
Ornithogalum 'Chesapeake Blaze', 'Chesapeake Sunburst', and 'Chesapeake Sunset'



The U.S. National Arboretum announces the release of three novel *Ornithogalum* hybrids, 'Chesapeake Blaze', 'Chesapeake Sunburst', and 'Chesapeake Sunset'. These cultivars are designed for container culture, unlike the popular cut flower *Ornithogalum*. Dense clusters of orange or yellow flowers are displayed on short, thick flower stems and last for months. For cheery bursts of color in your decorating or long-lasting gift to yourself or someone you love, the Chesapeake Series selections are ideal.



'Chesapeake Blaze'



'Chesapeake Sunset'



'Chesapeake Sunburst'

U.S. National Arboretum Plant Introduction
Floral and Nursery Plants Research Unit

U.S. National Arboretum, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, 3501 New York Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002





Chesapeake Series Star-of-Bethlehem

Botanical Name:	<i>Ornithogalum</i> 'Chesapeake Blaze' (NA 69717) <i>Ornithogalum</i> 'Chesapeake Sunburst' (NA 69718) <i>Ornithogalum</i> 'Chesapeake Sunset' (NA 69716)
Family:	Liliaceae
Hardiness:	U.S.D.A. Zone 9; indoor potted plant.
Development:	The Chesapeake Series was jointly created by Robert J. Griesbach of the USNA and the late Fred Meyer of New World Plants, Inc., as a new line of potted plant types combining the dense floral display and large flowers of <i>Ornithogalum thyrsoides</i> , compact habit of <i>O. multifolium</i> , and intense orange color and short stature of <i>O. dubium</i> . Following the production of interspecific hybrids facilitated by embryo rescue, and extensive intercrossing, 'Chesapeake Blaze', 'Chesapeake Sunburst', and 'Chesapeake Sunset' were selected. U.S. Patent Pending. Officially registered with the Royal General Bulb Grower's Association in The Netherlands.
Significance:	The Chesapeake Series cultivars are the first hybrid <i>Ornithogalum</i> developed for use as potted plant crops. This series is a significant plant breeding accomplishment, offering new color shades, increased bud count and flower size, and the thick, straight stems essential for potted crops.
Description:	Height: 10–12 inches tall. Habit: Summer dormant, deciduous bulb. Foliage: Dark green glabrous leaves 1–2 inches wide and 6–8 inches long. Flowers: Bulbs produce 2–3 flower stems in succession, individual flower stems bloom for 3–4 weeks. Plants remain in bloom for several months.

Cultivar	Ploidy Level	Flower Number & Color	Flower Size
'Chesapeake Blaze'	Triploid	30–40 bright orange (RHS 24A)	2" diameter on 7–10" inflorescence
'Chesapeake Sunburst'	Diploid	30–40 bright yellow (RHS 9A)	1.5" diameter on 7–10" inflorescence
'Chesapeake Sunset'	Tetraploid	20–25 deep orange (RHS 25A)	1.5" diameter on 4–6" inflorescence

Culture:	Bulbs should be grown in a well-drained potting mix or sandy-loam soil, pH of 6.0–7.0. Plants grow and flower continuously at temperatures under 90°F; 65–75°F is ideal; dormancy occurs above 90°F. Commercially, dormancy is broken by high temperature rather than low.
Propagation:	Bulbs are vegetatively propagated; tissue culture.
Use:	Container planting for indoor use, gift plants; bedding plants in zone 9.
Availability:	Finished bulbs are being produced under a licensing agreement. Plants available in the United States to commercial finishers in fall, 1999, and through retailers in spring, 2000. For additional information, contact Dr. Robert Griesbach, U.S. National Arboretum, Floral and Nursery Plants Research Unit.
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