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Unusual, Exotic, and
Native Plants*



**2017 Fall Sale – Salvia and Sages – Predatory Stink Bugs – Sleepy Orange Butterfly - New
Sasanquas and Camellias for 2017**

ALMOST EDEN'S 2017 FALL SALE

Our **2017 Fall Sale** has just begun and we have marked down over 160 great plants! Included are a great selection of plants for pollinators like our Porterweeds, Salvias, Lantanas and selected Turkscaps. Our sale includes some of our newest 2017 additions like Black and Bloom Salvia as well as some of our old favorites like the intensely fragrant Sunset Scentsation Night Blooming Jasmine, our selection of Confederate Roses, and the always reliable Ruellias. You can even place your order now for spring 2018 shipment. It's easy, just select your preferred shipping week at checkout for up to 6 months from now.



SALVIAS & SAGES



With their long tubular flowers and rich nectar, few other plants are more perfectly designed for hummingbird pollination. Our Ruby Throat Hummingbirds have been actively nectaring from our collection of Salvias, a.k.a. Sages, all season long. From the new improved form of Black and Blue Anise Sage called Black and Bloom Salvia (pictured lower right), to the vigorous big and bold deep purple flowered Amistad Salvia (pictured at left), to the Wish series: Wendy's Wish, Ember's Wish, and Love & Wishes. Except for the Wish series and Scarlet Sage, most of the other Salvias and Sages we offer are reliable garden perennials in zone 8. Amistad has surprised us with its hardiness and was the first Salvia to begin flowering as it was ready for the hummingbird migration by early March of this year. The new Black and

Bloom Salvia has proven to be more vigorous and free flowering than the widely popular Black and Blue. It has thicker, darker green, almost quilted foliage and produces a continuous display of deep indigo tubular flowers that emerge from nearly solid black calyxes.

Most Salvias prefer a sunny spot in the garden although midday or afternoon shade is acceptable for many varieties. An average garden soil with good to average drainage and moderate fertility is suitable. Bring the hummingbirds in close by using Salvias in containers. Use Salvias as specimen plants, en masse, or in combinations for summer long color that lasts into fall.



PREDATORY STINK BUGS – the Spined Soldier Bug and the Florida Predatory Stink Bug



A stink bug look alike, the Spined Soldier Bug (pictured at left) has two prominent 'spines' coming off of each side of its front 'shoulders', really the 'humeral angle'. It is a voracious predator in all stages except for the first instar (instars are the young stages of an insect before their final molt to adulthood, most insects go through 3-5 instars on average and this is normally when winged insects develop their flight worthy mature wings) where it is reported to eat nothing in this initial stage. The Spined Soldier Bug is known to attack almost any other insect in the garden and is particularly fond of caterpillars and young beetle larvae including the Colorado Potato Beetle. They tend to be loners as adults whereas you often see the plant eating stink bugs in groups, a.k.a. being gregarious.

During the early instars, the

Spined Soldier Bugs are also gregarious, and may even become cannibalistic. This excellent garden beneficial ranges across much of North America and has even been exported to other countries as a predator species for protection of commercial crops. So, if you find a light tan colored 'stink bug' take a closer look before considering pest control as these little bugs may be doing that for you! For more information about the Spined Soldier Bug, *Podisus maculiventris*, see the University of Florida's Featured Creatures page from the department of Entomology & Nematology at the following link:

http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/beneficial/podisus_maculiventris.htm

Another carnivorous stink bug that we have seen here is the beautiful Florida Predatory Stink Bug, *Euthyrhyncus floridanus*. Pictured in the image to the right, it is busy consuming the insides of a Gulf Fritillary caterpillar (sad, I know, but the Passionvine appreciated it!). Like the assassin bugs, predatory stink bugs have long tubular mouth parts with which to inject into their prey. Some types of predatory bugs also inject enzymes which help to liquefy the internal organs of their prey making them easier to consume through their straw-like mouth parts kind of like a protein shake. This predatory stink bug may be confused with a few other similar species so you may have to look close for proper identification but the 'spines' on the 'shoulders' are a giveaway to its predatory nature. It has striking aposematic (strongly opposing colors that often indicate an insect is poisonous) orange markings on a black body with iridescent green, blue, and purple. For additional information about these bugs, see the University of Florida's Featured Creatures page from the department of Entomology & Nematology at the following link:

http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/beneficial/e_floridanus.htm



SLEEPY ORANGE BUTTERFLY VISITING OUR NEW SENNAS

For the first time this year we have a Sleepy Orange Butterfly visiting our American Wild Sennas and Maryland Sennas to lay its eggs. I say for the first time, this is the first time it has given me the opportunity to take a picture to allow for positive identification it as these are fast flyers and



are not fond of close-up viewing. I suspect that this is the same butterfly that we get in the fall that looks similar to a variety of other small to medium sized Sulphurs and Yellows.

SENNAS FOR SULPHURS



Native and ornamental Sennas, once classified as *Cassias*, serve as the host plants to a variety of the yellow Sulphur-type butterflies along with our native annuals the Partridge Pea (pictured at right), *Chamaecrista fasciculata*, and the fine, ferny-leaved Sensitive Partridge Pea, *Chamaecrista nictitans*. The perennial and native American Wild Senna (pictured at left) and Maryland Wild Senna are very similar in nearly all regards until the seed have set and ripened. These two are generally long-lived clump forming, upright



growing perennials whose summer and fall flowers attract bees and other pollinators. They both get fairly large, 4-7'H, and so are generally relegated to the back of the garden or as part of the wildflower and native gardens. The large, summer and fall flowering Candlestick Tree, *Senna alata*, and the October flowering Winter Cassia are both introduced ornamentals that are used by species of Sulphurs and

Yellows.

WATCH FOR NEW SASANQUAS AND CAMELLIAS - Coming in Fall / Winter of 2017 and Spring of 2018

Sasanquas are hard to beat for fall color as a low maintenance evergreen shrub. Sizes range from the diminutive 2-3' high compact shrubs to upright growing plants that touch on 20' high at maturity. The petals make a blanket of color on the ground beneath the dark green glossy foliage increasing their color effect in the garden, landscape, and as container plants. These exceptional shrubs, like the compact 4'x4' [Louisiana Super Plant Shi-Shi Gashira](#), have become stalwarts of the landscaping industry for good reason and can flower from October well into December with some cultivars flowering into January. Sasanqua Camellias also make for easy and low maintenance medium to large container specimens. Allow them to grow into their natural dense forms or shape these sun to shade tolerant Camellias into hedges. Use the larger growing types as specimen plants and natural screens or even shape them into tree forms. Watch for us to add a selection of new October Magic® Sasanquas, (Bride, Dawn, Ivory, and Orchid) and a special large flowered Japonica aptly named Irrational Exuberance (from the breeding work of Bobby Green and Green Nurseries) this fall along with additional heirloom and modern Japonica Camellias.

Thank you for taking the time to peruse our Fall 2017 Newsletter and if you know of anyone who would be interested in reading it you can forward it to them by copying the below link:

[Almost Eden Fall 2017 Newsletter](#)

Textual version of the link: https://almostedenplants.com/shopping/growing_guides/Fall%202017%20Newsletter%20-%20Almost%20Eden.pdf

You can sign up to receive our periodic [newsletter here](#).

Thank You & Good Growing,
John, Bonnie, & Jeff McMillian

& the Crew at [Almost Eden](#)

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