



# 2018 Promising Plants

***Aralia spinosa*** (devil's walking stick; American angelica tree; Hercules'-club; prickly ash)

- Native to North America, with populations occurring diagonally from Maine to Texas, east to Florida, and north to Massachusetts  
Found on well-drained soils in low and moist woodlands, but also in rocky, dry, or clay soils of varied pH
- Deciduous shrub, to 20 feet tall; hardy in Zones 4-9
- Prefers fertile soil in full sun to dappled, open shade
- Bears numerous, pinkish white flowers in huge branched structures in early summer which give way to small, round green "berries" that eventually turn black with pink peduncles. Coarse stalks armed with multitudes of sharp, raspy spines bear ferny, pinnately compound leaves.
- Propagate by cold-stratified seed, best sown as soon as ripe in a cold frame

**Family:** Araliaceae (Ginseng family)

**Uses:** medicinal – used by Native Americans for a variety of purposes (Moerman); root bark used as an analgesic; young leaves can be cooked and eaten (Plants for a Future); ornamental; very attractive to pollinators

**Promising characteristics:** flowers provide an amazing array of exploding fireworks resembling an 18-inch wide "star cloud"

**Available from:**

Plant and Gnome: <http://www.plantandgnome.com/>

Vincent Gardens: <http://vincentgardens.org/product/aralia-spinosa/>

Forestfarm: <https://www.forestfarm.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=Aralia+spinosa&cat=>

**Sources consulted:**

Bown, D. 1995. HSA's *Encyclopedia of Herbs & Their Uses*. London: Dorling Kindersley

GRIN. <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=102537>

Moerman, D.E. 2009. *Native American Medicinal Plants*. Portland, OR: Timber Press.

Plants for a Future. <http://www.pfaf.org/USER/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Aralia+spinosa>

The Plant List. <http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/search?q=Aralia+spinosa>

USDA.gov publications. [https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/2004/ja\\_2004\\_connor\\_001.pdf](https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/2004/ja_2004_connor_001.pdf)

USDA Plants Database. <https://plants.usda.gov/java/charProfile?symbol=ARSP2>

**Photos:** *Aralia spinosa*

**Photos courtesy of** North Carolina Native Plant Society



***Humulus lupulus* var. *neomexicanus*** (hops; New Mexico amalia) (Syns.: *H. neomexicanus*; *H. americanus*)

- Native to North America – north- and south-central U.S.; north- and southwestern U.S.; northern Mexico; western Canada
- Found at higher altitudes of 6000-7200 feet, alongside streams or rivers on rocky benches where shrubs and trees act as a support, also climbs on streamside rocks
- Perennial, dioecious climbing vine; hardy in Zones 3-8



- Prefers full sun, moist but not constantly wet soil
- A hardy vine which climbs clockwise and is sometimes grown as an annual; has multiple heads and an extensive root system; is heat and drought tolerant and matures early. Leaves dark green, hairy, heart-shaped with three to five lobes, and coarsely toothed. Female flowers in clusters on lateral branches form pale green cone-like structures which are papery at maturity.
- Propagate by suckers in spring



**Family:** Cannabaceae (Hemp family)

**Uses:** culinary – brewing of beer; responsible for signature bitterness and contributes complex bouquet of flavors

**Promising characteristics:** variety of hops first found growing wild in New Mexico. Its hardiness contributes to higher yields in smaller plots of land, although its cold hardiness is still in question. Neo 1 – Neomexicana, bred and selected by Great Lakes Hops from native hops found naturally in the New Mexico desert, is very heat and drought tolerant, with very short day length requirements. Its aroma is a citrusy, super bright lemon, but quite harsh. Its plant structure is finer than most American

types, but it is very intolerant of wet, soggy soils. It grows to 12 feet in height and requires 36 inches of space between plants. (Hops will be IHA's Herb of the Year in 2018.)

**Available from:** Great Lakes Hops: <http://www.greatlakeshops.com/store/p86/Neo1Neomexicana>

**Sources consulted:**

GRIN: <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=415435>

The Plant List: <http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/search?q=Humulus+lupulus>

Tucker, A.O. & T. DeBaggio. 2000. The Big Book of Herbs. Loveland, CO: Interweave Press.

USDA Plants Database: <https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=HULUN>

Vascular Plants of the Gila Wilderness: [http://www.wnmu.edu/academic/nspages/gilafiora/humulus\\_lupulus.html](http://www.wnmu.edu/academic/nspages/gilafiora/humulus_lupulus.html)

**Photos:** *Humulus lupulus* var. *neomexicanus*

**Photos courtesy of** Stacey Stecher, Chelsea Nursery

## ***Ocimum basilicum* 'Cardinal'** (cardinal basil)

- *Ocimum basilicum* is native to the Old World tropics, especially Africa
- *O. basilicum* 'Cardinal' is a tender perennial grown as an annual; from 20 to 30 inches tall and 12 to 18 inches wide; hardy only in frost-free locations
- Prefers full sun, friable and porous, moist but not constantly wet soil
- Mound-shaped with burgundy-colored stems; dark red flowers in late spring to early fall; leaves medium green, elongated egg-shaped, with mostly smooth-edged margins, almost smooth or hairy
- Propagate by seeds in spring, cuttings during summer



**Family:** Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

**Uses:** basil has myriad culinary uses; used in wreaths and potpourri; in landscapes (Tucker & DeBaggio, 2009, p. 337); oil used in perfumery and aromatherapy; used medicinally internally for feverish illnesses, poor digestion, nausea, abdominal cramps, gastroenteritis, migraine, insomnia, low spirits, and exhaustion; externally for acne, loss of smell, insect stings, snakebites, and skin infections; oil is also used in dental preparations and insect repellants (Bown, p. 318).

**Promising characteristics:** cardinal basil has large, beautiful scarlet (dark red) flowers in pagoda-shaped clusters which bloom from spring until fall on burgundy stems. It is attractive to birds, bees, and butterflies, heat and humidity tolerant, pest and disease resistant (Park Seed); great container plant (West Coast Seeds).

**Available from:**

Park Seed: <http://parkseed.com/cardinal-organic-basil-seeds/p/52490-PK-P1/>

Silverleaf Greenhouses (plants): <http://www.silverleafgreenhouses.com/?s=cardinal+basil>

West Coast Seeds: <https://www.westcoastseeds.com/shop/herb-seeds/basil-seeds/cardinal-basil/>

**Sources consulted:**

Bown, D. 1995. HSA's *Encyclopedia of Herbs & Their Uses*. London: Dorling Kindersley

Tucker, A.O. & T. DeBaggio. 2009. *The Encyclopedia of Herbs*. Portland, OR: Timber Press.

**Photo:** *Ocimum basilicum* 'Cardinal'

**Photo courtesy of** Caroline Amidon

## ***Origanum syriacum* 'Cleopatra'** (Cleopatra za'atar; Lebanese oregano)

(Syn.: *Majorana syriaca*)

- The species is native to eastern and southeastern Mediterranean where it is found on sunny, rocky hillsides
- The cultivar 'Cleopatra' is a herbaceous perennial, 18-30 inches tall by 18 inches wide; hardy in Zones 8-10
- Prefers full sun; moist to somewhat dry, well-drained gravelly soil or rocky loam; can withstand drought when established; suitable for containers
- Subshrub with erect stems; leaves are egg-shaped and somewhat fuzzy; flowers are white
- Propagate by seeds in spring, cuttings in summer



**Family:** Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

**Uses:** culinary; ritual; antimicrobial and antioxidant; wreaths and dried flowers (Tucker & DeBaggio, 2009, p. 358)

**Promising characteristics:** This plant is the *ezov* ("hyssop") of the Bible; traditionally used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover sacrifice; hairs on the stem reputedly prevent coagulation of blood so were used to present the vinegar-soaked sponge to Christ just prior to his death (T&D, p. 358). The 'Cleopatra' cultivar is an award-winning cultivar selected for uniformity, flavor, aroma, and high yields. Flavor is zesty but not quite as hot as the standard variety. Excellent for Mediterranean dishes, soups, and sauces (Richters, p. 68)

**Available from:** Richters Herbs: [https://www.richters.com/Web\\_store/web\\_store.cgi?product=X7130-200&show=all&prodclass=&cart\\_id=3665794.18799](https://www.richters.com/Web_store/web_store.cgi?product=X7130-200&show=all&prodclass=&cart_id=3665794.18799)

**Sources consulted:**

Tucker, A.O. & T. DeBaggio. 2009. *The Encyclopedia of Herbs*. Portland, OR: Timber Press.

**Photo:** *Origanum syriacum* 'Cleopatra'

**Photo courtesy of** All-America Selection – National Garden Bureau (Gail Pabst)

## ***Oxypetalum coeruleum*** (tweedia, blue milkweed; southern star)

(Syns.: *Tweedia coerulea*; *T. versicolor*; *T. caerulea*; *Gothofreda coerulea*)

- Native to Brazil and Uruguay
- Preferred habitat: tropical; afternoon shade in hot summers
- Broadleaf evergreen twining vine or subshrub grown as an annual, 2-3 feet tall and wide; hardy to Zones 10-11
- Prefers sun to partial shade, average, dry to moist but well-drained wide range of soils; protected from wind and, if possible, rain; will overwinter in containers in a bright, cool spot with reduced watering (MoBot)
- Five-petaled sky blue flowers in axillary clusters in summer; evergreen foliage exudes milky sap when cut
- Propagate by seed started indoors 6-8 weeks before last frost; cuttings in late summer



**Family:** Apocynaceae (Dogbane family)

**Uses:** ornamental; butterfly plant; used in wedding bouquets; seedpods used in dried arrangements

**Promising characteristics:** unusual blue flower which is a butterfly magnet; Genus name *Tweedia* honored Scottish plant collector James Tweedie (1775-1862).

**Available from:**

Georgia Vines: [www.georgiavines.com](http://www.georgiavines.com)

Flowers by the Sea: <http://www.fbts.com/tweedia-caerulea.html>

**Sources consulted:**

GRIN: <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=26237>

Missouri Botanical Garden: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a555>

The Plant List: <http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/record/tro-2601961>

**Photo:** *Oxypetalum coeruleum*

**Photo courtesy of** Cedar Farm



### **Salix serissima** (autumn willow)

(Syns.: *S. lucida* var. *serissima* L.H. Bailey; *S. arguta*)

- One species of HSA's Notable Native Herb (Tree) for 2018
- Native to northern U.S. and Canada
- Found in herb- or shrub-dominated fens and calcareous swamps; bogs; marshes; on lakeshores
- Perennial, deciduous shrub or tree; 3 ½ to 13 feet tall; hardy in Zones 5a-8b
- Prefers sun to partial shade (mostly sun); not fussy about soil; needs regular even moisture
- Yellow flowers appear in spring at same time as leaves but fertilized female catkins remain green and unopened until autumn; then flower buds gradually turn red; leaves lance-like to oblong, shiny dark green above, slightly whitened on the underside
- Propagate by cuttings or air layering

**Family:** Salicaceae

**Uses:** ornamental; medicinal; of special value to native bees; also butterflies and hummingbirds;

**Promising characteristics:** attractive shiny green leaves and curious flower habit

**Available from:** Vermont Willow: <http://www.willowsvermont.com>

**Sources consulted:** Vermont Willow: <http://www.willowsvermont.com/seriss.html>

Flora of Wisconsin: <http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu/taxa/index.php?taxon=4961>

GRIN: <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=414341>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: [http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=SASE2](http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=SASE2)

New York Flora Atlas: <http://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=2872>

Plant Lust: <http://plantlust.com/plants/26355/salix-serissima/>

**Photos:** *Salix serissima*

**Photos courtesy of** Michael Dodge, Vermont Willow Nursery



### **Salvia lyrata** (lyre-leaf sage; cancerweed)

- One species of HSA's 2018 Notable Native Herb
- Native to U.S. - southeast, central, northeast
- Grows in rich, rocky, open woods; alluvial areas; wet to dry meadows; well-drained sand or loam.
- Perennial, evergreen herb; 1-2 feet tall; hardy in Zones 6-9
- Prefers sun/part shade/medium shade; acid or calcareous sands, loams, or clays, well-drained or not.
- Leaves dark green in a basal rosette, dark purple-veined in winter; pale blue to lavender to white flowers on an interrupted raceme between March and June
- Propagate by divisions, rooted sections, or seeds; will self-seed

**Family:** Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

**Uses:** medicinal, Native American medicine, culinary, ground cover

**Promising characteristics:** tough little *Salvia*; mostly purple leaves in a basal rosette hug the ground; good groundcover for sun, shade, or partial shade; can be mowed or walked on; the cultivar 'Purple Volcano' grows 12 to 18 inches tall with a spread of 12-14 inches and purple-blue flowers. It is hardy in Zones 4-9.

**Available from:** T's Flowers & Things ([http://www.tsflowers.com/seeds/salvia\\_lyrata.html](http://www.tsflowers.com/seeds/salvia_lyrata.html))

**Sources consulted:**

GRIN: <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=32945>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: [http://www.wildflower.org/gallery/result.php?id\\_image=8884](http://www.wildflower.org/gallery/result.php?id_image=8884)



Moerman, D.E. 2009. *Native American Medicinal Plants*. Portland, OR: Timber Press.  
The Plant List: <http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/search?q=Salvia+lyrata>

**Photo:** *Salvia lyrata* 'Purple Volcano'

**Photo courtesy of** Alexandre Molon Nogueira, THJardins

## ***Sanguisorba officinalis* 'Tanna'** (Tanna dwarf burnet; bottlebrush)

(Syns.: *Poterium officinale*; *S. polygama*)

- *S. officinalis* is native to temperate Asia, to Europe, and to North America; naturalized elsewhere
- Preferred habitat of the species: dry grassland and rocky ground
- The 'Tanna' cultivar is a herbaceous perennial; 18 inches tall by 12 inches wide; hardy to Zone 4
- Prefers sun to partial shade, average, moist but not wet, well-drained garden loam rich in organic matter
- Decorative pinnate, cucumber-flavored foliage; burgundy pink-colored catkin-like flowers on top of foot-long stems between July and August
- Propagate by seed



**Family:** Rosaceae

**Uses:** used in dressings, salads, soups, sauces, and as a garnish; ornamental landscape plant; once believed to have styptic qualities (generic name means blood-stauncher; no GRAS status (T&D, p. 544)

**Promising characteristics:** The 'Tanna' cultivar (selected by Piet Oudolf) has ferny grey-green leaves and spiky bottlebrush blooms in rich tones of red to magenta; does not mildew or attract slugs; bloom season extends into autumn; does not readily self-seed or demand a lot of space

**Available from:**

Digging Dog Nursery: <http://www.diggingdog.com/pages2/plantpages.php/P-0864>

Van Berkum Nursery: <http://www.vanberkumnursery.com/plant/sanguisorba-officinalis-tanna/>

**Sources consulted:**

GRIN: <https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=33026>

The Plant List: <http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl1.1/search?q=Sanguisorba+officinalis>

Tucker, A.O. & T. DeBaggio. 2000. *The Big Book of Herbs*. Loveland, CO: Interweave Press.

**Photo:** *Sanguisorba officinalis* 'Tanna'

**Photo courtesy of** Digging Dog Nursery

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