

## in the garden by Stephen and Kristin Pategas



STEPHEN & KRISTIN PATEGAS

### More Florida Garden Select Plants To Try

Here are three more plants in the Florida Garden Select program for 2011 ([www.floridagardening.org](http://www.floridagardening.org)) sponsored by the Florida, Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association. We, along with other judges from around the state, selected a diverse group of plants that all thrive in Central Florida. Contact us if you would like us to email you the November article for the other three 2011 plants.

#### Muehlenbeckia axillaris – wire vine



Wire vine creeps and is very fine textured

Wire vine is a small-leaved, creepy crawly, fine-textured vine that is low water use once established. This is a great performer if you wish to cover some ground in full to part sun with a low dense groundcover reaching about six inches in height. Plant it two to two - and one- half feet on center.

Compared to the similar dwarf Asian jasmine, it is softer to the touch and spreads and climbs more vigorously. In some situations where it borders other plants or is grown around them, that may mean more maintenance. Along edges not adjacent to hardscape or lawns we suggest installing a six-inch-high edging. Place it three inches below ground to halt the underground creep and three inches above to provide a trimming boundary.

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This groundcover will also stabilize a slope and take some foot traffic. Look for small white flowers in late spring and enjoy this lower maintenance turf substitute.

#### Lobularia 'Snow Princess' – Snow Princess alyssum



Snow Princess alyssum with petunias and Silver Falls dichondra

You may have grown alyssum for years and been disappointed when, after a winter and spring of flowering, the summer heat causes it to wither. Try the new Snow Princess alyssum in full sun to part shade and expect fragrant pure white blooms into July. In some locations this annual may even make it year-round. The secret is that it doesn't put energy into setting seed and channels it into continuous flower production.

Snow Princess reaches heights of 4 to 6 inches and mounds and cascades. Alyssum excels in containers, window boxes (open the window to snag the scent), and hanging baskets. Snow Princess flows out of the four amphora containers along the walkway in front

of our house. Drive by and see how it looks when the summer heat has many other plants gasping.

#### Copernicia alba – caranday palm or wax palm



Carnaday palm – just trim away old fronds

This single-trunk palm will grow in dry or moist soil conditions, even tolerating occasional inundation. It typically reaches a height of 20 to 30 feet. The striking silvery bluish-green fronds on thorny stems are fan shaped (palmate) and form a rounded crown.

The waxy fronds are a commercial source of industrial grade wax in its native lands of northern Argentina, southwestern Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Cold-hardy here into protected portions of Zone 9 (lows of 20-25 degrees), plant the wax palm in full sun for the best growth and use it as a single specimen or in a cluster of three.

Now we can all look forward to the 2012 selections. ♦

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All photography by Stephen G. Pategas/Hortus Oasis