



More about the *h.* 'Montana' family

Welcome to the may issue of our newsletter in which we feature two forms of *h.* 'Montana' family to see how it's characteristics have developed.

We also feature images from our themed stand at Harrogate Spring Show and hope you find them as amusing as our customers did, even those who were not familiar with Monty Python...

Forms of *h.* 'Montana'

As mentioned last month, *h.* 'Montana' is an especially prolific branch of the hosta genus with many varied forms growing wild in central and northern Japan.

Two forms, *h.* 'Montana Aureomarginata' and *h.* 'Montana Macrophylla', illustrate specific characteristics from *h.* 'Montana' very nicely:

H. 'Montana Aureomarginata'



This is the only one of the aureomarginata forms of *h.* 'Montana' to have a valid botanical description, other forms exist but are referred to as being part of the *h.* 'Montana Aureomarginata' group.

Sports and crosses include:

H. 'Brandywine'

Cross with *h.* *venusta* and *h.* *longipes f. hypoglauca*, 1993



H. 'Memories of Dorothy'

Cross with *h.* *pycnophylla* and *h.* 'Dorothy Benedict', 2002

H. 'Montana Macrophylla'



This form of *h.* 'Montana' has been grown under the name of *h.* 'Montana Praeflorens' in America and Europe. This is one of the largest growing forms of *h.* 'Montana' and is considered to be a hybrid with *h.* *sieboldiana*.

Sports and crosses include:

H. 'Amazing Grace'

Cross with *h.* 'Pin Stripe', 1999

H. 'Grand Canyon'

Cross with *h.* 'Sum and Substance', 1995

H. 'Great Lakes Gold'

Cross with *h.* 'White Vision', 2000

H. 'Jade Cascade'

Unregistered hybrid

H. 'Midnight Sun'

Cross with *h.* 'High Noon', 1996

H. 'Niagara Falls'

Cross with *h.* 'Sea Drift', 1991

Show updates

We will be supporting Plant Heritage displays at Gardener's World and Tatton Park shows. More information is on our [calendar](#).

Harrogate Spring Flower Show

The following images are from our stand at Harrogate - click on them to enlarge:



Camelot
(ham, jam and spam!)



The Journey
(coconut transport)

H. 'Ebb Tide'

Sport registered in 1997



H. 'Mountain Snow'

Sport registered in 1988

H. 'Orion's Belt'

Cross with h. 'Pin Stripe', 2003

H. 'Stardust'

Cross with h. 'White Vision', 1998

H. 'T. Rex'

Cross with h. 'Big John', 2005

Perhaps the most familiar of these offspring is **h. 'Niagara Falls'**, which has a wonderfully graceful habit and dark green leaves. **H. 'War Paint'** is the variegated but viridescent sport of **h. 'Niagara Falls'**. Given plenty of shade this cultivar will retain its variegation well into the season and is a little larger in stature than it's parent. Once the variegation fades it looks as lovely as the parent - the best of two plants in one!

Spamalot

Our Floral Hall display at the Harrogate Spring Show caused much hilarity last week.

We chose Spamalot as our subject for the theme of 'It's Show Time' and our 'prop-meister', Roy came up trumps again with a fantastic killer rabbit, cave and 'Holy Grenade of Antioch', among other things.

It is good to know there are so many Monty Python fans out there, and that we are not the only 'silly' people about.

We decorated our sales area with old Spam advertisements, two of which are off to Afghanistan to cheer a member of our armed forces, who has a particular liking for spam. Well, we did fight a war on it not so very long ago!



Nursery News

This is the latest spring we have known for a few years but at long last the collection plants are breaking into leaf. The late spring has given us quite a few challenges, not least of all in our preparations for Chelsea. We are now on Plan B in the hope that Plan C won't be required, but you can never tell with mother nature. As we prepare for Malvern the weather is turning cooler again after some lovely, and long overdue, warmth. Our blackbird is again nesting in one of the tunnels and our time-share cat is permanently guarding his kitty kibbles from the cheeky bird. She is particularly keen on 'Go Cat' and hops around our feet as we prepare for shows, trying to put us off the scent of where she has decided to nest this year.

Don't Panic!

Our garden grown hostas are only now showing themselves above the soil due to the prolonged cold spring. If you check just below the surface you should find buds ready to break out very soon, if they haven't already...

Next month: We reflect on our first Chelsea for over a decade.

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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Eaten Minstrels
(and there was much rejoicing)



You have been warned



That rabbit's dynamite



...but we have a secret weapon
(complete with full instructions)

We had a lot of fun putting the stand together and getting feedback from show visitors.