



Pest Corner

April, 2008

Favorite nurseries are open and well-stocked, and plant-temptation season is in full swing. While indulging precious time and energy, check out the 2008 Plant Picks List for the Pacific NW. The 2008 list has 58 new additions! Complete information, with photos and cultural guidelines, is available online at www.greatplantpicks.org

For eight years, the Great Plant Picks educational awards program, based at the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle, has presented a group of outstanding garden plants for the Pacific Northwest region, west of the coastal mountains. Awards are based on the combined expertise of over forty horticulturists from WA, OR, and BC.

Before introducing a plant into our gardens, or making decisions on what to discard/replace, we could ask ourselves the following questions -- as we follow the criteria used to include a plant in the Great Plant Picks list.

- Is this plant hardy in USDA zones 7 and 8?
- Will this plant be long lived, be vigorous, and easy to grow by a gardener of average means and experience? That is without specialized knowledge and intervention.
- Will this plant be reasonably disease and pest resistant?
- Will this plant have a long season, or preferably multiple seasons of interest?
- If plant is a variegated cultivar: Will it be stable and not revert?
- Is this plant available from at least two retail sources in the US and/or Canada?
- Will this plant be adaptable to a variety of soil and fertility conditions?
- Will this plant require excessive watering?
- Will this plant become invasive, or so excessively vigorous in colonizing the garden or larger environment?

- Will this plant require staking, continuous deadheading, or frequent division?
- Will this shrub or tree require little pruning ,and nominal training, to achieve the best form?
- Is this plant suitable for an easy-maintenance hedge?
- When choosing bulbs: Will these persist in the garden, without being lifted, for at least three years?
- Will this plant be relatively deer-resistant (if this is a concern and a problem), or become an attractive nuisance?

Adapted by Cecilia from recent articles by Don Tapio, GH Extension Agent