

Climbing & Other Potted Roses

By Jim Wagner

This article was initially prompted as a response to question from a lady from church about climbing roses to help hide an unsightly fence and to provide color all season. It has been expanded to include where to find roses and what to avoid in selecting potted roses in the spring. Her request to have color all season eliminated William Baffin with its heavy mass of blooms in June and sparse blooms the rest of the season, but below are some of the more hardy climbing type roses growing in the E. M. Mills Memorial Rose Garden in Thornden Park, Syracuse. These bloom almost continuously from mid-June through mid-Autumn and sometimes later.

<u>Name</u>	<u>ARS Rating*</u>	<u>Bloom Color</u>	<u>Height **</u>	<u>Fragrance</u>
Dortmund	8.8	Medium Red	8 to 10' (+)	Light
Clair Matin	8.5	Medium Pink	7 to 9' (+)	Slight
New Dawn	8.4	Light Pink	10 to 12'	Moderate
Westerland	8.3	Apricot	10 to 12'	N/A
Demokracie (Improved Blaze)	8.9	Medium Red	7 to 8'	Light
Fourth of July	8.2	Red Blend	6 to 8'	Moderate
Pierre de Ronsard (Eden)	8.3	Deep Pink	8 to 10'	Light
Dublin Bay	8.4	Medium Pink	8 to 10' (+)	Light
Don Juan	8.3	Dark Red	7 to 8'	Very fragrant

* The ARS Rating is the overall rating from the 2018 ARS "Handbook on Selecting Roses". I prefer a rating of at least 8.0.

** Height when fully grown, sometimes taking a number of years to fully develop.

For our area, potted roses are usually available around early May for Mother's Day and after. Living a few miles east of Syracuse, I recently visited three garden shop/nurseries to determine which roses will be available this year.

Zerrillo Gardens on Taft Road. They do not offer any climbing roses, preferring so-called "easy to grow" roses like the Knockout series and few other modern type roses.

Chuck Hafner's Garden Center in North Syracuse. They will have a large selection of all types of roses including some of the above climbers in three gallon pots that will be in "Bloom" by early May and Mother's Day weekend and after so that you can observe their color and bloom size. *I would suggest visiting them prior to and/or on Mother's Day weekend to get your best choice of roses.*

Aspinall Landscape and Nursery in Chittenango. They will have a couple of the roses listed above but they seem to prefer other modern type roses, especially the Knockout and other easy to grow roses that will be in "Bud" stage by Mother's Day.



When planting these, be sure to allow ample space for future root development and that the bud union is two inches below ground level. If we have winter temperatures well below zero for extended periods like we had a few years ago, some of these varieties may suffer major winter die back but will regain their normal size with time.

Try to avoid cheaper roses sold in small 3 to 3 1/2 quart plastic pots that I found in one of the big box stores. Their label showed they were boxed up in mid-February as an alternative to those in larger three gallon pots for people on a limited budget. The roots have been cut back to fit inside these smaller containers. You will be lucky if they survive their first winter. In prior years I have found these in plastic or similar wrappings.

Rows of climbers in the Mills Garden taken at the June 2009 Rose Day, where these roses had partially recovered from a seriously adverse winter about 2003-2004. William Baffin is on each end with New Dawn (light pink) and Clair Matin (medium pink) in between.