Solar Flare Prairieblues™ False Indigo
*Baptisia* ‘Solar Flare’ US PPAF
Solar Flare Prairieblues™

Solar Flare Prairieblues™ features purplish stems in spring, followed by yellow flowers that take on a unique orange to violet hue with age. A vigorous, easy-to-grow hybrid *Baptisia* developed at the Chicago Botanic Garden.
Botanical Name
_Baptisia_ ‘Solar Flare’

Common Name
Solar Flare Prairieblues™ false indigo

Family
Fabaceae (Pea family)

Origin
Solar Flare Prairieblues™ was selected in 2004 by Dr. Jim Ault of the Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, Illinois, from an open-pollinated seedling population. The seed parent was thought to be a hybrid of _Baptisia tinctoria_ x _Baptisia alba_ x _Baptisia australis_. The pollen parent is unknown, but traits suggest _Baptisia sphaerocarpa_.

Hardiness
USDA Zones 4-9

Bloom Season
This selection blooms for two to three weeks in early to mid-June in northern Illinois (USDA Zone 5).

Plant Habit
Primary stems are produced in numbers on a mature plant. Initially strong and erect, the upper portions of each stem branch repeatedly to produce a broad-rounded head over stout stems below. The strong stems hold up well to summer storms.

Size
Mature plants are broad rounded and measure about 4 feet tall and 4½ feet wide in five years.

Growth Rate
A vigorous grower, it will reach mature size quickly for a Baptisia.

Ornamental Characteristics
The emerging stems in spring exhibit a distinct purplish cast that persists for several weeks. In early to mid-June (in USDA Zone 5) medium yellow flowers appear on long primary inflorescences held above the foliage. Flowers take on a distinct orange to violet cast with age, producing a unique two-toned inflorescence. Shorter secondary flower stems are produced throughout the expanding foliage, extending the bloom display. The medium green foliage remains attractive all season.

Culture
This low-maintenance perennial requires only to be cut back every winter. Solar Flare Prairieblues™ prefers a well-drained, mesic to dry soil with full sun. Excellent in sandy soils and tolerant of clay soils that are not overly wet. Drought tolerant once established. These long-lived plants produce extensive root systems and are best not disturbed once established.

Pest and Disease Problems
None known.

Landscape Value
This striking plant makes an excellent specimen but is also effective massed at the back of a perennial border. Can be an outstanding addition to a mixed border or grouped for a naturalistic effect in prairie or meadow settings. Its durability lends it to low-maintenance landscapes. The upright stems and their lack of lowermost foliage lend this selection to close interplanting with shorter perennials, unlike some false indigos such as _B. australis_.

Propagation
Propagate by division, vegetative or root cuttings. Plants propagated from seed will not be true to type.

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