



The 2010 All America Selections Trials

by
Pat Holloway

There were four flower winners in the All America Selections program this season three of which were grown in the garden this past summer. All three are worth testing in home gardens and landscapes in 2010. Top on my vote for this year is a dwarf **snapdragon**, **'Twinny Peach'** This little ten-inch ground hugger is an open-faced or butterfly type snapdragon that is far superior to any dwarf snap on the market. What I hate most about dwarf snapdragons is their very short bloom time. No sooner does the rest of the garden begin to bloom, then the dwarf snaps go to seed. Deadheading is a must followed by several weeks before new blooms appear. Most are not worth the time and effort, but **'Twinny Peach'** is different. Our plants were in full bloom from transplanting in June through mid August and continued to show color until frost. Deadheading was occasional rather than a continuous chore. Most interesting of all is the color – the two toned pink and creamy yellow is gorgeous! It is truly a milestone in snapdragon breeding and one worth growing in Alaska gardens.



Dwarf snapdragon 'Twinny Peach'
Photo courtesy of <http://gardencenterohio.com>



Gaillardia 'Mesa Yellow'
Photo courtesy of <http://www.zelen.cz>

Gaillardia 'Mesa Yellow' is a compact bushy plant loaded with golden yellow daisy-like blooms. It was a stunner in full bloom but needed a lot of deadheading to maintain a good appearance. It did not begin blooming until July but continued until frost with a brilliant display of color. Full open blooms seemed to come in spurts at the end of the season, and many people couldn't tell the difference between seed pods and flower buds. Despite those quirks, it is a beautiful gaillardia for mid to late season show.

The **'Zahara Starlight Rose'** **Zinnia** is a new species to our trial gardens, *Zinnia marylandica*. The plants are bushy mounds of color similar to the Pro-



'Zahara Starlight Rose' Zinnia pictured at right
Photo courtesy of <http://media-cache-ec0.pinning.com>

fusion Series that is so popular mostly because of their eye popping colors and no maintenance needed. **'Starlight Rose'**, on the other hand is not packed with flowers, and deadheading is a

serious issue. The pink-tinged white flowers are very ornamental, but uneven height of flower stems produced a ragged appearance late in the season. The pink is not as pronounced as photos we have seen.

One other 2010 winner, **Viola 'Endurio Sky Blue Martien'**, a little lavender viola was an AAS Cool Season award winner, so we did not receive seeds in time to have them in trials this season. As usual, the plant height is advertised as 6 inches like many other violas. No doubt, when we do get to grow this winner, it will smash the height records. Like the giant cabbages but not as noticeable, violas in Alaska gardens routinely form giant mountains of flowers sometimes 24 inches tall! Gardeners don't even notice the difference until they read the catalog description and learn their plants are supposed to grow only a quarter that size.



Viola 'Endurio Sky Blue Martien'
Photo courtesy of <http://media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com>

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