

Dollars, Sense, New Plants, and Propagation

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PLANT ACQUISITION AND TESTING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.

Considerable thought has gone into the operation of our plant acquisition and testing program at the University of Georgia. Occasionally the wheels are spinning and the net gain borders on zero. At other times, I am most gratified at the responses of the nurseries in Georgia and the Southeastern U.S. Perhaps the positive effect of the program has never been more evident than with the butterfly-bush (*Buddleja*) evaluations. Over 75 species and cultivars have been tested. One nursery in Georgia has taken cuttings of 38 cultivars. No visitor has left without at least one new cultivar! Today I report my top five butterfly-bush choices and evaluation at a recent field day (23 Sept. 1997) when 126 individuals voted on their top five butterfly bushes.

Dirr's current favorites

B. davidii 'Potter's Purple'
B. davidii 'Summer Beauty'
B. 'Honeycomb'
B. 'Summer Rose' (*B. davidii* 'Raspberry Wine')
B. davidii 'Peace'

Field day top five

B. 'Honeycomb'
B. fallowiana var. *alba*
B. 'Moonshadow'
B. davidii 'Royal Red'
B. davidii 'Nanho Purple'

Also presented are several introductions and/or promotions from the University of Georgia that have met with positive reception from the nursery and gardening communities.

***Buddleja lindleyana* 'Gloster'**

***Clethra alnifolia*.**

- Selected compact clones grown from open-pollinated seed of 'Hummingbird'. Two selections are compact with lustrous dark green foliage and 10- to 15-cm long (4 to 6 inches) flowers.

***Chamaecyparis thyoides*, Atlantic whitecedar**

- Forty-five clones now in our trials.
- Amazing variability.
- Easy to root and container grow.
- Have consumer appeal in a container or as a field-grown plant.
- 'Webb #1', 'Blue Sport', 'Okefenokee Compact', 'Glauca Pendula' are promising; many blue forms that are as handsome as *Cupressus arizonica* var. *glabra* 'Blue Ice', 'Blue Pyramid', and 'Carolina Sapphire'.

Ilex glabra

- 'Nigra' — Continues to impress us as the most lustrous dark green and foliage retentive cultivar in our trials.
- 'Green Billow' — A compact branch sport of 'Nigra' which shows promise and is one-third the size of 'Nigra'; discovered by Mark Griffith.

***Itea virginica*, Virginia sweetspire**

Too much leaf spot (*Phyllosticta* sp.) in our area with this species and 'Henry's Garnet'; interestingly 'Saturnalia' is resistant.

Loropetalum chinense* f. *rubrum

- Too many: have observed 4.6 m (15 ft) high 'Burgundy'.
- 'Zhuzhou Fuchsia' is the most upright growing and most cold hardy.
- 'Ruby' is possibly the smallest, exceptional in a garden setting in groupings or in masses.

Thuja plicata

- 'Spring Grove' — Collected from Spring Grove, Cincinnati by the author. Close scrutiny indicated hybrid between *T. occidentalis* × *T. plicata*. Six feet high in 2 years in our evaluations from a small 1-gal plant.
- Also in our evaluations are *T.* 'Green Giant' and *T.* 'Giganteoides', both hybrids.

***Thuja occidentalis* 'Wansdyke Silver'**

This is one of the few variegated (cream) conifers that has persisted without crisping. Although the literature lists this as a *T. occidentalis* selection, it is closer to *T. plicata*.

***Hydrangea arborescens*, smooth hydrangea.**

- The progenitor species of 'Annabelle' and 'Grandiflora'; interestingly, I found a rather nice lace-cap type at Bernheim Arboretum in the research forest.
- My wife, Bonnie, and I discovered a delicate sterile-flowered type in the North Carolina mountains, needless to state it has been propagated and named 'Highland Lace'.

The next best plant looms around the curve in the road!