicolors and solids.

Calibrachoa habits, forms, uniformity, day length neutrality, pH tolerance and flower size have transformed the genus and expanded the production choices available to the grower and ultimately the consumer. We now have series that offer bench-run applicability as well as unique colors for specific color combinations and programs.

There are hundreds of current and new calibrachoa introductions in the summer trials every year displayed in baskets, designer mixes and trial beds. I decided to focus on enchanting calibrachos from last summer's trials. What do I mean by this term? It implies many descriptive adjectives including captivating, brilliant, striking, vivid, impressive and intense. The varieties I selected were photographed in late summer to demonstrate their uniqueness, color stability, heat tolerance and floriferousness.

1. 'SKYWALKER'

Westhoff

This hybrid variety was introduced as a standalone two years ago and continues to impress with its dynamic color pattern unlike any variety in the industry. The unique bicolor flowers with streaking patterns of violet and white with yellow centers were dramatic. It maintained outstanding flower power, medium vigor and non-fading petals in



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regional trials. The habit is upright and mounded, and with the bicolor petals offers outstanding application in mixed containers and mixed baskets.

2. 'BLOOMTASTIC YELLOW'

Dümmen Orange

Dümmen Orange offers eight assorted series of calibrachoa with distinctive flower patterns and growth habits for multiple production applications. The Bloomtastic series was introduced in 2018 with Serenity and Rose Quartz, followed by Pink Flair and Cherry in 2019 and Tiki Pink and Yellow for 2020. This is the most vigorous series in the assortment and it has mega blooms, floriferousness and outstanding heat tolerance. Rose Quartz has been one of the most ubiquitous calibrachos in basket programs since its introduction, and the new 'Bloomtastic Yellow'

augments the series with the striking yellow blooms, dark yellow centers and incomparable flower size that creates an outstanding flower canopy. This variety is a component in Confetti Garden Season Opener.

3. 'COLIBRI CHERRY LACE'

Danziger

The Colibri series is the most compact calibrachoa in the Danziger portfolio. It was introduced in 2016 and promoted as compact, floriferous and day length neutral with application in quarts, mixed containers and hanging baskets. There are 10 colors in the series, with two new varieties in the market this spring, Yellow Canary and Pink Flamingo. Malibu Pink and Mellow Yellow will be introduced at the California Spring Trials this year. What was impressive about this

series in the summer trials were the large flowers, tight internodes and colorful canopy. Two eye-catching varieties were the new Blizzard and, in particular, Cherry Lace, which has been in the market since the initial launch and continues to impress with multiple tones of raspberry and rose petals with a defined white rim. I have not seen another calibrachoa that matches the color combination of this variety.

4. 'CALLIE ECLIPSE STRAWBERRY'

Syngenta Flowers

The Callie series was introduced in 2007 as part of the original Goldfish line and still remains a core series in many spring programs with new colors added every year.

The introduction of the Eclipse colors — Raspberry, Strawberry and Lilac — last year highlighted advances in habit, unique colors and heat tolerance. The Eclipse varieties were top performers in the Southern and Northern trials when I visited in late August last year. They were vigorous and floriferous, and manifested color stability and sharp contrasting bicolor flowers. Eclipse Strawberry was particularly impressive with light rose petals merging into dark rose centers with a yellow throat.

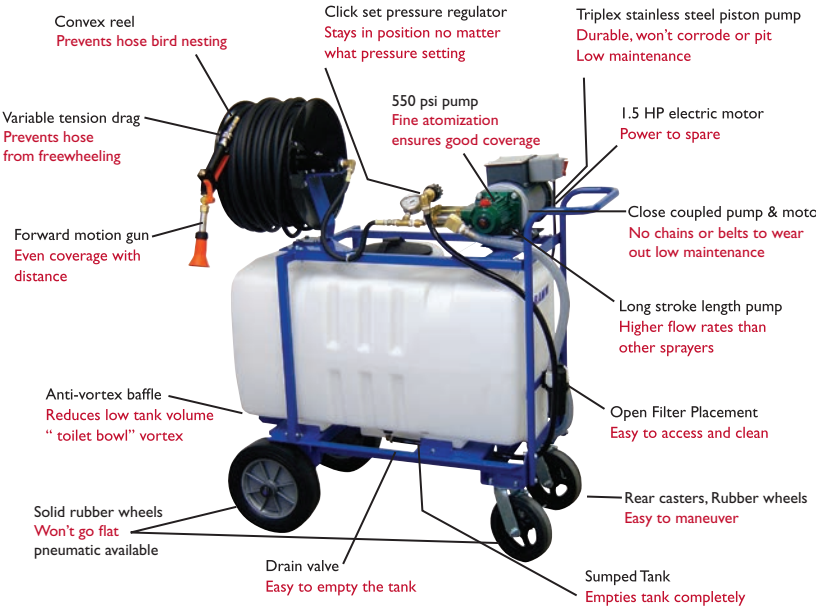
5. 'SUPERBELLS BLACKCURRANT PUNCH'

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2007. With improvements and new varieties, there are now eight colors available including two new varieties for 2020, Watermelon Punch and Blackcurrant Punch (which replaces Blackberry Punch). This series has become the benchmark for dark-eyed introductions from multiple breeders. The attributes include tighter internodes, improved flower performance and presentation, heat tolerance, disease resistance, and, most importantly and evident in trials and production, color saturation, stability, and floriferousness. I was impressed with the performance and brightness of Blackcurrant Punch in multiple trials. The flowers have bright fuchsia petals and black velvet centers with a subtle yellow throat. This calibrachoa enhances the Punch series.



6. 'CABARET GOOD NIGHT KISS'

Ball FloraPlant

This new introduction for 2020 was unquestionably one of the most captivating and top-performing varieties in multiple trials throughout the summer and early fall last year. The Cabaret series is comprised of 22 varieties, including eight new colors for 2020. This series is characterized by earliness, uniformity and a diverse selection of solids and bicolors. Good Night Kiss was one of the most conspicuous in the summer trials for

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multiple reasons. The flower is spectacular with a light rose margin transitioning to a deep rose throat with a dramatic yellow star center, and the flowers are positioned above the foliage on short, strong peduncles with upward shaped petals creating a colorful canopy. This variety appeared to be self-cleaning with a controlled habit all summer. It was the best summer performing calibrachoa in the Young's Plant Farm trial in Alabama and a top performer in the University of Georgia trial. It is the dominant calibrachoa series in 25 mono and multispecies Mixmaster mixes.

7. 'NEO LIGHT PINK+EYE '20'

Selecta One

This is a medium, semi-trailing, large, single-blooming series that comprises 25 varieties, including 10 new varieties for 2020. The new introductions include solids, tricolors and doubles. The five dark-eye colors within the series were

some of the most striking and luminescent in the summer trials. 'Neo Light Pink+Eye' was my favorite; what set it apart was the large brilliant tricolor blooms with light pink petals, a dark pink throat and a yellow eye. The abundance of flowers late in the season in the Southern trials and in the basket trial in Michigan was superb. This was the top-rated Selecta calibrachoa in the Alabama trial and highly rated in the University of Georgia trial. This is a versatile calibrachoa with application as a standalone variety in basket production and an excellent component in mixed containers and baskets. It is also a component in two new Trixi Combos: Sweet Candy '20 and Strawberry Shortcake '20.

8. 'CHAMELEON TART DECO'

Westhoff

The calibrachoa Chameleon series was a game changer when introduced in 2016 — and for good reason. This was

the launch of a new dimension in polychromatic flowers that were environmentally reactive and tended to transition in colors throughout the summer predicated on light levels, temperature and day length. There are now over 16 multicolored varieties available, and many of them have been in trial gardens since their introduction. They are a significant component in spring programs throughout the country with multiple applications in quarts, mixed containers and baskets. These unique varieties present opportunities to create exciting combinations with audacious color patterns. 'Chameleon Tart Deco' was in multiple trial sites and manifested outstanding durability, vigor, sharp color patterns and flower stability. It was consistent in performance and floriferousness in late summer trials throughout the country. The transitional flowers combine light pink and rose with streaks of yellow bleeding from the center. The flowers are stunning and, with such a diverse mix of Chameleons available to consider, this new introduction made a summer statement for inclusion in future programs.

9. 'CONGA PINK STAR'

Ball FloraPlant

The naturally compact and colorful Conga series is comprised of 13 varieties including solids, bicolors, stars and two new stars for 2020 — Light Pink Star and Pink Star. I was impressed with Pink Star for its performance in the summer trials and its attributes including compactness, earliness, heat tolerance, color stability and, most impressively, the position of the flowers above the canopy. It has a unique bicolor pattern with a yellow star-shaped center that expands to the margin of the flower. There are many star types available in the market from multiple breeders, and this series rivals them for overall performance.

10. 'CRUZE CONTROL PINK DELICIOUS'

Green Fuse Botanicals

The Cruze series debuted in 2013 with seven colors and was

upgraded to the Cruze Control series with improved uniformity in 2017. It is now comprised of 16 colors, including solids and five Delicious colors with striking dark centers. The series is characterized by large flowers, short internodes and a colorful

canopy. There are numerous dark-eyed calibrachoa series in the market, and I was impressed with the strong color retention and heat tolerance of the Delicious colors, especially Pink Delicious, with a yellow throat and deep pink center. This variety received high

performance ratings in multiple trials last summer. The series, with its outstanding timing, uniformity and day length neutrality, has application in quarts, combinations and baskets, and is a component in many of the Green Fuse Compatible variety mixes.



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11. 'ALOHA NANI TROPICANA'

Dümmen Orange

Dümmen Orange added the genetically dwarf Aloha Nani series to its extensive calibrachoa portfolio in 2018. This series is characterized by compactness, large flowers, day length neutrality and a semi-upright habit.

The eight varieties require no pinch or plant growth regulators, are floriferous, and form a colorful bouquet in small containers, combinations and baskets. The series comprises solid and bicolor flowers, including the top seller Tropicana and Calibash, which is new for 2020. Many of the varieties have been in regional trials since their introduction and Tropicana, with its rose red petals splashed with bright yellow, has been a top trial performer and continues to impress in every trial, in production and at retail. Many of the Aloha Nani colors are components in Confetti Garden mixes for 2020.



12. 'CALITASTIC PAPAYA'

Westhoff

Westhoff has made transformational breakthroughs in calibrachoa breeding since the introduction of the Celebration series in 2000, and was the harbinger of designer recipes with the calibrachoa Karneval Mix in 2003. Westhoff offers no less than seven series encompassing a myriad of flower patterns, different growth habits and a rainbow of captivating polychromatic colors that provide versatility in multiple applications including quarts, patio containers and baskets. The Calitastic series is comprised of 16 colors with a controlled growth habit, uniformity and early flowering. Papaya was introduced in 2018 and continues to impress in flower trials and production programs. The trumpet-shaped flowers are eye catching and vibrant with red-orange petals, dark centers and a yellow throat. It has been a top performer in multiple trials since its introduction and is unquestionably a dynamic color. [gpn](#)



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