



The species *h. sieboldiana*

We have finally arrived at the conclusion of our investigation into the origins of *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'*, which we began tracing back in April.

In this final part we include a chart showing how much influence the species *h. sieboldiana* has had on the hosta genus, especially through the development of some of the most outstanding large cultivars currently available...

Back to the future - part 4!

H. sieboldiana is parent to a range of mainly medium through to giant cultivars. The list of cultivars produced from *h. sieboldiana* is too long to feature in a single issue of this newsletter so we have created a full list of the those we hold in our collection at the foot of this issue. Clicking on this image will also reveal the route we have traced back from *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'*, listing the immediate sub-families featured in each part of the series.

One of the most intriguing aspects to this study is seeing how the rugosity and colouring of cultivars from *h. sieboldiana* seem to become more exaggerated through the generations as this species doesn't exhibit a particularly rugose character and is plain leaved.

To recap the four key plants, this time in photos:



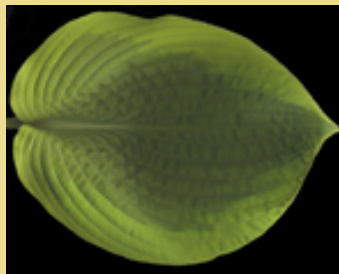
H. 'Dorothy Benedict'



Herb Benedict registered this cultivar in 1983 and named it after his wife, Dorothy.



H. 'Frances Williams'



Registered in 1986, *h. 'Frances Williams'* is a wonderfully textured sport of *h. sieboldiana* 'Elegans'

Phew! we made it through July...

Not an easy task considering we spent most of the month at, or preparing for, the Hampton Court and Tatton Park shows.

Firstly we would like to congratulate Rebecca, Ludovica and Victoria on the success of their first show garden at Hampton Court. The garden was one of only five chosen for its 'avante garde' design to feature at the show:

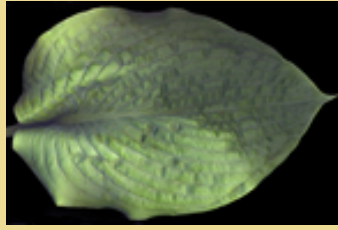


'It's Hard To See'
Design in Latitude

The garden was awarded 'Best Conceptual Garden, Gold medal winner', which was not surprising as it was truly stunning. Looking at the effect, from many different angles on a really dull and drizzly day, it was amazing how the design gave the impression of an underground garden in full daylight.



***H. sieboldiana* 'Elegans'**



Registered by the AHS in 1987, very little is known about this cultivar other than it is an *h. sieboldiana* type.



H. sieboldiana



An unregistered species named after Philipp Franz Balthasar von Siebold, who was very influential in popularising hostas in Europe in the 19th Century.

The exact form of *h. sieboldiana* has been debated over time as the natural occurrences of the plant, in Japan, vary quite significantly to the accepted European forms. In a nutshell, the natural forms are green and less textured than the more rugose, bluer leaves of the European forms. This may explain the misconception that *h. sieboldiana* and *h. sieboldiana* 'Elegans' are one and the same plant. You can find out more in *The Genus Hosta* by Georg Schmid.

Click on the image below to open up a full list of cultivars featured in this series:



We hope you have enjoyed this foray into a small slice of the hosta genus and that it may inspire you to look at these plants in a new way.

Next month: We look at the use of hostas in floral art...

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 30 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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If you missed it then check out the RHS Hampton Court pages or [click here](#) to go directly to photos of the garden.

You will see our small contribution to their success in the photos:

h. 'Montana'

h. 'Devon Tor'

h. 'Green Fountain'

It was a pleasure to be involved, if only in a minor way, and great to see hostas used to such effect as part of the planting scheme. Seldom do we see hostas used as they can be, more often than not they look tired and washed out because designers expect them to take conditions they are not happy to tolerate.

... and how did we do?

We exhibited in the Floral Marquee at Hampton Court for the first time in a decade and our stand was awarded a Silver medal. It was a real family affair and thoroughly enjoyable despite the hard work.

Finally this month, for those of you local to us, or holidaying in Suffolk...



Fri 14 Aug-Sun 16 Aug
Flowers Take a Bow

This event is being planned to raise funds for the Theatre Royal in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.