



Georgia Gold Medal Winners 2010

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Each year, outstanding ornamental plants are chosen by an elite group of industry and academic professionals to receive the Georgia Gold Medal Award. The award is given to only one plant in each of five categories: annual flower, herbaceous perennial, vine, shrub and tree.

A long list of nominees is judged on a strict set of criteria, including pest tolerance, ease of maintenance, survivability, seasonal interest and availability. After much debate, all on the committee agree that the plants chosen are deserving of their Gold Medal designation.

The 2010 selections represent the best of the best in their respective categories. They include a low-maintenance annual flower that provides an explosion of colorful white bracts from spring to fall frost, a native herbaceous perennial that attracts butterflies like a magnet, a tough, drought-tolerant ground cover with golden-yellow foliage, a flowering shrub with large upright panicles that change color with the seasons, and a traffic-stopping tree with glowing golden foliage.

The following is a brief description of each of the 2010 winners. Look for them in your local garden center or nursery. And remember:

*WHEN YOU TAKE HOME A GEORGIA GOLD MEDAL PLANT,
YOU TAKE HOME A WINNER!*

ANNUAL

Diamond Frost® Euphorbia

Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost'

Partial Shade

Diamond Frost Euphorbia is a gem of a plant, and one of the brightest new stars in the horticulture industry. Home gardeners will love the non-stop color, versatility and ease of maintenance this plant offers.

From spring until fall frost, Diamond Frost Euphorbia produces clouds of dainty white-colored leaves (bracts) that elegantly complement other plants in containers or landscape beds. It grows 6 to 12 inches tall and 20-plus inches wide, and its sprawling growth habit cascades over the sides of containers or fills in spaces within landscape beds. It also gives a dramatic solo performance in hanging baskets, engulfing them with spherical mounds of color that look like snowballs in the summer landscape.

The true leaves of Diamond Frost Euphorbia are tiny, gray-green and masked by the colorful bracts. They tend to fade into the background and are strictly a supporting actor in the color show.

Diamond Frost Euphorbia prefers morning sun, afternoon shade and moist, well-drained soil. It is self-grooming in that the old flowering bracts will wither and drop off, so they don't have to be removed by hand to maintain a neat appearance.

The plant is a member of the Poinsettia family and produces a sticky latex-like sap when cut, so people with skin allergies may want to wear long sleeves and gloves when working with it. However, the milky sap also makes the plant deer tolerant, an important trait in many residential neighborhoods.

Although Diamond Frost Euphorbia is a summer annual, containerized plants can be over-wintered indoors in a bright, sunny location and then taken outside again after the last spring frost.

Diamond Frost Euphorbia is a patented plant and can only be propagated for commercial sale by licensed growers. However, home gardeners can propagate the plants from cuttings for use on their own properties. Seed is not available.

HERBACEOUS PERENNIAL

Butterfly Weed

Asclepias tuberosa

Full Sun to Partial Shade

Hardiness Zones 3 to 9

Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, is one "weed" you will want in your landscape – because it is a butterfly magnet! Its leaves are the preferred food source for the larvae of several species of butterflies, including Monarchs; and the flowers provide nectar for both butterflies and hummingbirds. The brilliant orange flowers brighten a perennial border and provide a striking contrast to purple coneflower, blue salvia, Persian shield and other summer favorites.

Butterfly Weed is a native wildflower that has naturalized throughout much of eastern North America, from

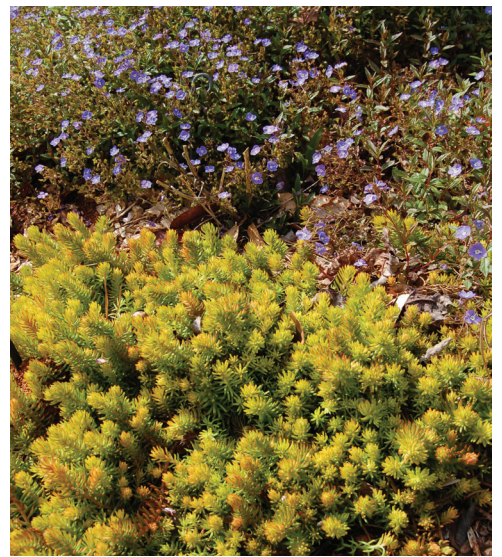
ANNUAL: Diamond Frost® Euphorbi (*Euphorbia*) Photos by Gary Wade



HERBACEOUS PERENNIAL: Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) Photos by Paul Thomas



EVERGREEN GROUNDCOVER:
Angelina® Stonecrop
(*Sedum rupestre*)
Photos by Mike Sikes



Deciduous Shrub:
Limelight® Panicle Hydrangea
(*Hydrangea paniculata*)
Photos by Gary Wade



Deciduous Tree:

Ogon Dawn Redwood
(*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

Photo by John Ruter



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Ontario to New Hampshire, west to South Dakota, south to Arizona into Mexico and east to Georgia and Florida. It likes dry, sunny areas and can be found in small colonies in open meadows, right-of-ways and roadsides. Although it's called a weed, it is not aggressive, invasive or weedy, and it will not take over the landscape.

Butterfly Weed grows 1 to 3 feet tall and has narrow, lance-shaped leaves on stout, hairy stems that do not require staking. From June to September, flat-top clusters of bright orange to yellow-orange flowers are borne on terminal stems. They hold up well in cut flower arrangements.

Flowers are followed by spindle-shaped seed pods, 1 to 3 inches long. When mature, they split open to release

seeds with long, silky hairs that float in the breeze. Gardeners concerned about the potential spread of the plant to unwanted areas can easily clip off the seed pods before they ripen to prevent seed dispersal.

Don't be alarmed if caterpillars suddenly attack the plant and destroy its foliage. The culprits are likely butterfly larvae that depend on the plant to complete their life cycle; however, Butterfly Weed is robust and defoliation does not kill the plant.

Butterfly Weed can be grown from seed or root cuttings. Patience is a virtue when propagating the plant from seed because it may take two to three years to produce a flowering plant. It may be best to purchase plants from a nursery.

EVERGREEN GROUNDCOVER

Angelina® Stonecrop

Sedum rupestre 'Angelina'

Full Sun to Partial Shade

Hardiness Zones 3 to 11

Stonecrops, also called Sedums, are among the most popular plants on the market today due to their drought tolerance, heat tolerance, pest tolerance and ability to thrive with minimal care. Angelina Stonecrop offers these qualities and more.

In addition to bright yellow flowers in summer, Angelina Stonecrop has colorful foliage that changes with the seasons. It is chartreuse in spring, bright golden-yellow in summer and orange-red in fall.

Growing just 6 inches tall and spreading 2 to 3 feet, Angelina Stonecrop is a tough, vigorous groundcover that does well in the front of dry, sunny landscape beds. It looks particularly nice in rock gardens or along the edges of containers where it can spill over the sides. The succulent colorful foliage combines well with plants having dark contrasting foliage, like purple passion, ajuga, black mon-dograss or purple fountain grass.

Clusters of tiny bright-yellow flowers add pizzazz to the already dazzling foliar display. The flowers arise on short stems above the foliage from June to July. They are a nectar source for hoverflies, whose larvae feed on aphids.

Angelina Stonecrop is easy to propagate from summer stem cuttings or by dividing the plants in spring. Individual leaflets will root when broadcast over a flat of well-drained growing media and then covered lightly to assure good soil contact. The plant is patented, so only licensed growers can propagate it for re-sale. However, home gardeners can propagate plants for use on their own properties.

Deciduous Shrub

Limelight® Panicle Hydrangea

Hydrangea paniculata 'Limelight'

Full Sun to Partial Shade

Hardiness Zones 4 to 8

Light up your landscape with Limelight Panicle Hydrangea. Its large, chartreuse flower clusters set the summer landscape aglow and are sure to be the envy of neighbors and friends.

Limelight Panicle Hydrangea is a large deciduous shrub, growing 6 to 8 feet tall with an equal spread. Plant it in groups of three to five in the background of a perennial border for a spectacular summer show. It also looks nice in a large pot as the focal point on a patio or deck.

This hydrangea prefers full sun and moist, well-drained soil. In central and south Georgia, a site with morning sun and afternoon shade would be ideal. Be prepared to provide irrigation during periods of limited rainfall.

In July, creamy white flower clusters, up to 8 inches across, emerge on strong, upright stems. As flower clusters mature, their color changes from creamy white to chartruse in summer, rosy pink in fall, and beige in winter. They can be harvested fresh or dried and used in floral arrangements. If left on the plant, they will persist all winter on the tips of naked stems.

Leaves are oval in shape, up to 4 inches long and have toothed margins. Fall color is attractive shades of red.

Unlike some other shrub-form hydrangeas, such as oakleaf and bigleaf hydrangeas that bloom on old wood and are pruned right after flowering, Limelight Panicle Hydrangea blooms on new growth so it can be pruned in late winter or early spring. Cutting back the stems to within 6 to 8 inches of ground level will encourage compact growth and strong new shoots.

Limelight Panicle Hydrangea can be propagated from root or stem cuttings in the summer. The plant is patented, so only licensed growers can propagate it for sale. However, home gardeners can propagate plants for their own use.

Deciduous Tree

Ogon Dawn Redwood

Metasequoia glyptostroboides 'Ogon'

Full Sun

Hardiness Zones 5 to 8

For a dazzling focal point in large public spaces, plant Ogon Dawn Redwood. Its brilliant golden-yellow foli-

age glows in the sunlight, attracting the attention of passing motorists and pedestrians and drawing them into the landscape.

Ogon Dawn Redwood is a large, deciduous conifer reaching 70 to 100 feet tall and 25 feet wide at maturity, so it is not suitable for most residential landscapes. However, it is stunning when planted in groups of two or three along ponds or lakes where its golden foliage is reflected by the water. It also is a great plant for framing golf course fairways or for creating a focal point in large scenic vistas within public parks.

At first glance, Ogon Dawn Redwood looks a lot like our native bald cypress; however, the needle-like leaves are larger than those of bald cypress. Also, the leaves of dawn redwood are arranged opposite each other on the stem, while those of bald cypress alternate along the stem. The foliage of Ogon Dawn Redwood is golden yellow throughout the growing season, eventually fading to orange-brown in the fall.

Like other dawn redwoods, Ogon Dawn Redwood produces separate male and female flowers on the same tree. Male flowers are borne on long panicles up to 12 inches long, while female flowers are solitary, becoming pendulous cones, 1 to 2 inches long by the end of the growing season.

The bark is an attractive reddish-brown on young trees. It becomes chocolate-brown with age and exfoliates into narrow strips that peel back from the trunk and appear to be flaking off.

Ogon Dawn Redwood is a moderately fast grower when provided with moist, well-drained soils. It reaches 50 feet in 25 years. It has a natural pyramidal form, so little to no pruning is required.

Ogon Dawn Redwood is a seedling selection from Japan. In the nursery trade, the plant is also sold as Gold Rush Dawn Redwood. Most growers agree that Gold Rush and Ogon are the same plant.

For cultural information and descriptions of the plants listed, see www.georgiagoldmedalplants.org

Take Home a Georgia Gold Medal Plant...and Take Home a Winner!

Learning *for* **Life**

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