



Spring at the nursery

This month we will update you on new varieties added to the collection, and those available for sale. We also look forward to the 2011 season and share some of things we will be doing...

Website

We have finally completed our website updates, which included the addition of thousands of images, updated plant descriptions and listings.

This was a major undertaking and we hope you like the results. There are still several image gaps, mainly due to adding around **150 new varieties** to our collection last autumn. Where we have gaps on the variety pages, we link to the Hosta Library home page - so you can search that site for images.

More excitingly, out of these 150 new varieties we will have sales stock for more than 50, but quite a few will be limited in quantity. To browse the full list - see our **2011 Availability** page, where varieties that are new and/or in limited supply, are highlighted. All available varieties are listed in our 2011 Catalogue, which you can download from our website, or order from us - **find out more**.

Here are our '**Hot Dozen**' varieties, newly available this year:

Name	Special characteristics
Avocado	Fragrant flowers
Daisy Doolittle	Miniature with fragrant flowers
Dinky Donna	Heart-shaped gold leaves with streaky green margin
Empress Wu	Colossal size
Final Summation	Stunning sport of H. 'Sum and Substance'
Holy Mole	Fragrant flowers
Little Devil	Miniature
Little Maddie	Miniature
Little Treasure	Miniature
Ringtail	Narrow, very rippled and serrated-edged leaves
Tot Tot	Miniature
Venus	Double, white, fragrant flowers



Helebores showing off at the nursery

Plant Heritage

This year we will be supporting Plant Heritage at the Helmingham Hall Plant Sale, Gardeners' World Live 2011, Tatton Park Flower Show and Hampton Court Flower Show - see our **shows page** for details.

We enjoy exhibiting with fellow National Collection holders, especially at the Hampton Court Flower Show, where Plant Heritage has a marquee in Area A. The theme for the 2011 Show is '**A Living Library of Garden Plants**' featuring the widest range of National Collections ever to be showcased at the Show.

We met up with our fellow exhibitors at Wisley recently and were

Alongside the 'new', we have a number of varieties, which we have previously only sold in limited quantities due to their reluctance to show their expected characteristics as young plants. These include:

- Alligator Shoes
- Alvatine Taylor
- Dark Shadows (fragrant flowers)
- Earth Angel (see opposite)

We have over **960 varieties** for sale this year - the most we have ever offered.



Looking forward...

The nursery is springling into life already.



Robin and Mel selected plants to 'pull forward' for our first show, Harrogate Spring. This year the show is a full week earlier than last year. Given the lateness of the spring in 2010, the last thing they expected to see was several plants already breaking dormancy, in the shade tunnel so early. We break dormancy using a miniature tunnel, within Tunnel 2, equipped with a heated bench and supplemental lighting. As soon as the shoots are through sufficiently, we move them out to 'harden off'.

Although, some of the usual suspects are already through in the poly-tunnels, the furthest forward is **h. 'Venus Star'** - opposite.

This variety is in Tunnel 3, which had no cover during the coldest weather we had this winter. Going through the shade tunnel, which only has a single layer of netting, and Tunnel 3, it was very interesting to see how these plants are further forward than those in the covered tunnels. The uncovered and netted areas may have been colder, but they have also been the first to 'warm up' afterwards. Since Christmas the weather in East Anglia has been more spring-like with less penetrating frosts, although light levels have been low. We are wondering if the plants are emerging earlier because the worse of the weather came earlier than usual. Whatever the reason, seeing these green shoots is hugely encouraging, and heralds the start of our 2011 season.

Don't forget: treat early for pests and apply feed to pot-grown plants.



delighted to see many new faces, all as madly enthusiastic about their collections, as we are about ours - the Marquee promises to be choc-full of interesting plants.

Your chance to 'ask the experts'

On hand will be the Collection holders, the seed shop, scheduled talks and demonstrations, plus the opportunity for you to find out more about the work of **Plant Heritage**.

We will be involved in the demonstrations, so why not pay the Marquee a visit and see how to divide and propagate hostas?

Advance notice

The American Hosta Society's Annual National Convention

The AHS National Convention is taking place in New England between **June 22-25**. This year the theme is 'Hostas and Heritage' and promises to be an historic experience. This is an event we would love to attend and the featured gardens always yeild fantastic photographs, which grace the pages of the AHS Journal and website.

Deborah Myrick, AHS 2011 Co-Chair, says, "this will be the closest convention to Europe in several years", so why not make it part of your 2011 plans?

Find out more from the **Convention website**

Next month: We devote an issue to red-stemmed varieties...

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 35 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**.