



## The 'Academy' series

This month we feature introductions from Steve Chamberlain, many of which derived from seedlings. We also provide a list of the latest hostas to be granted an Award of Garden Merit (AGM)...

### Growing from seed

We are getting more enquiries from gardeners about developing their own hosta cultivars and are often asked to supply seed.

As we are anxious not to mislead customers, there are two reasons we do not do this. Firstly, *h. ventricosa* is the only self fertile species which produces plants true to type. See **December 2009 newsletter** for more information. Secondly, plants grown in a garden situation produce open pollinated seeds from random fertilisation. Anything 'different' amongst the resulting seedlings is pure serendipity. Dedicated Plant Breeders undertake pollination in strictly controlled situations, where they are able to name both the pod and pollinating parents.

#### The Academy series

One breeder who has experimented extensively with open-pollinated seeds is Steve Chamberlain.

He uses the prefix Academy for his introductions, in honour of the street in Manlius, New York State where he lives.

Over the years we have enjoyed reading his contributions to the **American Hosta Society's Journal**.



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In his article 'The Grandchildren of *hosta* 'Ginko Craig', which was published in Volume 33, Number 2, he discusses some surprising results from experiments with open pollinated seedlings of *h. 'Ginko Craig'*. This programme was born out of the desire to find interesting flowers, rather than new variations in leaf shapes and colours. It is well worth a read if you are keen to take the subject further.



**H. 'Academy Celeborn'**

#### Unusual names

Steve has had fun naming his introductions over the years, with many fans of Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings' trying to source varieties with associated names.

Our own collection holds 10 of the 'Academy' series, but only one with a Tolkien name: *h. 'Academy Celeborn'*.

Steve has reserved his use of Tolkien names for the varieties he has registered from his experimentation with the *h. 'Ginko Craig'* seedlings. Varieties he registered between 2000 and 2005, from this research are: Academy Chetwood; Academy Dimholt; Academy Fangorn Forest; Academy Galadriel; Academy Isengard; Academy Lothlórien; Academy Mallorn; Academy Mirkwood; Academy Nazgul; Academy Palantir; Academy Rivendell and Academy Wethertop.

### Next month

We would like to devote the newsletter to challenging growing environments, and we would like your input to the issue, so:

Please get in touch with us if you have any tips on growing your hosta in difficult soil conditions, especially chalky or sandy soils.

Our experience of growing on clay soil is quite extensive, but we have lots of customers who garden successfully on very different soils.

Many of you have shared your experiences over the years, so we think it is time to devote a newsletter to the subject.

**Email Us** and we will include your tips.

#### HOSTA AGM

The RHS published their latest **Award of Garden Merit listings** last month, for all the genus they survey.

The list contains many varieties we would recommend, together with some more surprising additions of varieties we have found to be prone to reversion!

The full list of hosta varieties has been transcribed **here**.

The majority of varieties listed have been newly added, and give anyone

The **Hosta Register** lists 52 varieties in the Academy series  
(varieties in bold are in our collection - click on the links to find out more):

Academy Ametrine  
Academy Another  
Academy Aureate Piffle  
Academy Blue Funnel  
Academy Blue Titan  
Academy Blushing Chartreuse  
**Academy Blushing Recluse**  
Academy Bonfire Glade  
Academy Broddingnagian Viridity  
**Academy Celeborn**  
Academy Chetwood  
Academy Cockcrow  
Academy Crated Blue

#### **Academy Devon Moor**

Academy Dimholt  
Academy Fangorn Forest  
Academy Faux Sedge  
Academy Fickle Fellow

#### **Academy Fire**

#### **Academy Flaxen Spades**

#### **Academy Flora**

Academy Galadriel  
Academy Gilded Dawn  
Academy Glowing Embers  
Academy Gold Codswallop



**H. 'Academy Flaxen Spades'**

Steve has not chosen to register all his introductions. Zilis lists a couple in 'The Hostapedia', which have as yet to be registered: *h.* 'Academy Blue Borealis' and *h.* 'Academy Streaked Francee'.

**Next month:** Growing hosta in difficult soil and climate conditions...



**H. 'Academy Blushing Recluse'**

Academy Golden Papoose  
Academy Grass Clippings  
Academy Grins  
Academy Isengard  
Academy Kakistocracy  
Academy Lemon Knoll  
Academy Little Prother  
Academy Lothlórien  
Academy Mallorn

#### **Academy Mavrodaphne**

Academy Mirkwood

#### **Academy Muse**

Academy Nazgul  
Academy Nightfall  
Academy Palantir

#### **Academy Redundant**

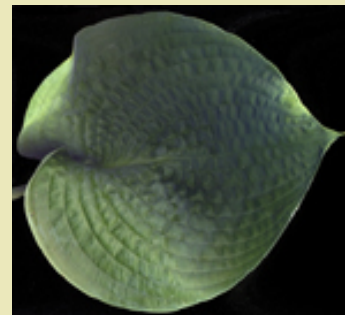
Academy Resplendent Froufrou  
Academy Rivendell  
Academy Shiny Vase  
Academy Smiles  
Academy Speckled Caddy Spoons  
Academy Speckled Vase  
Academy Tousled Turkey  
Academy verdent Sapdes

#### **Academy Verdant Verge**

Academy Wethertop  
Academy Wonky Balderdash

new to growing the genus a good starting point for their collection.

The list includes:



**H. 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd'**



**H. 'Barbara Ann'**



**H. 'Niagara Falls'**



**H. 'Praying Hands'**



**H. 'Touch of Class'**

As ever, we are happy to advise on varieties you may wish to buy - don't hesitate to talk to us in person, via phone or email, in the usual way.

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 38 years of experience with the Hosta genus. We are constantly learning and refining that knowledge and would welcome any suggestions that readers of this newsletter would like to make so please **contact us**.

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