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**A Historical Summary of Plant Material Evaluations by SERA-IEG 27**

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**Significance to Industry:** Independent testing of new plant material at a large number of locations is crucial before a new plant is introduced. The members of SERA-IEG 27 (Nursery and Landscape Systems) evaluate plant material then compile results for dissemination. This testing program and the dissemination of results offer a guide to green industry professionals attempting to select the best plants for production and landscape use.

**Nature of Work:** The Southern Extension and Research Activities/Information Exchange Group 27 (SERA-IEG-27) for Nursery and Landscape Systems was initiated in 1994. This group is composed of research and extension faculty working in the commercial nursery and landscape disciplines from fourteen 1862 land grant universities in the southeastern United States. In addition, horticulture faculty from the USDA – National Arboretum are members. Universities represented are Texas A&M, Oklahoma State, LSU, Arkansas, Auburn, Mississippi State, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, Clemson, North Carolina State, West Virginia, and Virginia Tech.

The goal of the group is to evaluate landscape plant material across many different areas of the southern United States. During the annual meeting held each summer, members determine which plants will be tested by the group. Plants for evaluation are then given a code indicating state of origin and numerical order of entry into the testing program. Next, plants are supplied as liners or one gallon containers to cooperators who grow the plant to landscape size before planting out.

From one to three plants of each selection are supplied to the cooperators. In SERA-IEG-27, both herbaceous perennials and woody plants are evaluated. Depending on the plant, the evaluation period can range from 2 to 10 years. Results of evaluation are disseminated through educational programs and publications of the participating states.

**Results of Work:** To date 40 different plant taxa have been evaluated or are being evaluated currently by cooperators in SERA-IEG 27. Plants officially evaluated in the program are show in Table 1. Dunwell et al. (1) and Lindstrom (2) have previously reported on this plant evaluation program effort. Lindstrom (2) documented in 2004 that evaluations have been completed on the plants listed below. These reports summarize the growth, flowering and other aesthetic qualities as well as adaptability in the test locations.

- *Rhododendron* 'GulfRay' MS04-01
- *Cornus mas* 'Spring Glow' NC96-01
- *Acer oliverianum* ssp. *formosanum* GA97-01
- *Styrax japonicum* 'Emerald Pagoda' NC98-01
- *Pittosporum heterophyllum* AL98-01
- *Cephalotaxus harringtonia* 'Berry College Selection' TN98-01
- *Conradina canescens* FL98-01
- *Lagerstroemia* 'Chickasaw' DC99-01
- *Lagerstroemia* 'Pocomoke' DC99-02
- *Plumbago auriculata* 'Hullabaloo' TX99-01
- *Turnera ulmifolia* TX99-02
- *Lonicera* × *americana* TX99-03
- *Ipomoea carnea* ssp. *fistulosa* TX99-04
- *Illicium mexicanum* 'Aztec Fire' NC99-01
- *Iris* 'Churchill Downs' KY99-01
- *Iris* 'Kentucky Derby' KY99-02
- *Hemerocallis* 'Octavia' Series KY99-03
- *Hemerocallis* 'Happy Returns' KY99-03
- *Hemerocallis* 'Milano' Series KY99-03
- *Bulbine canescens* TX00-01
- *Stachys coccinea* AR01-01
- *Conradina canescens* 'SPH' AR01-02

**Literature Cited:**

1. Dunwell, W.C., Fare, D., Arnold, M., Tilt, K., Knox, G., Witte, W., Knight, P., Pooler, M., Klingeman, W., Niemiera, A., Ruter, J., Yeager, T., Ranney, T., Beeson, R., Lindstrom, J., Bush, E., Owings, A., and Schnelle, M. 2001. Plant Evaluation Program: SERA/IEG-27: Nursery Crops and Landscape Systems. HortTechnology 11(3):373-375.
2. Lindstrom, Jon T. 2004. SERA-IEG 27 Regional Plant Evaluations. Proc. Southern Nursery Assoc. Res. Conf. Vol. 49: 567-569.

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**Table 1. Historical listing of ornamental plants selected for landscape evaluation by SERA-IEG 27 with listing of faculty introducing.**


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*Rhododendron* 'GulfRay' MS04-01 (Sam Laiche, 1994)  
*Cornus mas* 'Spring Glow' NC96-01 (Tom Ranney, 1996)  
*Acer oliverianum* ssp. *formosanum* GA97-01 (John Ruter, 1997)  
*Styrax japonicum* 'Emerald Pagoda' NC98-01 (Tom Ranney, 1998)  
*Pittosporum heterophyllum* AL98-01 (Ken Tilt, 1998)  
*Cephalotaxus harringtonia* TN98-01 (Will Witte, 1998)  
*Conradina canescens* FL98-01 (Gary Knox, 1998)  
*Lagerstroemia* 'Chickasaw' DC99-01 (Margaret Pooler, 1999)  
*Lagerstroemia* 'Pocomoke' DC99-02 (Margaret Pooler, 1999)  
*Plumbago auriculata* 'Hullabaloo' TX99-01 (Mike Arnold, 1999)  
*Turnera ulmifolia* TX99-02 (Mike Arnold, 1999)  
*Lonicera* × *americana* 'Pam's Pink' TX99-03 (Mike Arnold, 1999)  
*Ipomoea carnea* ssp. *fistulosa* TX99-04 (Mike Arnold, 1999)  
*Illicium mexicanum* 'Aztec Fire' NC99-01 (Tom Ranney, 1999)  
*Iris* 'Churchill Downs' KY99-01 (Win Dunwell, 1999)  
*Iris* 'Kentucky Derby' KY99-02 (Win Dunwell, 1999)  
*Hemerocallis* 'Octavia' Series KY99-03 (Win Dunwell, 1999)<sup>Z</sup>  
*Hemerocallis* 'Happy Returns' KY99-03 (Win Dunwell, 1999)  
*Hemerocallis* 'Milano' Series KY99-03 (Win Dunwell, 1999)<sup>Y</sup>  
*Bulbine caulescens* TX00-01 (Mike Arnold, 2000)  
*Michelia skinneriana* FL00-01 (Gary Knox, 2000)  
*Stachys coccinea* AR01-01 (Jon Lindstrom, 2001)  
*Conradina canescens* 'SPH' AR01-02 (Jon Lindstrom, 2001)  
*Magnolia* × 'Jon Jon' FL01-01 (Gary Knox, 2001)  
× *Sinocalycalycanthus raulstonii* 'Hartlege Wine' NC02-01 (Tom Ranney, 2001)  
*Daphniphyllum macropodum* DC02-01 (Margaret Pooler, 2002)  
*Forsythia* 'Fairy-Land' TN03-01 (Donna Fare, 2003)  
*Forsythia* 'Minikin' TN03-02 (Donna Fare, 2003)  
*Forsythia* 'Tinkle Bells' TN03-03 (Donna Fare, 2003)  
*Forsythia* 'Pygmy-Red' TN03-04 (Donna Fare, 2003)  
*Betula nigra* 'Summer Cascade' NC03-01 (Tom Ranney, 2003)  
*Amsonia* 'SPH' AR03-01 (Jon Lindstrom, 2003)  
*Buddleja* 02-25-142 AR04-01 (Jon Lindstrom, 2004)  
*Viburnum luzonicum* FL04-01 (Gary Knox, 2004)  
*Buddleja* 03-05-045 AR05-01 (Jon Lindstrom, 2005)  
*Ceanothus* × *delilianus* 'Gloire de Versailles' AR05-02 (Jon Lindstrom, 2005)  
*Pinus ayacahuite* AL05-01 (Ken Tilt, 2005)  
*Taxodium distichum* seedling selections TX07-01 (Mike Arnold, 2007)  
*Callicarpa dichomata* 'Duet' TN07-01 (Donna Fare, 2007)  
*Syringa* 'Betty Ross' TN07-02 (Donna Fare, 2007)

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<sup>Z</sup> The 'Octavia' series daylilies included 'Cherry Doll', 'Exotic Marble', 'Marble Model', 'Glow', and 'Orchid'.

<sup>Y</sup> The 'Malino' series daylilies included 'Maraschino', 'Rocket', and 'Violet Mark'.

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