

Non Invasive Options for *Lantana camara*

Most folks know by now that the old butter and eggs lantana (*Lantana camara*) that we see in the woods and in landscapes around Florida is an exotic invasive plant and should be avoided. The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FEPPC) calls it “a serious, worldwide invader that in some areas has altered habitats and threatens to eliminate populations of native plants and animals.” However, this unfortunate condition does not necessarily mean that residents should not use lantana of any kind in their landscapes.

According to Dr. David Sandrock, several sterile varieties are available. Some are female sterile (produce seeds but very few are viable) and some are male sterile (10% or less of the pollen is viable). Some are both male and female sterile. He recommended the Patriot, Hallelujah, Sunburst, and Cowboy series of lantana.

FLEPPC recognizes the cultivars ‘Gold Mound’, ‘New Gold’, ‘Alba’ and ‘Patriot’ series as cultivars that are not known to produce viable seeds. Other promoted sterile cultivars include ‘Miss Huff’, ‘Mozelle’, ‘New Gold’, and ‘Samantha’ (‘Lemon Swirl’). Descriptions of sterile varieties which are available include:

- [‘Gold Mound’](#) is sterile and has cheery golden yellow flowers that practically cover the plant. As its cultivar name implies, it forms mounds of stems that spread outward from the central trunk.
- [‘New Gold’](#) -- bright yellow, sterile flowers, spreading habit. This new variety named New Gold blooms profusely but NEVER forms berries which have to be removed before more blooms will be produced. This revolutionary new development in lantanas insures that this plant will be a continuous beauty rather than a virulent pest with its unwelcomed seedling offspring. But you MUST insist on the New Gold variety; all other lantana varieties exhibit the characteristics which lead botanists to label them with the highly unfavorable specie name of horrida. At maturity, ‘Gold Mound’ and ‘New Gold’ reach 18-24" tall and 3-4' wide or more.
- Pinkie -- Pink/cream bicolor, sterile flowers on an extremely compact plant which never requires cutting back.
- [‘Samantha’](#) (also Lemon Swirl)- has dark green and chartreuse variegated foliage with bright lemon yellow sterile flowers on a compact bush. A beautiful plant even without blooms! Plants grow 2 to 3 feet tall and 4 feet wide. Does not produce berries.
- [‘Miss Huff’](#) is one of the most reliably perennial lantanas, even in the Upstate. It is a vigorous, tall plant, forming an upright mound up to 5 to 6 feet tall in one season. Flowers are a mix of orange, coral and gold..
- [‘Mozelle’](#) is similar to ‘Miss Huff’ in size and hardiness, but the flowers are much softer in color, varying from pale yellow to peach and soft pink..
- [‘Patriot Cowboy’](#) is one of the smallest lantanas available, growing to only 12 inches tall and 12 inches wide. The blooms begin as orange buds that open bright yellow and change to bright orange.
- [‘Patriot Deen Day Smith’](#) is a newer variety with pastel colors of rose pink, canary yellow apricot. This is a vigorous growing mounding type, that will attain a height and width of up to 5 feet in one season.
- [‘Patriot Marc Cathey’](#) is a tall white flowering variety. The flower centers are clear lemon yellow. This is a vigorous growing mounding type, that will attain a height and width of up to 5 feet in one season.

Florida also has its own native lantana. One, the Florida lantana (*Lantana depressa*) is one of our endangered species. Another species, sometimes called wild sage (*Lantana involucrata*) is a more commonly occurring native that has white flowers with yellow centers.

Sources for this article came from:

[Clemson Extension Service Report](#)
[Roger Hammer - All About Lantanas](#)
[UF 2008 Lantana Garden Trials](#)
[Texas A&M Extension Service Report](#)
[UF Extension Service Report](#)