



## Early flowering fragrance

The early spring we experienced this year has resulted in the premature flowering of our hostas. This also means many of the fragrant varieties are beginning to flower now...

## Fragrant varieties

This month we feature some of the fragrant varieties we have in our collection, in advance of the Tatton Park Show.

We are planning to include a fragrance bed in our Floral Marquee exhibit. It is exciting to be able to do this as these fragrant varieties tend to flower in August, after the RHS shows are over. We took some fragrant cultivars to Hyde Hall last summer, and exhibited them outside so that visitors could easily experience the perfume. It won't be so easy to do this in the Tatton Floral Marquee, where the fragrance is likely to be masked by other, more pungent flowers, but we will have a go.

We plan to feature the following fragrant cultivars in our Floral Marquee display:



*H. 'Essence of Summer'*



*H. 'Fried Bananas'*



*H. 'Lederhosen'*



*H. 'Fragrant Bouquet'*



*H. 'Frozen Margarita'*



*H. 'Nightlife'*



*H. 'Fragrant Dream'*



*H. 'Guacamole'*



*H. 'Stained Glass'*



*H. 'Holy Mole'*



*H. 'Sweetie'*

## Congratulations

To Joanna, and the Plant Heritage team, for receiving the award for **'Best Show Feature'** at the **2011 Hampton Court Flower Show**.

The Plant Heritage Marquee was organised around the theme of 'The Living Library of Garden Plants' and was very well received by visitors to the show. We thoroughly enjoyed exhibiting alongside the other National Collections featured in the marquee and, as ever, it was great to be able to spend some time answering questions and enthusing visitors about hostas and plant collecting in general.



*H. 'Francee'* looking fab  
(click on image to view)

The Hampton Court Show was good for us again and we welcomed many customers to our outside stand. We used our chinese pagoda to great effect in the display but the design of the unit seemed to cut the display

We also plan to have quite a few other fragrant cultivars with us, including *h.* 'Venus' (with double flowers), *h.* 'Avocado' and *h.* 'Paradise Sunshine'. These varieties have flowers which range from pure white to deep blue-mauve (see *h.* 'Nightlife' right).



Weather permitting, we will have plenty of flowers in bloom during the show. But if it turns chilly next week, they might sulk!

All fragrant varieties have their origins in *h. plantaginea*, the species.

To find out more about the varieties in our collection that originate from *h. plantaginea*, visit our **August 2008** newsletter. We have added several new fragrant varieties to our collection since then and you can find a full list [here](#).

**Cultivating fragrant varieties**

The best garden situation for fragrant varieties is a spot where the plant will catch the late afternoon sun and experience more reflected warmth.

They need encouragement to bloom and would make great patio plants, providing they are not in the heat of the midday sun with insufficient moisture.

To eliminate the guess-work, simply place your pot in a tray or dish and keep it topped up with water. The plants will take all they need without fear of drying out.

Many fragrant varieties have light coloured margins, which makes them susceptible to scorching. Try to ensure they have plenty of shelter. There are quite a few varieties with shiny leaves, an obvious characteristic of *h. plantaginea*. Many have quite a heady perfume, but several cultivars have such subtle fragrance it can be hard to detect. A fine sense of smell is required to appreciate these.



*H.* 'Fried Bananas'

The July issue of the RHS journal, **The Garden**, features an article about two avid collectors of hosta - June and John Colley.

The article includes some lovely photographs of their garden and can be read as a sample article from the July issue - check it out [here](#). As a perfumier, June is interested in the fragrant varieties and she clearly understands the subtleties of perfume - the full article makes very interesting reading.

Why not consider adding a fragrant hosta to your patio planting and experience the added dimension fragrance can offer?

**PSST...** we have added two more shows to our calendar

We are delighted to be exhibiting once again at Hyde Hall, in August and Wisley in September - check our **show dates** for more details.

**Next month:** We feature the family of *h.* 'Francee'

off from the sales area, so the effect was somewhat lost. The old unit design with a garden entrance to the sales area works better in practice.

Prior to the Hampton Court Flower Show we were at the NEC with the **BBC Gardeners' World Live 2011** show. This year we constructed a large exhibit - here are some images, click on them to view:



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**.