

Share the excitement of a new season

This month we confirm our 2014 plant list, see the results of the photography day at the nursery, in this month's 'Gardens Illustrated', and preview more of the wonderful varieties we will have for sale this year...

Our 2014 Plant List

This year we are again offering around 1,000 different varieties of hosta for sale.

Some are in limited quantities and a handful are very limited - specials and 'one-off's, which are always being added to at the nursery, during the season. The full list is here, and our 2014 Catalogue is now available - click on the cover opposite to see details of how to download, or print off, a copy, or you can **email us** for one to be sent in the post.

In a recent office clear-out we came across a copy of our 1994 catalogue, which made very interesting reading. It was particularly interesting to see how our prices have barely changed in 20 years. Indeed, quite a few of the varieties are still the same price.

The only real change is that the cheapest varieties now start at £5.00 rather than £3.00. The main reason for this is the increased cost of pots, soil and labels over two decades. We have always suspected that the real cost of plants is far too low and this supports our view. Besides, hostas should be worth more because they are plants for life, rather like trees. Of course, new and rare plants should be priced at a premium but we always try to make it a fair reflection of what it has cost us to bring those plants to the point of sale.

The most striking difference over the past 20 years is the range of varieties we can now offer for sale. The proliferation of new introductions over this time has seen a bewildering array of colours, shapes and textures we could only have dreamed of back then. So, let's celebrate this with previewing some of the tastiest offerings we have for you this season. Be warned though, many of these varieties come with a higher price tag...



Small but perfectly formed...

When we select new varieties to add to our collection, we can underestimate how popular they might be.

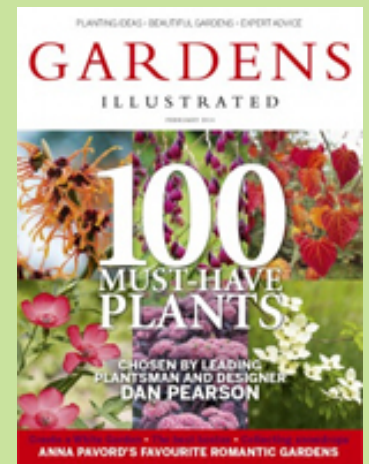
We have a new variety this season, **H. 'Lakeside Paisley Print'** (opposite), which is very striking and we hope we have got sufficient numbers to satisfy demand this time around.

When we introduced **H. 'Curly Fries'** in 2012, we promptly sold out and have struggled to get hold of more until now. It can be quite frustrating sometimes.

Gardens Illustrated

Last autumn a lovely young photographer, **Annaïck Guitteny**, spent a day at the nursery capturing images of selected varieties for an article by Val Bourne, which has just been published in the February issue of **Gardens Illustrated**:

Illustrated:



This is one of the best articles we have seen, devoted to hostas, and the images are fabulous.

The editor has kindly sent us a PDF copy for you to read **click here to view**.

Shows update

We have finally heard we are in at **Malvern Spring Gardening Show**, which is a relief to us because we have many regular customers who attend the show. Although we will be outside, this will give us scope to have many more

H. 'Justine' is sport of *H. 'June'* with the deepest colouring we have seen from the *H. 'Halcyon'* branch of the genus since *H. 'Devon Green'*, which is why we wanted to get hold of more. It shares the same neat shaped leaves and growing habit of most of the variegated cultivars developed from *H. 'Halcyon'*, but has much more subtle colouring. Sticking with the very dark green theme, we have more *H. 'Irish Luck'* for sale this year.



This wonderful cultivar has the shiniest deep green, wavy-edged leaves topped with very fragrant, pale lavender leaves - fab! We will also have more *H. 'Cathedral Windows'* this year. This cultivar represents a departure from the usual foliage colouring we see in the fragrant varieties.

We sold the last of *H. 'Warwick Comet'* in 2012 so we are delighted to have secured further supplies of this cultivar for 2014. It is a favourite of ours, as is *H. 'Rainbow's End'*, also back for the season. We introduced it for sale in 2007, promptly sold out of it and couldn't get hold of more - you can probably see why:



H. 'Warwick Comet'

Both these cultivars have vibrant colouring, what we call 'bling' varieties. They represent one of the most distinctive changes we have seen over the past 20 years, when the most colourful cultivar we had for sale was *H. 'June'*, although this has certainly stood the test of time in the popularity stakes. It can be difficult to choose between new 'bling' varieties to add to the collection, which is why we always try to select cultivars with something special, aside from being colourful, such as leaf shape, plant habit, texture, etc.

One trend that continues to surprise us, is the continued demand for white and green variegated cultivars. This season we will have quite a number of the usual suspects, together with some more exciting cultivars such as *H. 'Color Festival'*, *H. 'Enterprise'*, *H. 'Vulcan'* and *H. 'Jerry Landwehr'*, all of which have lighter green and/or yellow markings at the boundary of the white and green. We will also have more *H. 'Midnight at the Oasis'*, with its misty speckling in the leaf centres. This cultivar takes speckling to a new level - it is quite wonderful to see the green haze at the centre of the shapely leaves. However, for something really different, *H. 'Purple Haze'* gives you smokey grey-green leaves with a purple haze up the petioles, into the leaves. The haze is also visible at the leaf edges.

Next month: We feature *H. 'Fortunei Hyacinthina'*...

varieties with us than if we were restricted to two tables in the marquee. Those of you who were used to coming to see us when we had an outside pitch in previous years might well be pleased and don't forget to pre-order anything you would like us to bring along.

Hyde Hall have accepted our application to their **Summer Show**, which follows hard on the heels of Tatton Park, from 31st July to 3rd August.

July will be madder than ever this year:

NEW SHOW

We are pleased to announce a new show to our calendar:

18-20 July
Home and Garden Show
Stratford-upon-Avon.

The organisers, Steph and Steve, are hand-picking exhibitors based upon their own experience of attending shows, and a desire to secure specialist exhibitors.

We feel privileged to have been invited to help Steph and Steve deliver a special event, at a lovely location.

We hope you will consider giving the show your support. It promises to be enjoyable with plenty of facilities to help you enjoy your day there.

To keep up with events, and find out more details, visit our **Shows** page...

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**.