



CHRISTENSEN'S PLANT CENTER

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HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Somewhere in the midst of a chaotic, post-spring perennial lot, many plants can be found patiently waiting for their turn to shine. Now that July is upon us, it's worth a second glance at some interesting midsummer stand-outs. One such gem would be Rudbeckia sub. 'Henry Eilers' a.k.a. Sweet Coneflower.



This upright, sturdy Black-Eyed Susan reaches 5-6' with unusual quilled petals of true yellow. It is a great plant for the back of the border, as is Heliopsis h. 'Summer Nights'. This False Sunflower is of similar height with yellow, daisy-like flowers attached to dark purple stems. Bronze-tinted leaves add even more intrigue. Rudbeckia and Heliopsis prefer full sun and make also make great cut flowers.

Keeping with the middle-of-summer theme, look for an upright Sedum hybrid called 'Pool Party'. Similar to S. 'Autumn Joy', it boasts a tighter habit, thus less prone to floppiness and breakage. The blooms are pink, surrounded by blue-green leaves. 'Pool Party' will reach 24" tall and its flowers have just begun to appear. Want an even more compact Sedum? 'Pure Joy' at 18" is waiting to be noticed, too!



Now is also the time to check out the daylilies. We have many other rebloomers besides the ever-popular 'Stella D'Oro' or 'Pardon Me'. We have some Hemerocallis that are not only repeat-blooming, but have double and/or ruffled petals such as 'Moses Fire' (Red, 22") and 'Congo Coral' (Orange, 22"). 'Custard Candy', at 24" tall is also an excellent rebloomer with creamy yellow flowers and a maroon eye.

While there are countless other plants coming into their prime, let's not forget the ones with certain foliage characteristics that make them enjoyable to gaze upon throughout the entire growing season. Looking for a bold presence towards the back of a shade garden? Large hostas aside, check out Aralia 'Sun King', a hardy, gold variety of Japanese Spikenard. This tropical-looking deciduous shrub has been said to keep its stunning color with a few hours exposure of morning sun. While we did grow ours in full sun, they were also very well-irrigated. Turning chartreuse in full shade, its 5'x5' habit produces small clusters of white flowers in the late spring, followed by purple berries. Don't overlook the foliage of Polemonium r. 'Touch of Class' to brighten up a low-light area. This 12-18" clumping perennial has beautifully clear white-edged leaves with airy blue flowers in the spring as a bonus.

Lastly, at risk of sounding like a bawdy Broadway musical, keep an eye out for Pennisetum 'Hameln's hardy, red-headed cousin - P. 'Ginger Love'!



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