



FIRST[®]
EDITIONS
SHRUBS & TREES

2022-2024

NEW
VARIETIES

FIRST EDITIONS[®] ECLIPSE[®] BIGLEAF HYDRANGEA



AN ECLIPSE® WORTH STARING AT

We're thrilled to introduce an exciting lineup of new plants for 2024 that will take your landscaping game to the next level. In these pages, you'll meet our largest national introduction to-date, Eclipse® Bigleaf Hydrangea, as well as fantastic regional varieties for cool and warm climates. It's going to be an exciting and transformative year!

We know that choosing the right shrubs and trees can be daunting, which is why we've made it our mission to make it easy and fun. With over 100 varieties in our collection, there's something for everyone. Whether you or your customer needs a statement piece to anchor the garden or a hardy, low-maintenance plant for a tough spot, First Editions® has them covered.

In addition to our new for 2024 varieties, we'll revisit some of our favorites from recent years. These are the best of the best. And if you need tools to help learn and promote these varieties, we're here to support you every step of the way.

So, here's to a successful and prosperous year with First Editions®. Thank you for choosing us as your partner in new plants. Let's make 2024 a year to remember!

Layci Gragnani

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INTRODUCING ECLIPSE[®] BIGLEAF HYDRANGEA

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Bailmacseven' PP34,544, U.S. Patent Pending

**DARK FOLIAGE
THAT STAYS DARK**

**COAST-TO-COAST, THIS FOLIAGE STAYS
DEEP PURPLE AND WON'T GO GREEN!**



Astonishing Color: Between the rich color of the flowers and the groundbreaking deep purple foliage, Eclipse[®] brings color to the landscape and other outdoor spaces, even in warm and sunny climates.

Height: 3-5'

Width: 3-5'

Zone: 5-9

Exposure: Morning Sun,
Afternoon Shade



Dark purple foliage that doesn't fade to green.



Cranberry blooms that contrast and complement deep purple foliage.



Easy to grow anywhere.



2024 IS THE YEAR OF THE ECLIPSE®

And not just because there's an actual solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, but that's a pretty unique coincidence, don't you think?

First Editions® Eclipse® Bigleaf Hydrangea will be making its national introduction as the first-ever dark leaf *Hydrangea macrophylla* on the market that truly keeps its dark foliage all season long, even in warm and sunny climates. It's unique, innovative, and will make a big splash at retail and in the landscape. It's one of those plants you simply cannot miss out on, especially in its introductory year with a massive national advertising campaign that will drive consumer demand.

MEET THE BREEDER

David Roberts is the Director of Plant Breeding at Bailey Innovations™, the in-house plant breeding arm of First Editions® Shrubs & Trees' parent company Bailey. David and his team work tirelessly to develop and find genetics that raise the bar for new cultivars, whether that means disease resistance, beautiful blooms, plant form, or in this instance, totally new foliage colors that disrupt a crowded marketplace.

David's roster of genera is led by the *Hydrangea macrophylla* category, and Eclipse® is the first cultivar to come wholly from his work. This groundbreaking introduction began with his breeding work and has been backed by years of trials and market research, leading to a major kickoff for Eclipse® to make a big splash. Keep reading for all the efforts that went in behind the scenes before the 2024 launch!



FROM A SEED TO THE LANDSCAPE:

INTRODUCING ECLIPSE® ROADMAP



Bringing a groundbreaking new plant to market takes years of intentional breeding, research, trialing, marketing, and more. We are proud to share the path Eclipse® Bigleaf Hydrangea took to earn its place in your offering.

2016

SUMMER | THE BEGINNING

Seed is sown from crosses that are made at Bailey Innovations™.

FALL | THE HARVEST

Seed is collected and designated as family **HM17-R5**.

WINTER | THE START

Seed from family **HM17-R5** is sown and germinated.

H. macrophylla seed, germinated in Dec 2016 for evaluation in 2017.



SUMMER | THE SELECTION

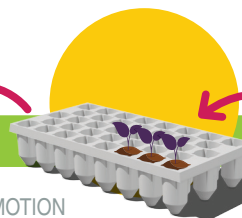
Seedling now designated **HM17-R5-06** is selected for its very dark leaf color and cranberry-colored mophead flower. Flowering as a one year old seedling indicates remontancy and potential for rebloom.

HM17-R5-06 is flagged for continued observation and potential trialing.



LATE SPRING | THE PROMOTION

Seedlings from family **HM17-R5** are transplanted from 32-cell trays into 3-gallon containers, where each seedling is given a unique accession number.



LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING THE TRANSPLANT

Seedlings from family **HM17-R5** were selected for their dark leaf color and transplanted into 32-cell trays.

2017

2018

SPRING | THE CUTBACK

HM17-R5-06 is entered into our cutback evaluations to gauge rebloom. We do this to all of our most advanced hybrids to determine if they're worthy of a true production trial.



SUMMER | THE CUTBACK WINNERS

The cutback trial involves chopping the hydrangea back to about 3"-4" above the rim of the container in mid June. We then wait to see which hydrangea rebloom and the best performers make it to production trials.

HM17-R5-06 stood out due to its very dark foliage that was observed to remain dark, despite the high heat of the summer. Typically the innermost leaves of other dark leaf selections were very green on the interior, but **HM17-R5-06** was far darker than the rest.



2020



SPRING

- **Eclipse®** survived in-ground in Minnesota (Zone 4).
- Production trials in Minnesota and rebloom trial continue in Georgia.



FALL | THE BRANDING

- **Eclipse®** planted in-ground at Bailey Innovations™ and Minnesota.
- Clones of **Eclipse®** are shipped to Minnesota and Oregon for in-ground trialing and stock additional buildup.
- **Eclipse®** is selected as an introduction for First Editions® Shrubs & Trees.



FALL

ZONE 4: THE TRUE HARDINESS TEST

Eclipse® planted in ground in Minnesota (Zone 4) for cold hardness trial.

MID-SUMMER | THE NAMING

HM17-R5-06 is given the internal nickname of **Eclipse®** due to its dark foliage *eclipsing* the other dark leaf hydrangeas in trial.



SPRING | THE TRIALS

10 clones of **HM17-R5-06** (3-gallon) were entered into production trials in Georgia. These trials gauge approximate time to full bloom, time to finish, time to rebloom and identify any disease or production issues.

2019

In-ground & production trials begin with external partners across the U.S. for additional feedback.

2021

SPRING | THE PREPARATION

Production and in-ground trials continue as propagation begins stock plant build up.

SUMMER | THE COMPARISON

Comparison trials begin to review the benefits of **Eclipse®** against introduced bigleaf hydrangea cultivars that claim dark purple foliage. **Eclipse®** retains dark leaf color while others turn green over time.



Comparison variety



Eclipse®

2022



SPRING | THE PREPARATIONS II

- Production and comparison trials continue, showing great overwintering capabilities.
- Marketing begins developing a promotional plan and materials for the upcoming **Eclipse®** launch.

2023

SPRING | BUILDING UP

- Ongoing trials continue to showcase unique attributes of **Eclipse®** remain consistent.
- Bailey and First Editions® licensees build numbers for Spring 2024 national release.
- Marketing efforts continue, introducing **Eclipse®** to the trade at Cultivate 2023.

2024



INTRODUCTION

2024 NEW INTRODUCTIONS



LUCKY LEU™ LEUCOTHOE

Leucothoe axillaris 'Bailcothoe'

Height: 3-5'

Width: 3-5'

Hardiness Zone: 6-9

Heat Zone: 9

Exposure: Full Sun to Part Sun

Habit: Mounded

With the species native to Southeastern United States, Lucky Leu™ is a well-rounded, low-maintenance landscape shrub that performs well in both sun and shade. In the garden, it maintains its shape beautifully and requires very little pruning. New growth has a peach-orange tint accented with small white flowers in spring with the foliage evolving into medium green.



HONEYCOMB™ NINEBARK

Physocarpus opulifolius 'ZLENora' PP34,624

Height: 4-6'

Width: 5-7'

Hardiness Zone: 3-7

Heat Zone: 7

Exposure: Full Sun to Part Shade

Habit: Upright, Arching

Large, vibrant, chartreuse leaves hold their color all season long, even in full sun. Honeycomb-shaped white flowers appear in spring and contrast nicely with the foliage, which turns shades of gold in the fall. Honeycomb™ can be easily shaped with pruning or left to grow naturally. This ninebark grows nicely in containers and is just as attractive in the landscape. The medium size makes for a beautiful hedge or color block along a fence line.



QUEEN BEE™ CHASTETREE

Vitex agnus-castus 'Bailtexthree' PPAF

Height: 5-6'

Width: 7-9'

Hardiness Zone: 6-9

Heat Zone: 9

Exposure: Full Sun

Habit: Rounded

Long-lasting blooms and improved flower power make this shrub a true standout. Vibrant lavender flowers appear in mid June and continue throughout the summer. The first round of flowers encourages a strong rebloom, which is ideal for scheduling production cycles. Queen Bee™ exhibits impressive drought, heat, and cold tolerance compared to similar varieties. With its larger size, this pollinator magnet creates a beautiful and colorful hedge or focal point.

2023 INTRODUCTIONS



SPRING FLING® FORSYTHIA

Forsythia 'UMNFOR01' PPAF

Height: 5-6'	Width: 5-6'
Hardiness Zone: 5-8	Heat Zone: 8
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Upright

A beacon of spring, forsythia are known for their brilliant explosion of colorful flowers early in the season. Spring Fling® Forsythia does just that, bringing the garden to life with profuse yellow blooms to the tips of each stem. Maturing to 5-6' tall and wide, Spring Fling® can be a back-of-border focal point in spring, create a beautiful hedge, or serve as a foundational anchor at the corner of your home. Growing best in full sun, Spring Fling® is not picky about soil type and can be planted most anywhere you need a pop of early-season flowers.



SHADOW MAGIC™ CRAPEMYRTLE

Lagerstroemia 'Baillagtwo' PP34,639

Height: 7-9'	Width: 5-7'
Hardiness Zone: 7-9	Heat Zone: 9
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Upright, Oval

The combination of prolific dark rosy blooms and dark purple leaves make Shadow Magic™ Crapemyrtle a standout in any warm-climate landscape. While many dark leaf crapemyrtle are riddled with foliar issues, Shadow Magic™ is incredibly disease resistant, especially to powdery mildew, so the glossy dark leaves remain brilliant spring through fall. More compact than Twilight Magic™, this variety matures to 7-9' tall and 5-7' wide, creating a beautiful upright shrub or small tree.

SPICY DEVIL® NINEBARK

Physocarpus opulifolius 'ZLENatalie' PP34,244

Height: 3-4'	Width: 3-4'
Hardiness Zone: 3-7	Heat Zone: 7
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Upright, Rounded

Spicy Devil® Ninebark is a great structural shrub with plenty of multi-season interest to keep your garden exciting spring through fall. Leaves emerge a fiery combination of orange and yellow before maturing to a vibrant reddish-purple, which is a beautiful backdrop to the white-pink spring flowers.

Growing to 3-4' tall and wide with that gorgeous dark foliage, Spicy Devil® is a fantastic foundation plant or small hedge in cool and moderate climates.



LUCKY DEVIL® NINEBARK

Physocarpus opulifolius 'ZLEMichael' PP34,243

Height: 3-4'	Width: 3-4'
Hardiness Zone: 3-7	Heat Zone: 7
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Upright, Rounded

With bright yellow leaves, Lucky Devil® Ninebark is a spectacular shrub to serve as a focal point, informal hedge, or along the foundation of your home. With a mature size of 3-4' tall and wide, beautiful white blooms in spring, and orange fall color, this compact shrub is a multi-season wonder in cool and moderate climates. While some yellow-leafed plants may bleach out in full sun, Lucky Devil® maintains its bright color to capture attention and serve as a strong accent to other plants in the landscape.



2022 INTRODUCTIONS



VANILLA BRANDY™ ABELIA

Abelia x grandiflora 'Bailbeliaone' PP33,071

Height: 2-3'

Width: 2-3'

Hardiness Zone: 6-9

Heat Zone: 9

Exposure: Full Sun to Part Shade

Habit: Compact, Mounded

Vanilla Brandy™ is a tight, compact abelia that has green leaves with white margins that hold their color without necrosis from sun and heat. In the fall, leaf margins turn pink to rose, and are evergreen to semi-evergreen depending on climate. The flowers are white, about 1" long, and slightly fragrant, opening in May-June and continuing through October. The sepals turn pink and are persistent. New stems are red-purple through the growing season and add to its winter interest. Vanilla Brandy™ is a strong production plant that doesn't lean or flop in containers, roots to the bottom quickly, and doesn't need pruning to stay compact.



PINKTINI™ LILAC

Syringa x prestoniae 'Jeftini' PP32,724

Height: 4-5'

Width: 3-4'

Hardiness Zone: 2-7

Heat Zone: 7

Exposure: Full Sun

Habit: Upright

Pinktini™ Lilac is perfect for small spaces, reaching just 4-5' tall and 3-4' wide at maturity. Rich pink flowers bloom from late May through early June in cool regions, adding the classic lilac fragrance and color to a late spring and early summer landscape. Gardeners will appreciate its subtly fragrant flowers and classic textured Preston hybrid foliage. Bred by Dr. Wilbert Ronald of Jeffries Nursery in Canada.



LEMON BURST® ARBORVITAE

Thuja occidentalis 'RutThu3' PPAF

Height: 4-6'	Width: 3-4'
Hardiness Zone: 4-8	Heat Zone: 8
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Broadly Pyramidal

Lemon Burst® Arborvitae is a conical evergreen that thrives in warm and cold climates and is resistant to Passalora/Cercospora needle blight. Yellow new growth keeps its color when grown in full sun and takes on orange tones in cool climates during winter.



PLANET EARTH® ARBORVITAE

Thuja occidentalis 'RutThu4' PPAF

Height: 3-5'	Width: 3-5'
Hardiness Zone: 4-8	Heat Zone: 8
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Round

Planet Earth® Arborvitae has a perfectly rounded, dense habit without any shearing. It thrives in warm and cold climates and is resistant to Passalora/Cercospora needle blight. The green foliage takes on bronze tones in colder climates.



TALL GUY® ARBORVITAE

Thuja occidentalis 'RutThu5' PPAF

Height: 8-12'	Width: 2-3'
Hardiness Zone: 4-8	Heat Zone: 8
Exposure: Full Sun	Habit: Columnar

Tall Guy® is a moderate- to fast-growing, upright arborvitae. Tall Guy® has no gaps between multiple stems like other varieties. This evergreen thrives in warm and cold climates and is resistant to needle blight. Use Tall Guy® to create hedges or screens.

LITTLE HOTTIE® PANICLE HYDRANGEA

Hydrangea paniculata 'Bailpanone' PP32,549

Height: 3-5'

Width: 3-5'

Hardiness Zone: 3-8

Heat Zone: 8

Exposure: Full Sun to Part Shade

Habit: Rounded

An exciting new compact panicle hydrangea, Little Hottie® has very full flower heads with florets that emerge green and turn sparkling white. This well-branched, compact selection is covered in large blooms from the bottom to the top of the plant and holds tight flower clusters out on strong stems. Bred in Georgia for heat tolerance, Little Hottie® performs equally well in Minnesota; flowers don't get heat-stressed or turn brown in excessive heat. With natural basal branching, this new introduction doesn't need much pruning in production or the landscape to grow into a well-shaped plant. It delivers beauty into the fall as color ages to soft pink.





ROCK STAR VARIETY

This resilient shrub puts on a long-lasting show with full flower heads that emerge green and mature to dazzling white. Because of its smaller size and strong stems, it is perfectly suited for any garden setting — from decorative patio containers to mass landscape plantings.

WHAT IS A ROCK STAR?

While we are confident in every plant we bring to the market, we definitely have our top picks that have demonstrated their reliability in production, at retail, and in the landscape. Rock Stars have earned their title through ultimate multi-region performance, versatility, outstanding visual interest — and will undoubtedly enhance any outdoor environment with strength, texture, and color.

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