



Coreopsis 'Autumn Blush'

EDUCATION:

B.S. in communications with a minor in psychology and botany, University of Oregon.

BREEDING**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

Dan and his team at Terra Nova Nurseries breed primarily hardy perennials.

BEST SELLERS:

Heuchera 'Midnight Rose,' 'Obsidian,' 'Lime Rickey,' 'Marmalade,' 'Peach Flambe'; heucherella 'Stoplight'; coreopsis 'Autumn Blush'; echinacea 'Tiki Torch'; brunnera 'Jack Frost' and sedum 'Mr. Goodbud.'

AWARDS:

Heims won the Reginald Cory Memorial Cup by the Royal Horticultural Society for advancements in *Heuchera*.

ADVICE:

"Find your niche. Compare your plant to others in the marketplace and only launch the best. Don't be a copycat breeder. Copying floods the market and confuses the consumers and nursery buyers. If you truly have a plant that supersedes other cultivars in the market, by all means, go for it!"

FOR MORE:

Terra Nova Nurseries, (800) 215-9450; dan@terranovanurseries.com; www.terranovanurseries.com.

DAN HEIMS / HARDY PERENNIAL BREEDER

By Kelli Rodda

You never know where the next introduction from Terra Nova Nurseries will come from – the Oregon breeder's own greenhouse, Tasmania or a hobby hybridizer. Company president Dan Heims is the Columbo of perennials. His plant investigations are thorough. He follows the trail of a potential new introduction until all the evidence is collected. He's traveled the world looking for plants that make him shout, "Wow."

He's looking for selections with disease resistance, drought tolerance, better and longer flowers, reflowering, proportionate flowers, hardiness and vigor. It may seem like a long list, but Heims is determined to offer superior plants to the trade.

HEUCHERAS, ETC.

Terra Nova specializes in hardy perennials and is probably best known for its heuchera introductions. Heims' love of begonias helped launch the heuchera program.

"My whole breeding program of heuchera was to create a 'begonialike' plant that could withstand USDA Hardiness Zone 4 winters," he said.

Begonias certainly fall in the tropical category, but Heims introduced 'Metallic Mist,' which is hardy to Zone 7.

With Rob Jansen's coleus introductions this year, Terra Nova Nurseries has released 600 new plants to the industry.

Heims and his team use several methods of propagation including hand-crossing, line crosses, masses and embryo rescues. Terra Nova performed more than 10,000 rescues last year.

The next Terra Nova introduction could come from someone's backyard. On its Web site, the nursery has a call out to other breeders. When Terra Nova finds a new plant, the company first trials it against others in the market. Then the company will virus check and test the plant's ability to reproduce.

FABULOUS FINDS

Terra Nova selections all come back to the wow factor – like the pumpkin color of echinacea 'Tiki Torch,' the masses of



Tiarella 'Sugar and Spice'. Photos courtesy of www.terranovanurseries.com



Sponsored By: Agrium Advanced Technologies / 800.422.4248 / www.agriumat.com



Dan Heims' perennial breeding programs have produced many international gold and silver medal winners.

flowers on sedum 'Mr. Goodbud' and the sturdy stems of scabiosa 'Vivid Violet.'

Heims is quick to credit Harini Korlipara, Janet Egger and Gary Gossett for helping put Terra Nova introductions "to the forefront of horticulture."

Most of Terra Nova's selections are suitable for the garden or in containers. They also create some stunning combination recipes.

But there are some plants in the trade that Heims feels are overused, including echinacea 'Magnus' because there are "so many improved varieties"; daylily 'Stella de Oro'; heuchera 'Palace Purple'; rudbeckia 'Goldsturm'; and sedum 'Autumn Joy.'

Heims' favorites that are underused include all cultivars of hakonechloa, heucherella, penstemon, tiarella and *Perovskia atriplicifolia*.

Some of his favorite cultivars are brunnera 'Jack Frost'; geranium 'Rozanne'; and heuchera 'Midnight Rose.'

Heims sees a trend toward plants that are suitable for containers and smaller gardens, such as a smaller *Ipomoea* that doesn't overwhelm a container.

TERRA NOVA INTRODUCTIONS

BEGONIA 'METALLIC MIST'

This begonia has heavily silvered, maplelike leaves and is hardy to Zone 7. It vigorously grows to form a striking 18-inch-tall specimen. Pink flowers in late summer extend the show. This was a Terra Nova breeding breakthrough.

HEUCHERELLA 'SWEET TEA'

'Sweet Tea' is new for 2009. Huge cinnamon stars are surrounded by orange tea-colored borders. The big, palmately cut leaves darken in the summer and lighten up again in the fall. Its *H. villosa* breeding gives it a big bold habit and heat and humidity tolerance.

PULMONARIA 'TREVI FOUNTAIN'

'Trevi Fountain' has silver-spotted foliage with profuse clusters of large, cobalt-blue flowers. It does well in the South due to its *P. longifolia* breeding. It's hardy in Zones 4-9.

SCABIOSA 'VIVID VIOLET'

'Vivid Violet' has a low-mounding habit and large, vivid-violet pincushion flowers. It's free flowering and flowers continuously from late spring to frost. It has shown good mildew resistance in Terra Nova's trials.

TIARELLA 'SUGAR AND SPICE'

'Sugar and Spice' features shiny, lacquered leaves that are lacy with a heavily marked center in summer and winter. Spring brings lightly fragrant flowers that are frosted pink with a white interior.

Heims has fervor for heucheras.

