

STATE-BY-STATE
GARDENING

MISSOURI GARDENER

MISSOURI'S OWN GUIDE TO GREAT GARDENING & LANDSCAPING

A Rainbow
of *Iris*

May/June 2012

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**10 Easy
Veggies**

**The POWER
of PEONIES**

Publisher
Steve Giddings

Editor
Michelle Byrne Walsh

Art Director
Suzanne Ray

Webmaster/Graphic Artist
Christopher Kilpatrick

Graphic Artist
Doug Futch

Contributing Writers
Mary Kroening, Jennifer Schutter,
Nathan Brandt, Patrick Byers,
Sarah Denkler, Jim Long,
Alice Longfellow, Stacey Mollus,
Tony Mistretta, Kylee Baumle,
Bobbie Schwartz, Nicole Juday,
TC Conner, Patrick Byers, Scott Zanon,
Tom Butzler, Linda Wiggen Kraft

Advertising Sales
Ashley Gnemi James
Kathy Hogrefe
Ann Sanders
Brandon Sutherland
Jim Vincent

Distribution Manager
Maria Lucca

Circulation Manager
Courtney Newcomer

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Our address: State-by-State Gardening
PO Box 730, Downers Grove, IL 60515-0730
www.mogardener.com
Call us at (318) 255-3149
or toll-free at 1-888-265-3600
Fax us at (318) 251-8882
or email contact@statebystategardening.com

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On The Cover
Japanese Iris 'Lion King' (*Iris ensata*).
PHOTO COURTESY OF BAILEY NURSERIES

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Echinacea Cultivars

Natural selection and breeding techniques have greatly broadened the number of *Echinacea* spp. (coneflowers) cultivars. *Echinacea* species pollinate each other readily. Natural offspring hybrids may exhibit showy attributes not expressed in the original species providing many of the new cultivars. Breeders deliberately pollinate certain plants to produce new cultivars, which exhibit the best attributes of each parent.

The trial bed at Missouri Botanical Garden Kemper Center is currently testing 49 cultivars. They are judged on vigor, beauty, number of flowers and habit. This year, 2012, is the second of three years for the evaluation.

Some outstanding cultivars:

Pink-Purple: 'Hope', 'Pica Bella', 'Fatal Attraction'

White: 'Amado', 'White Swan'

Yellow: 'Matthew Saul', 'Big Sky', 'Harvest Moon'

Orange: 'Hot Papaya'

Red: 'Tomato Soup'

Quick Facts & Keys to Success

Common Name: Coneflower

Botanical Name: *Echinacea* spp.

Flowers: Daisy-like flowers in pink, purple, white, yellow, orange and red

Soil: Well-drained, likes organic matter, loamy, wide range of pH, dry to moist

Size: Ranges from 1 foot to about 3 feet tall

Exposure: Full sun

Watering: 1 inch of water per week until established then can stand drier soil

When to Fertilize: Feed sparingly the first and second year with general-purpose fertilizer in late spring. No fertilizer after that unless soil is poor.

Planting and Pruning: Plant in spring. Remove flowers as they fade for periodic new blooms. Seeds left on the plant are eaten by many birds.

In Your Landscape: Perennial borders, great with grasses and in wildlife gardens. 🐦

June Hutson is the supervisor of the Kemper Home Demonstration Gardens at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis.

