



Blaze of glory

This issue of our newsletter celebrates the brief but colourful season of autumn colour.

We unashamedly keep the blurb short and let the images do the talking. We hope you enjoy this issue and are enjoying the autumn colours in your gardens.

Colour changes

There can be some startling colour changes during the brief time when the hostas are approaching dormancy. It is interesting to see how the autumn colours bleed into the leaves, sometimes following the variegation, to give quite an unusual effect.

Greens and blues turn orange and white areas bleach brighter, just before the leaves become papery and shrivel up, having done their work for the season. We are often asked about removing the dead leaves and, although you can elect to leave them, we prefer to remove them to avoid any danger of introducing rot into the plant crown.



H. 'Kiwi Full Monty' in its spring colour, which it holds well into the season, especially if the plant has plenty of shade. Its current colouring is intriguing - see right:



H. 'Paradise Glory' has broad green margins, which turn orange. On the right the leaf centres have turned white, which sets off the orange brilliantly.



Nursery news

As the gates shut for the 2014 season we reflect on what has been our best year yet for nursery visits. It has been brilliant welcoming so many visitors over the past few months.

Because of the prolonged hot weather this year it has been especially good to have Robin and Yvonne based at the nursery throughout. Without their efforts with watering and ventilating the tunnels, the sales plants would have succumbed to the effects of the weather. This ensured Roy and Mel were able to support the Harrogate Autumn show with lots of colour and fabulous sales plants. In the past we have had to cancel our attendance at this show due to the early arrival of autumn.

The heat was a real problem for many fellow exhibitors. It was especially pronounced during July. The lack of rain could have been a much bigger issue had we not been able to fill the reservoir last autumn.

We plan to refurbish our packing shed building over the next year or so and we will be installing a rainwater capture system to feed into the reservoir at the same time. This will



H. 'Orange Marmalade' is known for its orangey gold leaf centres in spring. The orange reappears in autumn as the margins turn orange and the leaf centres bleach white.



The leaves of *H. 'A Many-splendored Thing'* gradually turn orange from the tip towards the petiole creating a rainbow of colour - see right.



H. 'Golden Meadows' just keeps delivering throughout the season with startling spring colouration, which gradually becomes more subtle. The final autumn colour really shows the quilted margins beautifully.



help enormously in maintaining the reservoir level and take some of the worry out of watering in future years. Robin has been spending some time updating the tunnel watering system, so that we can isolate each bench more effectively, targeting specific areas better.

Propagation

This is the time of year when we can get to grips with propagating plants for sale the following season. We are currently dividing parent plants and over-grown sales plants, for this purpose, as well as re-potting parent plants in the collection.

We are planning a new sales area for the nursery to make it easier for visitors to find the plants they are looking for, without having to trek backwards and forwards through the tunnels. This should help us to make better use of the tunnels for mid-season propagation, show preparation and all the other associated work we need to do during the season. Over the past few years it has been difficult trying to keep the tunnels clear of obstacles for visitors, when we are constantly on the move between shows.

Kicking off this month

Mel will be giving talks to gardening clubs, starting with a visit to Essex. If you would like her to give your group a talk, **drop her an email...**

Next month: [Our annual review of the show season...](#)

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**.

[Subscribe >](#) | [Unsubscribe >](#) | [Archive >](#)