



CHRISTENSEN'S PLANT CENTER

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As I was walking through the perennial lot I was amazed at how quickly the year seemed to be coming to an end. Dead-heading no longer encouraged rebloom, leaves of many varieties looked tired, and the beginnings of root-in-pot sales hiding the gems till another year begins. Then I spotted a group of flowers I had not seen for what seemed years. Both by name and geography I am reminded of Walt Whitman walking the beaches of Paumanok reminiscing his beginnings and the many changes our country had seen in his lifetime. This Indian name had long ago given way to its present and more familiar name – Long Island.

At the eastern end of Paumanok lies Montauk, the namesake for my subject. *Nipponanthemum nipponicum*, known to too few as Montauk Daisy. Blooming into October even when its many cousin-asters have turned in for the year. The Montauk, in its bloom, reflects the mood of Whitman's Paumanok. Its purest-white stars remind one of the summer's walk beginning with the Shastas (*Leucanthema*). But just as the Aster and *Dendranthema* in all their colors drop the last of their petals, the Montauk reflects back their full spectrum of color in a blinding white.

When the seasonal march is ending the Montauk will be a standout on a hoar-frost morning, perhaps even making the likes of Gertrude Jekyll happy. And, as the first snow appears, the Montauk will disappear with the loss of definition.



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[***Return to Archive***](#)

