



BRIGHTON PLANTS CATALOGUE

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Abelia engleriana

£14

A compact evergreen with flowers of an unusual soft mauve with orange markings in the throat over a long period in late spring – early summer. May need shelter in cold areas. From Peter Catt.

Abelia sp. from Peter Catt

£16

A new introduction as far as I can tell from the well-known plant breeder and collector – this is a very special shrub, wild collected I believe, with very shiny and attractively textured leaves and vigorous growth. The flowers are a warm pinkish cream – almost white and with rich yellow markings inside. This species seems to have an unusual trailing habit, so would be ideal for a bank or raised bed or perhaps a large pot. It's certainly choice enough to be worthy of a prominent place on the patio

Has so far proved very vigorous and easy. Hardiness has not been well tested but seems good so far.

Acanthus spinosus

£10

Not even vaguely rare but a total classic - the big dark green jagged leaves and tall white/maroon inflorescences are a magnificent feature of the late summer garden. Easy and hardy in a wide variety of sites - including heavy soils and dry part shade, but definitely at its best in sunny well drained conditions.

Acer buergerianum

£12

The Trident Maple. A very pretty small tree or large shrub known for its small glossy three-lobed (hence 'trident') leaves which are coppery when young and colour up well in autumn but don't usually drop until early winter. Easy and adaptable in mesic and woodland conditions.

Acis autumnalis (aka Leucojum autumnale)

£5

Autumn snowflake. Nothing like the more familiar spring and summer snowflakes with which it used to be classified, except that they have pale nodding flowers. No more than four inches high with very fine glossy almost evergreen foliage. A very pretty and hardy little bulb – easy in a well-drained sunny spot without too much competition.

Actinidia tetramera maloides (aka pilosula)

£14

A gorgeous climber - similar to the familiar *A. kolomikta* but with narrower, more richly coloured foliage. The rosy white blotched leaves act as coloured bracts - drawing pollinators to the small pink (but very pretty) flowers hidden among them. Adaptable and vigorous.

Adenophora takedae

£7

A very pretty little Japanese bellflower; the flowers are relatively large for the size of the plant and held on delicate wiry stems. Fully hardy and late flowering. For well drained (but not too dry), sunny (but not too hot) situations, with alpines or other small perennials and bulbs.

Adenostyles spp.

£9

The *Adenostyles* are almost never available – they are among the larger alpines from wet meadows and gulleys, found growing and flowering alongside *Aconitum*, the larger gentians, *Veratrum* etc. They have broad *Ligularia*-like leaves and broad heads of small fresh pink flowers in late summer and autumn. Largely untried here but seem vigorous and easy so far. I collected the seed in Switzerland and may have both *A. alliariae* and *alpina*. I need to check. Please enquire.

Adiantum venustum

£7

A completely hardy Maiden-hair fern – every bit as delicate looking as you'd expect but quite vigorous given a well-drained leafy soil in shade.

Aesculus californica

£21

This is a very large spreading shrub (or low spreading tree) and needs a lot of space - the flowers are fragrant, creamy or rosy white and held in solid 'candles'. The foliage is neat and attractive and the bark is chalky white (especially good in winter after the leaves fall). Given an open sunny well-drained site this will be one of the most magnificent woody plants we can grow. Hardly ever offered and I have no idea why it isn't better known. Young plants grown from conkers collected in California. Not flowered yet but will be fast growing once established.

***Aesculus pavia* Northern form**

£16

I have no real idea why these are not seen a lot more often in UK gardens – this shrubby buckeye is a sensible size for small gardens, has rich red tubular flowers in late spring and good foliage. It's completely hardy in the UK (even to late frosts when the new foliage is emerging) and makes superb addition to the shrubby layer in a woodland garden. These are grown from wild collected seed – not grafted.

Allium macranthum

£7

A quite highly sought-after Asian species, superficially similar to *A. cernuum* but without the nodding flower stem. It also needs cooler, moister conditions. In this form the flowers are a dusky purple.

Alstroemeria brasiliensis

£7

Very different from the more familiar garden hybrids but just as adaptable. This species forms a slowly spreading colony of stems up to 2ft tall and flowers sporadically through the summer. Excellent as a part of the ground cover under deciduous 'hardy exotic' trees and shrubs, or growing amongst things like *Hedychium* and *Zantedeschia*, to complete the subtropical scene. The colony from which these roots were taken have come through the last few winters unscathed in mid Sussex but might benefit from mulching in colder areas.

Alstroemeria isabellana

£9

There seems to be some confusion about the name of this. Some seem to think it's really *Bomarea boliviensis*. The seeds of mine are definitely like *Alstroemeria* anyway – without the orange coat of *Bomarea* seeds. Either way it's a terrific herbaceous perennial – not climbing, making upright to arching glaucous leafy shoots, and umbels of unusually coloured tubular flowers – peachy pink with jade green petals. Like many *Bomareas* and *Alstroemerias*, the deep roots mean that it is surprisingly hardy as long as well-drained. Needs warmth to flower well though.

Anemarrhena asphodeloides

£7

A bit like an asphodel, making a grassy clump, with spikes of narrow violet flowers on slender stems in summer. As far as I know it has no close relatives and is a bit of a botanical oddity. Nice though, in an understated way, and not at all difficult to grow in a well-drained spot in sun.

Anemone leveilei**£8**

Like *rivularis* but more substantial. Purple blue tinted white flowers with dark anthers are produced on long arching pedicels in an umbel on a stout leafy plant up to 2ft tall. For moist alpine or woody conditions.

Anemone multifida**£4**

A lovely small species with rounded creamy flowers (some with a purplish shading on the outside) through spring and summer. For a sunny or semi-shady site on any reasonably well-drained soil. This plant is often offered as *A. palmata*, but that is a completely different species.

Anemone rivularis**£7**

So many waterside plants are too big or invasive for small water gardens. I offer a few small marginals, and this is one of them. Blue tinged white flowers are produced on tall branching stems from a compact rootstock in early summer. Also suitable for woodland and other retentive soils in part shade.

Anemone sylvestris**£6**

A common and widespread European alpine eventually making large clumps of deeply cut dark green foliage up to about 6ins high, with individual nodding white anemone flowers above. Easy and hardy in a sunny well-drained sunny spot.

Anemopsis californica**£8**

Not to be confused with *Anemonopsis* – this is a relative of *Houttuynia* with very striking flowers, somewhat reminiscent of a Magnolia (though actually made up of lots of small flowers, rather than one big one). A colonising plant for shallow water or wet mud and one of the few garden plants that should be happy in a salt marsh. Fully hardy, but grow as warm as possible in full sun for best results.

Aphyllanthes monspeliensis**£6**

Masquerading as a low grey rush or sheep's fescue, this mop-top suddenly bursts into life in late spring with bright blue flowers at the tips of its 'leaves'. (The name means something like 'flowers without leaves')

Apios americana**£8**

An unusual herbaceous climber closely related to *Wisteria*. The dense clusters of pea flowers are an odd shade of terracotta and produced in summer. It grows from long strings of (apparently edible) tubers which wander about underground over some distance but not enough to become a weed. An easy and attractive hardy plant for any well drained soil in sun, best allowed to twine up through shrubs

Arenaria ledebouriana**£5**

A choice species, forming a dense juniper grey spiky bun with pure white flowers on wiry stems above in spring, like a minuscule *Gypsophila*. For very well-drained sunny sites.

Aristea ecklonii**£6**

Similar in many ways to *Sisyirinchium* or *Libertia* but with vivid gentian blue flowers through the summer. The fans of foliage are a nice fresh green. This is not a terribly hardy species but like its relatives, it seeds about and at Pool Meadow at least (in the High Weald of East Sussex) it has persisted at least throughout the last decade. The mature plants disappeared during the harsh winter we had a while back but the seeds survived and it came back without any help from me. For a well-drained soil in sun.

Aristolochia baetica**£10**

A small climber from southern Spain and Portugal that can be seen there twining about among the shrubs with its grey heart shaped leaves and maroon pitcher-shaped flowers. It's one of the more vigorous and obvious of the Mediterranean species and worth trying in a sheltered sunny well-drained site, but it isn't very hardy. I recommend planting it under a smallish shrub like a *Cistus* or broom and letting it grow forward among the branches. Even if it gets frosted the roots will usually regenerate well

Aristolochia fimbriata**£8**

The peculiar yellow and brown tentacled flowers of this species are rather striking, and the silver veined leaves are good too. This herbaceous species is possibly the hardiest of the South Americans currently in cultivation and worth a try in a sunny sheltered place, kept dryish in winter.

Aristolochia sempervirens**£8**

A terrific miniature evergreen climber, perfect for decorating low shrubs like Brooms, Lavender and *Cistus*, as it does in its natural habitat. *Aristolochia* flowers are usually fairly cryptically coloured and more of a curio than a thing of beauty (though I like them a lot), but these are quite striking with a bright golden interior and a reddish-brown exterior. The foliage too is very good - small and glossy and evergreen. These plants have suffered not at all in the last few winters down here in Sussex. Suitable for sun or semi shade and very drought tolerant once established. The plant pictured is growing on almost pure chalk. Ultimately probably capable of reaching several feet in height but hardly rampant.

Artemisia alba Canescens**£7**

The best, I think, of the genus, making low billowy mounds and cushions of silvery white extremely fine foliage. Excellent with small bulbs. Any well-drained soil in sun. Slightly taller flowering stems appear in late summer. The flowers are brown and probably best removed.

Arum nigrum**£7**

A Russian species very like our native Cuckoo Pint but with a magnificent tar-black spathe. Very robust and very hardy, and as far as I can tell, just as easy to grow. Only a few as yet.

Asclepias exaltata**£9**

To my mind one of the best new things I've come across, and I have no idea why I so rarely sell any. Although the flowers are not vividly showy they are exquisitely crafted in jade and ivory and dangle elegantly on long filaments from the tips of the 2ft stems. Completely frost hardy and easy to please on any fertile retentive soil in sun or part shade.

Asclepias incarnata**£8**

There are lots of exciting species of *Asclepias* in the U.S.A. This is one of the most common and deserves to be more widely grown over here. The flowers, in contrasting pale and dark pink resemble those of a *Hoya* (to which it is related) and are worth a close look. Leafy, clump-forming herbaceous perennials with reddish stems to 2ft. Any soil, but heavy and damp soils in sun are especially favoured.

Asclepias speciosa**£8**

A magnificent and adaptable species making a big impressive plant quickly. The fleshy pink flowers are of the usual intricate asclepiad design and contrast well with the soft pale foliage. Almost any soil as long as not too soggy or parched. Works well with other large prairie plants. It can run somewhat so not something for very neat gardens.

Athamanta turbith and vestina**£6**

Miniature umbellifers for sunny well drained situations, especially with alpines and low Mediterranean plants, bulbs etc. The leaflets are extremely fine and thread-like and make a neat tangle on the ground with the small white umbels above - like a tiny fennel. Perennial and not even slightly weedy. There is some confusion here. I have labelled my plants by the names on the batches of seed they came in but I have yet to confirm their identity. My information suggests that *A. turbith* should be taller with slightly thinner leaf segments, which from the evidence at hand suggests that the names I was given are the wrong way round. (nb. *vestina* = *turbith hungarica*, so they are going to be very close.) Also, my '*turbith*' are slightly older, which might explain their larger size. Either way they're both jolly nice!

Aucuba himalaica dolichophylla**£9**

A slow growing and compact 'spotted laurel' up to about 4ft high with attractive narrow dark green foliage, lightly spotted with yellow. This is a male clone with striking dark red flowers in conspicuous branching sprays in early spring. For exactly the same conditions as the common species but much choicer. Many thanks to Nymans for the original plant.

Bauhinia yunnanensis**£12**

The only *Bauhinia* I know of that can be expected to do anything much outdoors in the UK. It has the characteristic cleft leaves made up of two leaflets about 2cm across on slender, clambering stems. Not flowered yet here – the flowers will be typical of the genus, but relatively small and pink. Worth a try on a sheltered sunny wall, grown as a climber through evergreen shrubs. Deciduous here – the new growth is red

Blechnum penna-marina alpina**£5**

A perfect little evergreen fern – like our native deer fern but only 2-3ins high. The new fronds are copper tinted and the plant can cover a large area in time – ideal under and amongst moisture loving dwarf shrubs and larger alpiners. Fully hardy.

Boehmeria sieboldiana**£8**

Shiny fresh green attractively veined and serrated nettle leaves on a lush bushy plant. Whitish flowers. Moist woodland

Boehmeria tricuspis**£8**

Sometimes known as *B. tricuspida*, a subtly lovely (non-stinging) nettle relative adding mellow autumnal colours to the border or woodland garden. Lush jaggedly cut leaves, pale catkins and red stems.

Bomarea aff. caldasii**£10**

There seems to be some confusion about exactly whether *caldasii* is in cultivation but with funnel shaped orange and red flowers this appears to be something very similar. The inner 'petals' are orange/yellow, the outer are coral red. There are no other markings but the black anthers are prominent. Untried outside, but like many *Bomarea*, the roots go so deep that they are unlikely to freeze in a normal UK winter. Climbing to about 2m, and dying down in winter.

Bomarea salsilla**£10**

A delicately built species with coral pink flowers on twining stems. I've not tried it outside yet but it should be hardy enough in a sheltered spot with the tubers planted deep.

Brimbleura amethystina**£5**

An extremely charming small relative of the bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) but with flowers of a particularly delicate shade of pale blue (not amethyst!) Very easy to grow and seems to especially like the same conditions as the bluebell, with some shade and not too dry although it also does well in standard gritty sunny bulb growing conditions.

Buddleja colvillei large leaf form**£18**

This species is known for its relatively large rich glossy pink bell-shaped flowers - much larger than any other species that I know of. This is a very rare form with large greyish felted leaves up to 20cm long, and is descended from a plant that used to grow against the house at Borde Hill. The flowers appear in mid spring on the previous year's growth and can get frosted off in bud, so a very sheltered situation is required in all but the warmest areas.

Buddleja limitanea**£10**

A relatively small species which may or may not be a form of *forrestii*. The foliage resembles *dauidii* but is smaller and neater and more evergreen. The flowers are fewer but larger and bell-shaped and of soft mauve with the usual orange eye. The fact that it doesn't get huge should be enough of an incentive to grow it for many people

Buddleja lindleyana**£14**

A very striking species and not at all what you might expect a *Buddleja* to look like. The rich purple flowers are tubular and have a waxy bloom to them which gives a particularly richly coloured effect and are produced over a long period in summer.

Buddleja nivea yunnanensis**£10**

In contrast to *limitanea* this is an absolutely enormous shrub growing to 10ft very quickly and demanding a big space. The leaves are also very big – up to 20-30cm pale grey above, pure white felted beneath and along the stems. The flowers resemble *dauidii* but the small purple

orange eyed flowers are in hefty clusters up to about 30cms long and set in white fluff. All in all a dramatic and remarkable thing. The down side is that the new shoots and buds have been severely damaged by late frosts so needs a sheltered situation or a mild garden. Easy and undemanding otherwise.

Buddleja salviifolia

£8

A South African species, but don't let that put you off - this is a surprisingly hardy shrub for a sheltered sunny wall. The violet-scented purple flowers are produced in late spring among good quality felted foliage on a medium-sized shrub. Prune it periodically in summer to keep it compact.

***Bupleurum longifolium* Bronze**

£8

A very unusual umbellifer, the umbels of flowers being condensed into a head surrounded by coloured bracts - in this case the whole inflorescence and the leaves immediately below it being heavily tinted with a rich reddish brown, which contrasts gorgeously with the soft green oval leaves. A long-lived and easy perennial for a rich moist soil in sun. There is some confusion about the name - sometimes seen as *angulosum* or even *perfoliatum* (which it definitely isn't) and also copper form - but this seems to be about right

Calceolaria pavonii

£7

A remarkable species from Chile. The flowers are typical for the genus - yellow and slipper shaped, but in this case with quite broad pale green sepals behind. The whole flower is over an inch across and the effect is vaguely daffodil-like. Flowers appear over a long period in summer. This is quite a big soft bushy sprawling plant, reputed to be hardy in mild locations in a well-drained sunny spot or dry semi shade. I haven't risked it outside here yet because there isn't much shelter.

Calycanthus occidentalis

£16

A lovely lush medium sized shrub from California with fresh green aromatic leaves and good sized deep pink flowers good enough to rival any of the popular *Sinocalycanthus* hybrids. Flowers periodically through the summer. Easy, hardy, and nowhere near well-known enough.

Campanula Paul Furse

field-grown £6

Another spreader of uncertain parentage perhaps involving *punctata* or *takesimana*, but with violet flowers. A useful vigorous late-flowering ground cover - happier in shade than *takesimana* so ideal to combine with shrubs and trees. Best not with small delicate perennials.

Campanula raddeana

£5

A Caucasian species with strongly serrated basal leaves and rich purple bells in reddish calyces on slender reddish stems. An easy 'alpine' for any well drained soil in sun, but like many bell-flowers it is a bit of a runner.

Campanula stevenii beauverdiana

£6

An unpretentious compact Russian species (to 8ins high) producing good quality violet bells over a long period in summer. Not invasive

Campanula takesimana

field-grown £6

A beautiful species with 2in long ivory flowers, lightly speckled red inside, over fresh shiny green foliage. Like its coarser relative *C.punctata*, this is a coloniser, but in my experience, not to anything like the same extent, and in fact I've had it peter out a couple of times, possibly from too much competition. Easy in any moist rich soil in sun or part shade

Campanula tommasinianus

£6

A choice alpine crevice dweller making short upright stems clothed in narrow green leaves, with narrow violet bells in summer. Very distinctive and rather choice, and a nice plant for well drained sunny conditions among rocks.

Canarina canariensis**£8**

A tender herbaceous climber from the Canary Islands similar to a *Codonopsis* but with big red and orange striped bell flowers. Winter growing but not frost tolerant.

Canna x ehemannii**£20**

Now for the big one - I've been looking forward to this. I finally have some divisions from the big clump on the nursery. This is a wonderful plant - I normally find Cannas a bit garish for my taste but this one has elegant and vivid cerise flowers in nodding sprays and on tall dark stems and broad lush green leaves, plus it's an enormous tropical looking banana-y thing to 10ft or more in full flower.

Plus, it's been hardy here. All I've done is give it a thick pile of straw in winter. It dies down completely (the straw is held in place by the dead stems) but always reappears in May and is luxuriant and magnificent by August. A wonderful plant for anyone with a taste for the tropics. Many thanks to Alan for the original plant

Caragana microphylla**£10**

A low growing version of the, to my mind anyway, grossly underrated Siberian pea tree - *Caragana arborescens*. This has fresh yellow pea flowers among fine small pinnate leaves. Excellent for any harsh exposed unpleasant situation where not much else will grow, but choice enough for a sunny well-drained border.

Cardamine glanduligera**£6**

In my estimation the best and showiest of the Eurasian species with rich purple flowers and deeply textured foliage. A vigorous spreader in a retentive soil in part shade, and probably a bit too vigorous with choice woodlanders, but a splendid groundcover among shrubs and larger woodland perennials.

Cardamine kitaibelii**£6**

A much more slender and less vigorous species than *glanduligera* needing a little more care to keep it, but not difficult once happy. The heads of nodding flowers make this one of the most graceful of the *Cardamines*. Very few.

Cardiocrinum cordatum Red Vein**£12**

An unbelievably easy and adaptable plant here on the nursery, especially given how dry it gets here in the summer. They've grown quickly and easily even in small pots and one even flowered after only 2 years from seed. The rosette of glossy red-veined cordate leaves is the most ornamental feature in spring but the long, slightly flattened pale green/cream flowers are well worth checking out. These are produced on a 40 - 60cm tall stem in summer. Like other *Cardiocrinum*, the mature bulb splits after flowering to make several smaller bulbs which should flower a few years later. No doubt would be at its best in moist woodsy shady sites, but like I say, remarkably tolerant here in my normal compost even in dryish shade.

Carduus defloratus**£5**

A choice and not very spiky thistle from the mountains of southern Europe. Relatively large and rich pink heads develop on 12-18in branching stems in summer over simple basal rosettes. Not at all weedy. For well drained soils in sun. I have two subspecies here, differing mainly in the shape of the basal leaves:- ssp. *defloratus* has somewhat broader leaves than ssp. *argemone*.

Carex baccans**£8**

A typical tussock-forming sedge in many ways except that (surprise surprise!) it makes shiny red berry-like fruits in autumn instead of the usual greenish seeds. Cool and moist woodsy conditions are recommended.

Carthamus dianius**£9**

A lovely big *Centaurea* type of thing. White flower heads with violet stigma over jagged lobed deep green foliage. Unlike the more familiar annual safflower (*C.tinctorius*) this is a robust perennial and despite being Spanish is a hardy evergreen. Splendid herbaceous border plant - ought to be much better known.

Centaurea atropurpurea**£7**

An easy and long lived medium sized border perennial but not garish or coarse. Ragged tufts of deep wine red flowers emerge from hard sculpted involucre of dark overlapping scales. The leaves are jaggedly cut with narrow lobes, and the whole plant is edged with silver rime. Suitable for any reasonably well-drained soil in sun.

Cestrum aff. parqui* Purple tinged form*£12**

A remarkable evergreen shrub given to me by Geoffrey Kibby who has had it in his North London garden for some time and reports that it has never been frost damaged and is very vigorous. The suspicion is that it isn't *parqui* (sadly it has no evening fragrance for one thing) but the floral display is interesting enough on its own for me. The flowers are essentially mustard yellow but heavily tinted with inky maroon, especially in bud and when they close up during the day, which creates a striking two-tone effect. The leaves are stained black in winter. Probably worth sheltering in colder areas.

Chelonopsis moschatus**£8**

Tubular pink flowers more like a Penstemon (some of which used to be classified as *Chelone* - hence the name) and foliage that reminds me a bit of a *Hydrangea*. This is a rhizomatous perennial, spreading steadily but not in a bad way. Usually grown as a woodlander (where it is admirable) but adaptable, and flowering over a long period into autumn.

X Chitalpa tashkentensis**£14**

A hybrid between *Catalpa* and *Chilopsis*. Most of us know what a *Catalpa* looks like, but *Chilopsis* is less familiar - it's a willowy looking shrub (known locally in the south-western USA as Desert Willow) with masses of pink *Catalpa* type flowers in summer among narrow leaves and is very lovely. Unfortunately *Chilopsis* does not grow well in the UK, probably because of the unpredictable damp climate. The hybrid though (created in the botanical gardens in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, hence the name) is an excellent and adaptable substitute, making a large shrub or small tree, flowering freely in late summer. Any well-drained soil in sun. These are vigorous young plants.

Chlorogalum pomeridianum**£9**

The Soap Lily - a relative of *Yucca*, *Agave*, *Polianthes* and *Camassia* from the western USA. Simple but very elegant white asphodel type flowers are produced on tall rigid stems over a long period in summer above rosettes of undulating grey leaves. Hardy and easy to grow in full sun on a very well-drained soil.

Chlorophytum chinense**£8**

A small hardy Chinese relative of the common spider plant with similar narrow grassy leaves (not variegated) and sprays of small white flowers. Pretty in a very understated way - rather like *Anthericum*

Chrysogonum virginianum**field-grown £6**

Unusually in the sunflower group these are restrained and even refined plants - flowering over a long period through summer and autumn in a wide variety of conditions. The flowers resemble *Coreopsis* but are on short stems among neat, not coarse, rich green foliage. I have two forms - the basic *virginicum* is the more vigorous and possibly a little coarser, while *australe* is a choicer, more compact plant, but both are equally easy and adaptable.

Cirsium oleraceum**£12**

A big lush green non-spiky thistle from the mountain woods of central Europe. The flowers appear on tall upright stems in late summer/autumn and are relatively small and off-white but surrounded by pale bracts which makes them rather striking. For cool damp and/or semi shady sites. The young stems and leaves are a good edible vegetable apparently, especially if blanched.

Cissus striata**£12**

There are not that many evergreen climbers hardy in the UK, and this South American vine is decidedly borderline but worth considering for sheltered sites, especially in shady spots. It's a close relative of the Virginia Creepers and Boston Ivies (*Parthenocissus* sp) but with neat glossy leaves and far less rampageous and being evergreen of course, it does not colour up in

the Autumn. In warmer climates it gets a lot bigger and makes pale flowers and black berries. It can also be grown as a house plant.

Clematis coactilis

£ 12

One of a number of peculiar herbaceous perennial (non-climbing) species from the eastern USA. This one makes a pale leafy clump to about 12ins high with fuzzy -fuzzy rounded nodding white flowers over quite a long period in early summer. Very intriguing and a great favourite here. For any well drained soil in sun.

Clematis fusca

£ 12

A really peculiar species with nodding urn-shaped flowers, looking as if they're made out of dark brown fuzzy felt. Very variable – some with a silky white lining, or tinged violet within; others are violet throughout and not fuzzy (*C.ianthina* or *fusca violacea*). Very odd. This is a small scrambling semi-herbaceous species growing to about 6ft so plant it among shrubs near the path where you can get a proper look at it.

Clematis gentianoides

£ 12

This is a wonderful species which I saw growing in drifts along the roadside in south-eastern Tasmania where it is endemic. It's a completely non-climbing low-growing evergreen herbaceous perennial with flowers very like those of a small *Clematis montana* - mostly white but often with a pink tint to the outside. Like all antipodean *Clematis*, there are separate male and female plants - the males having broader 'petals' (sepals actually) and short filaments, the female with narrow sepals and showier filaments that turn into silky seed heads if a male is nearby. I recommend growing both though at this stage my plants are too young to have flowered yet so I can't sex them. The epithet '*gentianoides*' I think refers to the leaves rather than the flowers. They are simple ovals with three veins (not compound like most *Clematis*) and a dark leathery green often with maroon tints. Surprisingly hardy - even in The Wirral apparently, but probably best with shelter to preserve the evergreen leaves as intact as possible. For a well-drained sunny spot. Not tried on chalk.

Clematis ispanica

£ 12

A sub-shrubby species to about 5ft with four narrow creamy white petals and dark red anthers and narrow greyish foliage. Very hardy in a sunny well-drained position. *C.songarica* is related

Clematis orientalis glauca

£ 12

One of the central Asian species with nodding yellow flowers in late summer. In this case the foliage is smooth and glaucous and cut into narrow leaflets. Extremely hardy in a sunny well drained site

Clematis serratifolia

£ 12

A member of the same group as *tangutica* and *orientalis*, but with broad serrated leaves. The flowers are of a softer paler yellow too. An easy and adaptable late flowering species.

Clematis songarica

£ 12

A sub-shrubby species to about 5ft with six oval creamy white petals and pale anthers and narrow green leaves. Very hardy in a sunny well-drained position. *C.ispanica* is related

Clematis tibetana vernayi

£ 12

The classic late flowering species with thick yellow 'petals', divided green leaves and silky seed heads. Very adaptable.

***Clematis urophylla* Winter Beauty**

£ 16

A winter flowering evergreen *Clematis* with handsomely textured leaves and soft felted white flowers of just under an inch across. There have been doubts as to the hardiness of this one but it has grown and flowered in our front garden without any damage through the last three winters. To be on the safe side I'd give it plenty of sun, and shelter from the worst of the weather, in other words, exactly the same as for *cirrhusa* and *armandii*.

Cobaea pringlei**later in the summer**

A hardy herbaceous perennial relative of the familiar cup-and-saucer vine, *C.scandens*. Having white flowers, it's not as spectacular as its tender relative but still a lovely thing. I grow it in a sunny spot on a well-drained but rich soil, with a thick strawy mulch in winter just to be on the safe side. It dies down completely in winter. The only down side is perhaps its vigour - once it gets going it's a big plant capable of covering quite a large area in a single season so make sure you put it somewhere where it can roam free. It tends to start late and flower late too so provide warmth and shelter.

Codonopsis lanceolata**£10**

Rather like a climbing Fritillary is how I'd describe these unusual herbaceous vines. The flowers have the same bell-shape and a similar green and maroon colour scheme, though without the chequering. The markings are just as interesting however. Often recommended for woodland conditions but adaptable to a variety of rich and not too dry soils where the vine can grow up through shrubs into the light. Watch out for slugs early on. To 6ft tall. Flowering late summer/autumn.

Codonopsis ussuriensis**£8**

Like *lanceolata* but with smaller, maroon bells.

Colquhounia coccinea**£12**

Pronounced *Cohoonia*, a very striking and exotic species, hardy and easily grown in a sunny, well-drained but not parched situation. Stems may die back during a hard winter but grow back during the summer in time to flower in the autumn. Flowering relatively late, this species can be shy flowering if it does not get enough sun or if there is an early frost, but well worth persevering with.

Commelina dianthifolia**£5**

A very pretty little tuft-forming plant, making a succession of intense gentian-blue flowers through much of the summer and autumn until frosted. Quite hardy but mulch it just to be on the safe side.

Commelina tuberosa* ex BSWJ10353*£6**

A very compact form from the highlands of Guatemala, producing clear gentian blue flowers all summer on short stems (to a maximum of about 7ins) among clusters of fresh green foliage. Very adaptable but probably needs a good mulch in most parts of the UK to ensure survival through the winter.

Conoclinium (Eupatorium) coelestinum**£6**

Essentially a hardy perennial *Ageratum* with fuzzy powder blue flowers in late summer and autumn. Best grown in a moist (or even wet) rich soil in full sun. Needs a long warm season to flower well but worth it for the late display. To 18ins. Spreading but not invasive.

Coriaria terminalis xanthocarpa**£12**

An odd arching leafy shrub/perennial with racemes of small reddish green flowers turning to translucent yellow fruits – always remind me of yellow fruit gums. Best sheltered by trees and not allowed to dry out.

Cornus foemina**£10**

A close relation of and very similar to the familiar *C.alba* and *sericea* but with fruits changing from white to blue

Cornus sericea* Kelsey dwarf*£10**

A low growing version of this well-known species making thickets of wiry red/maroon stems only about 50cms high. Very easy and adaptable in any moist soil and very useful for stabilising pond edges and ditches

Correa backhousiana**£15**

Possibly the hardest species and known for being an excellent seaside shrub. I collected the original in Tasmania where it can be grown everywhere and is impervious to the weather. The

bell-shaped jade green bell flowers, touched with brown suede, are a feature from autumn to spring.

***Corydalis Blackberry Wine* £5**

Fruity mauve flowers over sea green ferny foliage. Flowers on and on all spring and summer in almost any conditions.

***Crambe maritima* £8**

Our classic native Sea Kale (seed collected locally, on Shoreham Beach by the way) with phenomenal big waxy wavy pale grey leaves and chunky heads of honey-scented white flowers. The new leaves are purple and can be blanched under an old bucket and then steamed as a vegetable. Easy almost anywhere sunny but definitely looks best planted among pebbles.

***Crassula sp* £5**

An unnamed species, almost certainly from southern Africa – forms a minuscule film of tiny green leaves on the surface of the compost – very like a moss, but sprinkled with rosy pink flowers in late summer. Don't be alarmed when the whole thing seems to dry up and blow away in autumn – it comes back in spring. Remarkably tough and easy given sun and good drainage – perfect with miniature bulbs or under dwarf shrubs.

***Crithmum maritimum* £8**

A native umbellifer which has always impressed me with its compact semi-succulent almost sub-shrubby growth habit, attractively cut foliage and short pale flower stems. The creamy green flowers contrast nicely with the waxy jade green foliage. A common shingle beach plant here in Sussex (the seeds were collected from plants at Lancing) alongside sea kale and yellow horned poppies but it grows happily in a well-drained sunny site inland. The plant can apparently be used as a vegetable (known as rock samphire) and has a strong but not unpleasant flavour.

***Crusea coccinea* £7**

A relatively new plant to cultivation, this Central American woodlander with vivid red tubular flowers is in fact related to the tropical *Ixora* and *Bouvardia*. Not very hardy but easy from cuttings or in a sheltered shady garden perhaps.

***Cymbalaria hepaticifolia* £5**

Forget the common Ivy-leaf Toadflax that festoons shady walls in many parts of the country (pretty though that is) this is a much nicer species with delicate mauve white flowers and fleshy silver marked leaves and spreading without being invasive. Excellent in dry shade but best to avoid big vigorous neighbours. Good cover for hardy *Cyclamen*.

***Cynara cardunculus flavescens* £10**

Though the familiar cardoon and globe artichoke plants are undoubtedly magnificent specimens, there is a lot more to the genus *Cynara*, with a wide variety of exciting and intriguing (and spiky) forms and textures. As well as that, most are better suited to smaller spaces than their giant relatives. All they really need is full sun and good drainage.

***Cynara humilis white flowered form* £9**

As above but with large white thistle heads. Often white forms do not compare well with the basic forms but this is at least as good. The narrow filaments remind me of white chocolate cake decorations. For dry sunny sites. Thanks to Sal Soares for this.

***Cynoglossum grande* £9**

The common Californian species of hound's tongue. The typical boraginaceous flowers have a prominent white eye and are pinkish or purple changing to blue as they age. The foliage is broad and soft green and not at all coarse. This species comes up in winter and flowers in spring so may need protection from hard frost. Drought tolerant in summer but seems to be better with some shade and moisture.

***Cytisus hirsutus* (previously *Chamaecytisus*) £8**

A lovely small arching shrub with fresh lemon yellow pea flowers over a long period in spring and soft pale green leaves. Well drained sunny soils

***Datisca cannabina* £8**

An amazing large herbaceous perennial from Crete with luxuriant pinnate fresh green leaves on tall arching stems to 7 or 8 ft. The small green flowers appear in long tassels at the ends. Despite its origin, the natural habitat of *Datisca* is moist and shaded ravines and streamsides, and they grow well in ordinary soils in the UK.

***Decaisnea fargesii* £15**

The long pinnate leaves, nodding pale yellow flowers (a bit like *Clematis koreana*), and the main feature – bizarre plum purple sausage fruits on the bare stems in autumn, are unmistakable. A classic. Easy and adaptable but the new shoots and flowers are prone to late frosts so shelter is recommended

***Delphinium carolinianum* £5**

A graceful and slender little perennial larkspur from the Mid-Western USA. The flowers will be in shades of true blue. Rarely offered in the UK, but should be easy to please in a sunny or semi-shaded spot without too much competition.

***Derwentia (Parahebe) perfoliata* £7**

A most peculiar plant (known in its native land as Digger's Speedwell I understand) totally unlike any of the related Veronicas and Hebes and in fact looking more like a seedling *Eucalyptus* (Mimickery? *Eucalyptus* are pretty unpalatable to grazers) with arching spikes of deep violet flowers at the tips. Striking for both flowers and foliage and one of the very few Australian mainland plants that can be relied upon to grow almost anywhere.

***Desmodium elegans (tilifolium)* £15**

Soft green foliage and understated mauve flowers over a long period in late summer and autumn. Not much seen in British gardens, possibly because they are neither shrubs nor climbers but instead send out long pliable stems that in the wild are partly supported by other plants. Not for the very tidy-minded perhaps but all they need is either a lot of other vigorous shrubs to grow through or to be tied in to a wall or fence. Fully hardy in a wide variety of conditions.

***Desmodium canadense* £7**

A leafy herbaceous perennial from the USA with 3ft stems, fresh green pinnate foliage and loose sprays of bright pink pea flowers over a very long period in summer. Totally hardy and adaptable in any soil.

***Deutzia pulchra* £10**

A potentially quite large semi-evergreen species with flaking bark. The flowers remind me very much of *Correa* flowers being bell-shaped and with the same soft texture, though in this case a simple chalky white. Easy and reliable in a variety of situations.

***Dianthus ferrugineus* £5**

Shocking intense cherry red flowers appear in tight heads on tall stems above fine grey tussocks of grey leaves in early summer. For dry soils in sun.

***Dianthus pinifolius* £5**

A very rare and classy species, producing tight tussocks of pine-needle-like foliage (hence the name). In summer, dense heads of dark ruby red flowers are produced on wiry stems, high above the foliage. For an open site in sun. Seems to need especially sharp drainage and should fare especially well on chalk.

***Dianthus superbus* £5**

Much more informal and grassy than most pinks but with exquisite and quite large pale filigree flowers in late spring/early summer. The ragged and finely marked flowers are worth looking at closely and are heavily fragrant. A superb and rarely seen 'old fashioned' cottage garden plant, not at all garish or artificial looking.

Dichromena (aka Rhynchospora) colorata £7

An unusual little sedge to about 12ins high, with prominent white bracts beneath the heads of flowers - a bit like an umbrella grass (*Cyperus*) but with conspicuous 'flowers'. This is a wetland plant from warmer parts of the USA, often seen growing with *Sarracenia* (pitcher plants) in the wild. In cultivation it is easy to grow in shallow water but likely to need some protection from intense cold, and shallow water that warms up quickly in summer. Clump-forming - not invasive.

Dierama reynoldsii £9

A beautiful and very distinct species with flowers of a rich wine purple colour dangling from 3-4 ft stems. This species has a reputation for being one of the less hardy ones, but I've found them easy enough to please once established. What they don't like it seems is being in a pot, where they make very little progress, if any, so buy them young and get them settled in soon!

Dierama igneum £8

A medium sized species, forming a dense tussock of narrow leaves. The funnel-shaped flowers are of an unusual terracotta hue and held on fine arching stems to about 3ft high. Hardy and reliable.

Dietes bicolor £8

A South African *Iris* relative with extremely striking round creamy flowers with three bold orange and black blobs towards the centre. The plant gradually forms a dense evergreen tussock, very like a *Libertia*, with the flowers held on wiry stems above. Although this plant is happy in a wide variety of conditions it will need a very sheltered well-drained site in the UK or a large pot, brought inside for the winter. The parent plant has overwintered fine in a terracotta pot in an unheated tunnel for many years now, but I haven't planted any outside yet.

Digitalis micrantha £6

Basically exactly like a tiny version of *D.lutea* - very cute

Digitalis obscura £6

A very distinct small, almost shrubby species from Spain with 8-10in spikes of brownish orange glossy flowers over narrow evergreen leaves. Quite charming and generally hardy in the southern portion of the UK, especially in drier areas but worthy of a special place in a sunny raised bed or container.

Dipelta ventricosa £14

A gorgeous and very choice member of the *Abelia* group with flowers that are glossy pink outside and white with orange markings inside. A tall upright deciduous shrub, as easily grown on chalk as on acid soil, in sun or part shade. Beginning to flower in late winter, the main display is in mid to late spring. Attractive deciduous leaves and peeling papery bark. Fully hardy. Rare, I think, only because it's slow to propagate. This has lately, along with *Abelia* and *Kolkwitzia*, been transferred to *Linnaea*, for reasons I can explain if anyone's interested.

Dodecatheon austrofrigidum £6

Similar to *D.dentatum*, but with more substantial rosettes of leaves, and with pink flowers on taller stems. Although not the most spectacular, I've found this the easiest *Dodecatheon* to keep in ordinary woodsy garden conditions.

Dodecatheon dentatum £6

Quite distinct from the well-known pink flowered species - this is a lower growing, more spreading species with white flowers. Best in moist leafy woodland situations.

Ellisiophyllum pinnatum £5

A handy woodland creeper related to *Mazus* apparently. Pure white flowers appear in summer from a mat of lobed leaves. Easy in shady conditions, especially where a bit damp, and ideal for clothing rocks near water features for example.

Eomecon chionanthum**£6**

The Dawn Poppy - an Asiatic relative of the American Blood Root (*Sanguinaria*) that flowers on and off through the summer. This is one of those unusual plants that wanders about on long rhizomes but without swamping other plants. It just comes up amongst them here and there. Adaptable but best in moist woody conditions but tolerant of dry shade. Ideal for colonising under trees and shrubs.

Epimedium epsteinii**£7**

A choice species with broad white petals and dark maroon red spurs. The new foliage is copper tinted. Needs the usual moist woody conditions as other Chinese species.

Epimedium leptorrhizum**£7**

Forming a dense, slow-spreading clump close to the ground. This species produces relatively large soft pink flowers just above the foliage. The brownish new growth is a feature too. Totally hardy in a moist woody spot.

Epimedium platypetalum**£7**

One of a small number of Chinese species lacking the usual spurs (the others that I am aware of are *ecalcaratum* and *campanulatum*). In this case the flowers are bright yellow bells. A neat species that spreads slowly to form a dense colony. For moist woodland conditions.

Ercilla volubilis**£12**

An unusual Chilean climber related to *Phytolacca* with small wavy matt evergreen leaves, and clusters of pink scented fluffy inflorescences in spring. Can be trained on a sunny wall or growing through a large shrub or as ground cover. Hardy and adaptable with a bit of shelter

Euonymus spraguei**£7**

A rare species related to *E.fortunei* - this is a spreading evergreen suitable for dry shade. It has green spiky fruits that split to reveal orange fruits

Euphorbia donii ex Amjilassa**£8**

A very smart and extremely obliging member of the Asiatic group that also includes *griffithii* and *sikkimensis* (but without the invasive habit), with similarly striking foliage, reddish tinted and with a pale midrib. The flowers are the usual greenery-yallery-euphorbiary, of excellent quality and produced over a very long period in late summer. Almost any soil in sun or semi shade. Seedlings vary somewhat but I've not had a dud yet.

Euptelea polyandra**£20**

Unusual hardy deciduous small trees or large shrubs (to about 5m), somewhat reminiscent of a *Tilia* perhaps but not closely related to them or to anything else for that matter. The flowers are a dusky reddish colour with prominent anthers but are more curious than striking and this is one of those trees grown more for foliage effect and overall form. Adaptable in sun or semi shade. I've not tried it on chalk, but I've no reason to think it would object as long as not too dry.

Farfugium japonicum**£8**

A rather tender evergreen relative of the *Ligularias* with broad fleshy dark green leaves and wide branching heads of rich yellow flowers. An excellent foliage plant in an unheated greenhouse or a mild location outside in cool damp conditions.

Fascicularia bicolor canaliculata**£8**

I think most keen gardeners now know about this remarkably hardy (to about -12C) Chilean bromeliad with its dramatic blooms made up of a dense head of blue flowers surrounded by vivid red leaves. There has been some confusion about the naming - the *F.bicolor bicolor* apparently has broader shorter leaves and is generally less hardy and easy to flower in the UK. *F.bicolor canaliculata* forms a mass of long narrow silvery leaves under a wide variety of conditions in most of the UK and flowers regularly. The only thing it definitely needs is excellent drainage. It doesn't mind drying out periodically or being root-bound, and makes an excellent container plant. It will also grow well in the dry shade of an evergreen shrub as long as it gets sun coming in from the south side, especially in winter.

In the wild it tends toward the epiphytic or lithophytic, growing in rock crevices and in the forks of branches so a raised bed is the obvious place for it. If you have a gnarly old tree I'd definitely give it a go there too - wiring the roots in a fork in the trunk, covering them in moss and giving it some water while it gets established. Try it in the crown of an old *Cordyline* or on the fibrous trunk of a palm.

Felicia rosulata

£6

Previously known as *Aster natalensis*, these have proved easy to please in a sunny, well-drained spot, and although said to benefit from a dryish winter (coming from East Africa, this is to be expected) they have so far been better if not too parched. Completely unfazed by the last few winters' onslaught. An easy alpine and should be better known.

Felicia uliginosa

£6

Very different - this is a creeping species with needle-like foliage and soft lavender daisy flowers. Just as hardy and easy to grow. *Uliginosa* means 'of wetland' or something like that, so probably best not too dry.

***Forsythia suspensa* Nymans**

£12

Forget about the garish yellow blobs you see about the country through February and March - *Forsythia* has several much choicer and less overwhelming species to offer. *Suspensa* is in effect a giant winter jasmine (to which it is related) that can be trained in as a climber, or allowed to drape itself among other vigorous shrubs, or pruned in summer to make an arching shrub. The flowers are large and pale yellow and scattered along the branches, which, in this variety, are dark purple in winter. Really quite choice!

***Freesia laxa* Blue**

£8

An unusual form of what used to be *Anomatheca laxa* or *Lapeirousia cruenta* - unusual in that it is a winter growing form (and hence not much use outside in the UK) and also for its unusual soft mauve flowers, marked with dark purple at the centre. One for the unheated greenhouse with a dry summer.

Fuchsia hatschbachii

£8

Closely related to *F. magellanica* but, to my mind at least, a much nicer plant with good quality narrow foliage, a graceful willowy habit and slender red flowers, giving a completely different effect. Reputedly about as hardy as *magellanica* - these came through the winter in their pots in the tunnel totally unscathed.

Fuchsia magellanica arauco

£7

A very choice naturally occurring form of the popular hardy species with finely crafted flowers on a delicate small leaved shrub. The flowers are typical slender violet and red *magellanica*, but the sepals are white giving a very classy effect - not even slightly garish. Like most *magellanicas* this is hardy and adaptable but less heat and drought tolerant than most *Fuchsias*.

***Fuchsia magellanica* Lady Bacon**

£7

Very like *arauco* but with slightly larger flowers and paler growth

***Fuchsia procumbens* glaucous form**

£5

A fascinating species from New Zealand (almost all other *Fuchsia* are Latin-American) with bizarre little green and yellow flowers with violet anthers, peeking up from among the little round leaves. In a good year you'll also get the edible cranberry-like fruits. Normally considered very borderline in cold-tolerance, the parents of these plants have come through the last few winters in mid Sussex without trouble. Best in rather dry shade in my experience. This form has grey leaves

Galega orientalis

field grown £8

I'm not quite sure why anyone grows *G. officinalis* when they could have this a lovely fresh green plant making upright stems to about 3ft with spikes of really deep rich violet pea flowers at the tips. Easy and accommodating in a wide variety of conditions. It runs about a bit underground but not to the extent that it takes over. I grow it among other largeish

perennials and shrubs and it pops up here and there making a lovely contrast. Well worth having, not like those weedy wishy-washy *officinalis* types. Ugh!

Genista sagittalis

£8

A very distinctive species of low spreading habit. The stems are flat and green and leaf-like and carry clusters of bright yellow pea flowers in summer. Easy and adaptable.

Gentiana paradoxa

£8

A rather lovely and rarely seen late summer and autumn flowering species. The elegant blue flowers appear at the tips of a cluster of upright 6 inch stems. The narrow leaves may turn yellowish toward the end of the season making a very pleasing combination.

This is not one of the normal Asiatic autumn-flowering gentians. This one comes from the Caucasus and does not require acid soil. In fact, despite warnings to the contrary I have found this a ridiculously obliging species given a well-drained soil in sun.

Geranium orientalitibeticum

£6

A choice ground-covering species with rosy pink flowers but the main thing is the leaves which are beautifully marbled with lime green. An easy well-behaved small border plant

Geum rivale islandicum

£5

The miniature Icelandic form of our rather lovely but understated Water Avens. The nodding pale peachy flowers are much the same but on shorter stems. An easy and adaptable alpine on any soil that does not dry out. Ideal mini bog plant.

Gladiolus flanaganae

£7

An absolutely astonishing hardy species from near vertical cliffs in the Drakensberg. The plant is only 10 ins high but the outsized vivid red flowers are rich red and grow out sideways. Hard to explain – has to be seen.

Gladiolus papilio

£7

A terrific tall slender species that always attracts attention with its pastel maroon and green nodding flowers. Easy and perfectly hardy around here and, though I've not tried it, probably worth naturalising in rough grass. It can run about a bit underground, popping up here and there so I recommend planting it among herbaceous perennials or low shrubs that are done flowering for the year.

Habranthus tubispathus texensis

£5

A pretty and resilient species with simple small Amaryllis style flowers at intervals through the summer, golden yellow inside, red out. They have thrived and seeded about in the tunnel for the last five years, unprotected from the cold and subject to my somewhat sporadic watering. I've not tried them outside yet.

***Hedychium spicatum* (wild, from Ciaojiang)**

£10

A medium size species to about 5ft tall, with creamy, orange centred fragrant blooms in summer. Hardy

Hedychium yunnanense

£10

Similar to but more compact than *spicatum* but with broad fresh green leaves giving a more luxuriant effect. One of the hardiest.

Helianthus mollis

£8

The ashy sunflower. I've become very fond of this this summer. The foliage is not at all coarse and complements the soft golden yellow flowers, which are produced over a long season in late summer and autumn. To 6ft tall. Any rich soil in sun. Big plants.

Helwingia chinensis

£12

A peculiar evergreen woodland shrub which makes its flowers on the upper surfaces of the leaves (the flower stem is fused to the midrib). This on its own makes it a botanical curio, but it is also a pleasant and intriguing species with dark glossy leaves, maroon tinged when young, and an attractive upright habit. In good years, red berries will appear, also attached to the

leaves. An excellent small to medium sized shrub, best in moist woodland. Hardy but better with shelter from too much sun and wind..

Helwingia himalaica

£12

A slight variation on the above. Equally nice but with leaves a little bigger and if anything, even glossier.

Hemiboea subcapitata

£10

I was very excited when I first came across this on Ed Bowen's Opus nursery website. I thought at first it might be some very classy *Abelia* relative with long white flowers, marked rich red inside over dark green leaves, but it is in fact a member of the gesneriaceae. Now, one does not expect any gesneriads to be hardy easy-going perennials in the UK but this does appear to be the case here. The easiest up until now have probably been *Haberlea* and *Mitraria* but this adds to the list and seems if anything, even more adaptable. Unlike many choice woodlanders it doesn't appear to need cool moist conditions to do well and, as I've discovered, puts up with rather hit-and-miss watering rather well. It spreads and bulks up well and quickly here. I don't know yet how much cold it puts up with but it seems hardy at least in Southern England. It dies back to rosettes in winter. Still rare outside specialist collections but destined to be very popular I think.

Heracleum stevenii

£8

Not a weed! A rather splendid species from Russia only growing to about 30cms high but with leaves and flower heads of about normal hogweed size or even bigger – 20-30 cms! The foliage also is relatively soft and greyish – not coarse like our native hogweeds. This seems to be a biennial species. It produces a lot of seeds but I've never found a self-sown seedling, so I suspect that most of them are infertile. So, far from being weedy it may take a bit of effort to keep it going.

Herbertia lahue

£6

A gorgeous little summer flowering *Iris* relative producing attractively marked violet flowers on short stems just above the ground. Although this is widely distributed in the USA it's of doubtful hardiness and may need protection, but I recommend trying it in short turf – a technique that works remarkably well with many 'tender' bulbs

Hesperochiron californicus

£7

A little-known but charming miniature perennial related to *Phacelia* and *Nemophila*, making pale rosy almost stemless funnel-shaped flowers, over a neat rosette of leaves in spring. It emerges in late winter and disappears again in early summer. I've not had enough to experiment with until now, so been keeping it in the tunnel, but it might well be happy in a well-drained sunny spot outside with plenty of water in spring, among small bulbs for example. Very pretty.

Heuchera Brownfinch

£8

A change from the endless stream of bedding *Heuchera* that are so fashionable at the moment – this is very close in appearance to *H.cylindrica* which is usually available in a form known as Greenfinch. Brownfinch has the same cylindrical flower spikes, but of a rather nice rich red brown, on unusually tall stems. The foliage is attractively silver splashed. Rare in cultivation, but easily grown in sun or part shade. Keep an eye open for vine weevils, which love *Heuchera* roots.

HIBISCUS

The North American herbaceous perennial *Hibiscus* are extraordinary plants with huge and dramatic flowers. What's more they're completely cold hardy. They do however need quite a bit of heat in the growing season to really get them going, and perhaps more importantly, they are basically bog plants in the wild. Therefore a shallow bog garden in full sun is probably the way to go. They can be kept in containers, overwintered outside and moved to the greenhouse in spring to get them moving. Be aware though that they are eventually very big indeed and will need large containers and plenty of feed. They are worth any amount of trouble though.

Hibiscus coccineus**more later in the summer**

A very tall (10ft) and truly magnificent species with finely cut palmate foliage and superb scarlet flowers very like the familiar tropical *H.rosa-sinensis*. Completely cold hardy but needs plenty of heat, water and feed in summer to really thrive. You can treat them like tomato plants, but without having to bring them in in winter.

Hibiscus moscheutos**£10**

A much shorter bushier species with broad heart-shaped leaves. The flowers though are insane – up to 10ins across and in various shades of red, pink and white usually with a darker centre. Completely obscene and yet irresistible. For the same conditions as *coccineus*.

Hibiscus militaris**£5**

A much more modest species with flowers 'only' 4-5ins across, and white with a dark eye. Probably more acceptable to those of us with subtler tastes. Still needs plenty of wet and heat to thrive.

Horminum pyrenaicum**£7**

Another of the *Dracocephalum* kind but this time producing a nice chunky rosette of crinkly leaves - the purple dragon-head flowers arise on stems from the centre. An easy alpine probably seen at its best growing out from among rocks.

Horminum pyrenaicum alboviolaceum**£7**

A choice form with white flowers, tipped violet.

Hydrangea scandens chinensis formosana**£12**

A graceful shrub with unusually big sterile florets of a very fresh slightly greenish white in early summer. The narrow dark green leaves are more or less evergreen. A Crûg Farm introduction - best with shade, shelter and plenty of moisture.

Hydrangea serrata Kiyosumi**£9**

A normal lacecap Hydrangea in many ways but with two unusual features - the sterile florets around the edge of the inflorescence are white, edged with pink (but tastefully so), and the new foliage is a rich maroon red. A striking small shrub (about 4ft high) for semi-shade on most soils as long as not too dry (including chalk. Hydrangeas are among those plants often believed to be lime-haters. This is not the case.)

Hypericum aegypticum**£6**

A terrific little shrub for a hot dry spot, looking perhaps more like one of the shrubby *Linums* than a *Hypericum*.

Bear in mind that it stays very small (just a few inches across) so avoid invasive companions, but otherwise ideal for a sunny raised bed or a trough with other Mediterranean sun-lovers. My plants have come through the last two winters unprotected here in Sussex without difficulty.

Hypericum balearicum**£6**

A curious little shrubby species with leathery crinkly leaves and knobbly red stems. The flowers are relatively large and rich golden. For a sunny sheltered site with free-draining soil. Hardy here so far.

Hypericum kalmianum**£8**

Hypericums can seem a bit ho-hum to most keen gardeners I admit but there are some interesting ones. In this case I think the appeal is in the distinctive low rounded habit and the contrast of the fresh yellow rounded flowers with the neat elliptical sea-green leaves. Like other shrubby *Hypericums* though, it's easy to please and flowers over a long period in summer. Not at all weedy, and completely hardy.

IMPATIENS

Several species of possibly cold hardy Impatiens have appeared on the market in the last few years. My experience here is that they are good garden plants for moist shady and leafy soil. These have all been completely hardy here through the last few winters although the first spring shoots may be caught by late frosts but then come back strongly as soon as the weather

warms up. Brilliant for colonising the soil under shrubs, flowering all summer until the first frost. A couple can even be a bit invasive. Certainly not tender here.

Impatiens arguta

£6

The most impressive so far of the hardy species with elongate violet flowers all summer. Ideal for not too dry shady situations and thriving outside here through the last few winters, and even on my mum's rather dry chalky soil.

Impatiens flanaganae

£10

A South African species related to *tinctoria*, and an impressive tall luxuriant hardy tropical. The flowers are a very attractive rich pink and red. Seems pretty tough as a border perennial but sensitive to damp roots. Considering how big and fleshy it is, it's probably best kept on the dry side.

Impatiens omeiana

£6

The very dark green, yellow veined, purple-backed leaves in rosettes are the main feature here, but the amber yellow flowers in late summer and autumn are a pleasant bonus. For moist woody soils in part shade. This one runs underground quite widely.

***Impatiens oxyanthera* Milo**

£8

A very choice species with white flowers tinted with flesh pink inside (and with a few black spots for good measure) among broad fresh green foliage. Runs underground a bit so maybe not with small delicate things. Reputedly very hardy.

Impatiens puberula

£6

Another hardy purple flowered species, this time with soft green, somewhat fuzzy foliage. The flowers are chubbier with dark purple lips and a paler 'bag' behind, if you see what I mean. Needs the same conditions as *arguta* but is more spreading.

Impatiens stenantha

£6

Like *uniflora* but with amber yellow flowers among distinctly wine-tinged foliage. Bushy, not spreading.

Impatiens tinctoria

£8

An old favourite from East Africa and surprisingly hardy given a good pile of straw over the tubers in winter to stop them freezing. Forms a thicket of juicy green stems clothed in quite large lush green leaves and topped from late summer until it freezes with heavenly fragrant hooded white flowers. If you take a closer look you'll see delicate red markings inside and a very long spur behind, adapted to the long-tongued moths that pollinate them in the wild. Remarkably easy given plenty of moisture and, as I said, a good thick mulch in winter.

Impatiens ugandense

£8

A gorgeous tall species from (you guessed it) tropical East Africa with large white flowers, delicately marked with pink, and good quality fresh green foliage. Not hardy but an easy and undemanding species that requires only frost-free conditions in winter and can be stood outside in summer.

Impatiens uniflora

£6

Pretty rosy pink flowers over lush red backed green foliage. Spreading quite vigorously underground. Another ideal plant for providing late summer and autumn colour under shrubs even in deep (but not dry) shade.

Incarvillea delavayi

£6

A classic and popular perennial – sometimes called the hardy Gloxinia for its almost unreal huge trumpet shaped pink or white flowers and lush pinnate foliage. Looks like it should be tender but easy and long-lived in a sunny well drained site. I have both pink and white forms.

Indigofera hebetala

£12

A very striking species with fresh green leaflets and dramatic magenta and maroon bicolor flowers over a long period in summer. Easy and adaptable in any ordinary garden soil in sun. May need shelter in cold areas.

Iochroma australis**£10**

A vigorous and adaptable shrub from Chile with rich violet blue funnel shaped flowers all summer. Hardy enough for a sheltered spot over much of the south and west of the UK and a great candidate for city gardens. In colder areas some protection will be needed in winter but it sprouts well from the roots if frosted and flowers quickly on the new wood. (aka *Acnistus australe*)

Iris aphylla**£8**

A medium sized bearded Iris species from Eastern Europe - an excellent species in the garden, forming compact clumps and always making plenty of rich purple flowers on short stems. Also has excellent new foliage - a feature in itself. Easy in the open garden in a sunny well-drained spot. A good doer, as they say

Iris bulleyana Dali Yunnan**£7**

A short form - only 18ins tall but with lovely shapely and finely marked flowers. Moist or waterside conditions in sun or light shade.

Iris fulva**£8**

A legendary Iris (is that too strong a word?) from the deep south of the USA with flowers as close to red as any. This species is cold hardy but does have a reputation for needing more heat than we typically get in the UK. Nevertheless these seedlings have proved quick to flower here and very vigorous. For shallow water in full sun, where the water warms up quickly in spring. Thoroughly recommended.

Iris gracilipes**£6**

Neat grassy tussocks (quite ornamental in themselves) sprout multitudes of small but perfectly formed mauve flowers in June. A terrific little Evansia, related to *I. cristata* and *verna* but much much easier to grow and flower. Seems more than happy so far in well-drained shade but I have the feeling it'll be quite adaptable elsewhere. Another one of those plants I grow here that I look at and think *Why on earth isn't everyone growing this?*

Iris hookeri**£7**

A lovely small species like *setosa* but not more than 8ins tall with very finely marked violet flowers. Neat glaucous foliage. Suitable for moist alpine or waterside sites.

Iris lactea**£7**

A finely built Spuria with narrow upright grey leaves and soft mauve or creamy white flowers. I have three forms here grown from SIGNA seed, all as yet unflowered. For open sunny conditions.

Iris milesii**£8**

A really choice relative of *I. tectorum* and *japonicum* with tall branching sprays of remarkable, frilly, purple speckled flowers. Easy on any sunny freely drained soil. Extremely nice.

Iris Regal Surprise**Field grown £7**

A remarkable cross of *versicolor* and *pseudacorus* with very striking violet and white flowers in late spring. Sturdy and vigorous but nowhere near as much so as *pseudacorus* (the common yellow flag) An excellent bog or marginal plant.

Iris setosa**£7**

There seems to be some confusion about the relationship this and *I. hookeri* (not *hookeriana* – that's something else entirely.) The consensus seems to be that there is one variable and widely distributed species stretching from north-east Asia, across the Bering Strait, and throughout northern North America. *Setosa* seems to be the name given to taller plants from Asia with rich purple flowers, which is what we have here. Easy in any moist soil or as a bog plant. Totally hardy of course.

Iris sintensis**£7**

A lovely small species with grassy leaves and exquisite blue flowers. A semi woodland species in the wild but quite adaptable on any well-drained soil, in sun or semi shade, and without too much competition.

Iris unguicularis Peloponnese Snow**£8**

I'm very excited to be able to offer this superb new wild form from Greece, given to me by Robert Rolfe a couple of years back. Since then it has proved hardy in a dry raised bed and flowered freely through much of last winter. This is a relatively small form of the species but remarkably vigorous.

The flowers were damaged by the heavy persistent rain and slugs this last mild wet winter and for that reason alone I might recommend alpine house or frame cultivation. In normal years they might well perform perfectly well in a sheltered spot in a south or east facing bed.

Iris variegata**£6**

One of my favourite Irises - very adaptable and easy and free flowering. There are several similar cultivars (Niebelungen most obviously) but this is one of those cases where one wonders why the plant breeders bother - the basic species is so good. A beautiful and adaptable species from Eastern Europe (the seed came from Moravia) with fresh yellow standards and black and white boldly striped falls. This is a medium sized bearded species and thrives in a wide variety of garden conditions as long as not too shady or wet. (Not to be confused with *I. pallida variegata* which has variegated foliage and violet flowers.)

Jamesia americana**£12**

A close relative of the *Deutzias* from western USA. The flowers are exactly like one of the nicer white *Deutzias* (not *scabra*) but the foliage is more like a *Viburnum* of the Wayfaring Tree fraternity (*V. lantana*). A pleasing small shrub for any ordinary soil, neither too wet nor too dry, in sun or semi shade. Unaccountably rare.

Jeffersonia dubia**£6**

One of those exquisite choice small spring woodlanders and one of the first plants I fell in love with. The crystalline purple flowers appear in early spring above the coppery red emerging foliage. The leaves are made up of two leaflets and are a soft matt green. Just beautiful, and not difficult in a cool moist shady spot and can make quite a good-sized clump in time. Small plants are vulnerable to damage by slugs though.

Justicia americana**£6**

Fully hardy acanthaceae are relatively rare in cultivation, and most *Justicia* are tender herbs and shrubs, so this one comes as a slight surprise. This is a rarely grown North American marginal producing heads of pretty violet/white flowers over fresh green foliage for a long while in summer. Easy in shallow water or wet soil. Not at all weedy

Kalimeris incisa* Edo Murasaki*£8**

A rather choice compact aster relative with flowers that remind me of *Anemone blanda* - with rich violet rays and yellow centres. The foliage is lush and deep green and the whole plant is of modest size without being a blobby dwarf. Not fussy about soil or aspect as long as extremes are avoided, and flowering through the summer - usually June to autumn (but it started in March this year!)

Keiskea japonica* Pink form*£9**

Plants that flower late into autumn are always worth having and there are a number of late season Lamiaceae (mint family) from eastern Asia that are far too little grown in the UK. *Colquhounia*, *Leucosceptrum*, *Elscholzia* and *Rostrinucula* are three that I grow, and this is another. Keiskea are from Japan and make attractive bushy herbaceous perennials to about 4ft tall with spikes of palest pink flowers in October. Adaptable and completely hardy.

Kniphofia brachystachya**£8**

A small species – only about 50cm tall, producing dense spikes of honey yellow/orange flowers that open from buds that are almost black and which turn black again when spent. Very striking. Seems hardy so far

Lathyrus aureus**£6**

Reminiscent of *L.vernus* in that it doesn't climb but bigger and producing flowers of an unusual soft orange colour. For any good soil but especially nice in light woodland.

Lathyrus davidii**£6**

Another orange-ish flowered species but quite different to *aureus* with a more robust upright, almost climbing habit and oddly coloured flowers beginning yellowish green. Also good in woodland conditions but very adaptable.

Lathyrus gmelinii**£7**

Another member of the same group as *aureus* and *transsylvanicus* and very like the latter

Lathyrus grandiflorus**£7**

A short climbing species with large, sweet pea style flowers of rosy pink. This is not a rampant climber like *tuberosus* but it does run underground quite freely. Looks excellent clambering about among shrubs but not to be trusted with small plants

Lathyrus laevigatus**£7**

Yet another member of the *transsylvanicus* group

Lathyrus transsylvanicus**£7**

Very like *aureus* but generally more impressive and elegant - with larger and more striking spikes of orange flowers. Distinctly different

Lecanthus aff. peduncularis**£7**

A peculiar little woodlander – a member of the nettle family (but non-stinging) making a fresh green ground-cover. The flowers are individually tiny but gathered into pale fruit-pastille-like heads, reminiscent of some *Dorstenias*. More of a curio than a great beauty but I really like it. (See also *Pilea*)

Ledebouria Gary Hammer**£6**

I've had a thing for *Ledebouria* ever since I first came across *L.socialis* when I was a teenager (*Scilla violacea* then) because of their interestingly mottled leaves and curious little flowers. It's a mainly African genus with a few species in south west Asia I believe. A few of the South Africans are reputed to be hardy to z7 if kept dry in winter, including this one and *L.cooperi*. Otherwise they make excellent pot plants for a frost-free greenhouse or stood outside in summer. This species produces relatively long leaves with bold black blotches, and spikes of small greyish hyacinth flowers in summer. It is more or less deciduous in winter

Ledebouria cooperi**£5**

For a long time I thought this plant was called *Ledebouria adamii*. Anyway, a charming little South African bulb with brown lined leaves and rich pink flowers. It builds up quickly into a nice dense pot-full. Not really a cold hardy plant - it's best kept dry in winter - but I hear claims that it can do well in a sheltered, sunny, well-drained spot outside in milder areas. Perfect undemanding plant for a terracotta pot in an alpine house or stood outside for the summer.

Leucosceptrum canum**£12**

A remarkable *Buddleja*-like shrub from the foothills of the Himalayas, where it is quite common and widespread. The foliage is very pale and the flowers, which are produced very late in the year, are slender creamy white bottlebrushes. The combination is rather striking and unusual. Not really tried outside here yet so not sure how hardy it is or whether it will flower on one-year old stems if the older stems are cut back. We'll have to see won't we.

Leucosceptrum stellipilum formosanum**£8**

Mauve pink bottle-brushes and fresh pale green foliage. A lush leafy herbaceous perennial related to *Elscholtzia*, *Agastache* and *Rostrinucula* and with the same late flowering season. Possibly best in sheltered woodland to avoid hot sun and early frosts which can damage the display. Otherwise easy and adaptable.

Lindelofia anchusoides**£8**

Rarely offered *Cynoglossum*-like plant with intense azure flowers over dense clumps of leaves. Hardy and easy in a sunny well-drained place

Lobelia laxiflora angustifolia**£7**

A spreading perennial with fresh narrow foliage topped in summer with tubular orange and yellow flowers. Hardy here, this might suffer in a very cold year but otherwise a reliable border perennial. This has a reputation for running but I've not found it excessive.

Lobelia siphilitica* Blue form*£6**

A good blue form of this excellent North American species from Kevin Hughes. The flowers remind me of *Penstemon* and are a lovely clear colour without a touch of mauve. The foliage is fresh green. This is an upright fully hardy perennial happy in any moist soil in sun or part shade. Not at all weedy or coarse.

Lonicera crassifolia**£8**

A lovely little evergreen creeping (not climbing) honeysuckle for ground cover or rockery with small shiny round leaves and clusters of creamy gold honeysuckle flowers, slightly tinted pink. Possibly too vigorous for a trough but hardly rampageous.

Lonicera hirsuta**£12**

A vigorous climber with broad green leaves and heads of golden flowers subtended by a pair of rounded bracts. A lovely woodland climber.

Lonicera hispidula**£12**

The Californian Pink Honeysuckle - ideal for drier, sunnier or shady conditions, where a lot of the more familiar types tend to get mildew. The foliage is rounded and somewhat fuzzy and, in the population from which these seeds were collected (thanks again Dennis), somewhat marked with irregular maroon-black splotches, especially when young and in winter. Some individuals have completely blackened foliage which I find rather striking, but I understand that not everyone will agree. Please let me know if you'd prefer a specimen with more or less black leaves.

Lonicera morrowii**£15**

A quietly lovely shrubby honeysuckle with plentiful rosy white flowers in late spring turning pink with age. Hardy and easy and very shade tolerant.

Lonicera myrtillus**£10**

A very different species with small rounded leaves and rosy white urn-shaped flowers - almost like some sort of ericaceous shrub (hence the name). Compact and easily pleased

Lonicera ligustrina pileata linearis**£10**

Lonicera pileata has recently been reclassified as a form of *ligustrina*, and this is a form with longer narrower leaves than usual. These are seed raised plants and may well produce the purple fruits. An adaptable evergreen shrub

Lonicera sempervirens* Cedar Lane*£12**

A brilliant species producing 3in long tubular vivid red flowers from early spring until well into summer. The foliage is not evergreen (contrary to the specific epithet) but is a rich soft purple when it first emerges, and the top-most pair form a dish around the flowers. Fully hardy and easy in a sunny spot on a wide variety of soils. Much better than *x brownii*, which is usually recommended over *sempervirens*. Grow it in a *Pyracantha* and make an ersatz *Embothrium*!

Lychnis coronata sieboldii**£6**

Unexpectedly large (2in) salmon orange flowers over a long period in summer. A Japanese relative of our native red campion, and just as easy to grow in sunny borders or semi shade - anywhere as long as not too dry.

Magnolia wilsonii**£12**

With nodding flowers in early summer and attractive fresh green foliage this is an ideal small tree/large shrub for light woodland or to mix with other woodlanders such as *Acer* and *Euonymus*. Like most *Magnolias* it will need a deep, moist and fertile situation but does not require lime-free soil. Very interesting fruits too.

Mahonia nervosa**£18**

The most sought-after west coast species with magnificent glossy pinnate foliage in rosettes low on the ground, like some fabulous fern. The spikes of yellow flowers are produced in short spikes in spring and the foliage turns red or maroon in cold weather. Reputed to be less lime tolerant than other *Mahonia* – I wouldn't know, but it is an absolutely perfect species for growing under pines or ericaceous plants, slowly spreading underground to form a sizeable colony. These are seedlings from seed collected by Dennis near Berkeley, California.

Mahonia aff. nevinii**£12**

I have two seed strains on the nursery, one collected from *M. nevinii*, the other from *M. fremontii* (both collected from cultivated plants in California by Dennis Carvalho). Neither have flowered much yet but the foliage has a marvellous colour and form - the pale veined coppery red new growth turning to sea green, and has an unusual thin scratchy texture. Overall they look most like *nevinii*. The overall appearance will be of quite a dense shrub eventually up to 4 or 5 feet high. Fully hardy and very drought tolerant.

Mandevilla laxa**£10**

A beautiful twining climber from South America with pure white scented funnel-shaped flowers in late summer, like an outsize *Trachelospermum*. Not terribly hardy but vigorous enough to recover from damage, this plant has done very well through the last few years on a south facing wall near Heathfield in East Sussex. Deciduous. Aka *M. suaveolens*.

Manettia cordifolia**£8**

An extremely pretty small herbaceous climber from Brazil with lots of 2in pure scarlet tubular flowers in late summer and autumn. Cultivation information is a little scarce but American sites seem to agree that this will grow in USDA z8 and as I grow quite a lot of z8 plants here I'm pleased to give it a try. Even if it ends up being one of those plants that needs bringing in in the winter it will be worth it because of its modest size and the fact that it dies down completely to tuberous roots, which makes it very easy to handle. An ideal small vine for decorating shrubs or putting on a trellis.

Manfreda maculosa**£10**

Related to *Agave* and *Yucca* – this is a small *Aloe*-like perennial from Texas. The grey leaves have conspicuous black spots, are soft and brittle, and without spines. These are hardy if kept dry in winter but not tried outside here yet

Melia azedarach**£15**

The Indian Bead Tree. A very tropical-looking tree which nevertheless can be grown (as more of a shrub) in a warm sheltered situation or container in the UK or in the open in milder parts of Europe. The finely dissected foliage is a fresh pea green, the fragrant flowers are palest mauve with a dark centre, and the fruits are yellow. One of those subtropical plants that, once established, can cope with a certain amount of frost damage and chopping back, to regenerate from lower down.

Meliosma cuneifolia**£10**

For some reason the *Meliosmas* seem to have fallen out of favour in horticulture. I can't think why. I suppose the flowers are rather small but produced in large panicles and followed by berries, but it is the foliage that they are mainly known for, which in this case is deeply furrowed and textured and distinctly tropical looking. The new growth is red tinted.

Potentially a large deciduous shrub or small tree. Maybe better with shelter but generally hardy.

Mirabilis longiflora

£8

A glorious night-scented species - the fragrance redolent of tropical evenings. (The very long-tubed white flowers are typical of plants pollinated by moths.) A low spreading bushy perennial with rather sticky green foliage. Very vigorous and easy on the dry chalky raised bed at the nursery, and could well be hardy enough to survive the winter outside (USDA zone 7) in a sheltered spot with rain protection. If not would also be fabulous in a big terracotta pot on the patio, brought in for the winter.

Molopospermum peloponnesiacum

£10

A very good-looking medium sized umbellifer with jagged cut glossy green foliage and fresh pale yellow umbells turning lime green - a very nice contrast. Absolutely not "yet another bloody hog-weed" and not even slightly coarse or invasive. Although southern European in origin this plant is best kept not too hot or dry.

Moltkia doerfleri

£6

An unusual and uncommon herbaceous perennial making clumps of slender leafy upright stems to 18ins (50cms). The flowers are a bit like comfrey in blackcurrant purple and produced over a month or two in spring.

Monarda bradburiana

£6

A very classy bee-balm - just as easy and adaptable as the better known *didyma* types but more compact, longer lived and with flowers of a soft rosy pink, framed by rich maroon tinged calyces and. A very striking combo.

Moraea huttonii

big plants £10

Stupendous tall Iris with beautifully crafted yellow 'flags' on rigid upright stems well above the narrow strappy green leaves (easily hidden among other perennials). For open sites on fertile moist soils ideally but very tough. Basically they'll grow anywhere *Agapanthus* or *Kniphofia* succeed.

Moraea vegeta

£6

A small South African bulb only a few inches high, with Iris type flowers of an unusual soft cocoa colour with a bright yellow centre. I give it a dry summer and protect it in winter but this is a dependable, easy species and might well grow in a sheltered, sunny, well-drained place outside.

Orbexilum pedunculatum psoralioides (Psoralea psoralioides)

£7

A subtle little legume with soft mauve spikes of flowers, suitable for interplanting with other North American Prairie species like *Callirhoe*. Quietly pretty.

Paederia scandens

£12

An unusual subtropical/warm temperate, deciduous, twining climber from eastern Asia. The flowers are very distinctive – they come in clusters in early summer, are more or less tubular, to about half an inch long, pale on the outside and plum purple inside. They may be followed by orange berries. Untried here but worth a go in a sheltered position outside.

Penstemon venustus

£7

An upright plant with broadly serrated stem leaves and without basal rosettes. The flowers in this form (sent to me as Purple 36") are a particularly nice dusky purple. Like the other *Serrulati*, this should be a relatively reliable and long-lived species for a well-drained sunny site.

Perovskia Filigran

£8

A choicer plant than the *P.atriplicifolia* cultivars we normally see and probably a form or hybrid of *P.abrotanoides*, which is less easy to grow in moist mild climates. The silver foliage is very finely cut, the stems are white and the flowers are intense blue. I've not yet worked out how to get the best from it but a very dry site with maximum exposure is probably the key. Very cold hardy.

***Persicaria filiformis* £8**

I've always been impressed with the fresh, almost luminous green lustre of the leaves of this species with the black chevron and coppery tints, reminiscent of the tropical *Calatheas* and *Marantas*. Red flowers are produced in slender tails in summer and early autumn. Not invasive but may seed about here and there. For moist conditions in sun or semi shade. For a long time this was sold as a form of the American species, *P. virginiana*, but apparently it's Chinese.

***Persicaria filiformis* Guizhou Bronze PAB 9127 £8**

A rather gorgeous form of the species with less conspicuous black markings but the leaves have a wonderful brassy tint and the whole plant is more luxuriant.

***Persicaria sp. Indian Summer* £8**

A popular species lately with rich pink flowers and red tinged heart-shaped foliage. A lovely contribution to the late garden scene. Not even slightly invasive, with a compact root system

***Persicaria tenuicaulis* £6**

A choice little woodlander – very unlike any of the other common species - slowly spreading to make a colony of stocky little plants with small silvery green leaves and in spring, short spikes of pure white flowers. For moist but well-drained woodsy soil in shade. Never even slightly weedy. In fact, keep an eye on it or it might get lost.

***Peucedanum verticillare* £8**

Possibly my favourite large umbellifer – a tall upright plant with broad basal leaves made up of many rounded glossy green leaflets, red-maroon when new. The overall effect reminds me of some of the choicer *Aralia*. The flowers are pale yellow and the umbels are produced in whorls up the stem to well over head height. For rich moist and heavy soils especially, but fairly adaptable. Monocarpic so collect seeds

***Philadelphus aff. delavayi* £12**

I can't even remember where I got the cuttings of this one. It's clearly one of the *delavayi calvescens* types with their strongly textured foliage and contrasting dark calyx (remarkable how much difference that makes to the look of the flower) but in this case the flowers are unusually elegant with pure white filaments. The fragrance is just as good. This is an easy adaptable, medium sized arching shrub for sun or semi shade.

***Philadelphus coulteri* £12**

This is one of those highly sought-after Mexican 'Rose Syringas' with heavily scented waxy nodding bowl-shaped flowers, reddish toward the centre. Almost evergreen, of arching/weeping habit with dark green oval leaves, and not too big, this can be grown against a wall or allowed to grow through other shrubs, as it does in the wild. Being Mexican and evergreen, this is almost certainly best in a sheltered spot. It has a reputation for not being free flowering in the UK but what it lacks in mass it makes up for in flowering over a much longer period than the more familiar mock oranges, and of course, the scent is wonderful.

***Philadelphus mexicanus* Rose Syringa £15**

Similar to *P. coulteri* in flower but with more slender growth habit and narrow greyish leaves, and here at least, seems hardier. Also harder to propagate so in short supply

***Philadelphus x lemouinei* Erectus £8**

I was originally impressed by this when I saw it in a garden centre in mid-winter, when it was just a cluster of rather remarkable black stems, apparently made of charcoal. Now in flower it's proving to be a very attractive cultivar, with jagged white petals and a fresh scent. In its upright shape, modest size and neat foliage it has something of *P. microphyllus* about it, which is presumably one of the parents. A very appealing shrub for a small garden.

***Phlomis 'angustifolia'* Toob £8**

A very striking *Phlomis* with the edges of the grey leaves turned up to reveal the white undersides, giving a very smart two-tone effect, especially in winter. The flowers are a clear bright yellow. This has proved hardy and easy in a sunny well-drained spot. Originally

obtained as *P. angustifolia*, it seems this name is a synonym of *P. fruticosa*. It's not clear if it's a form of *fruticosa* or another species but it's a much nicer plant. Nick Macer gave it the varietal name 'Toob' because of the 'toobular' shape of the leaves.

Phlomis lanata

£6

A dwarf version of the well-known Jerusalem Sage. The flower heads are a similar (but I think better) dusky gold colour and the foliage is of much the same fuzzy grey green, but everything about the plant is neater and better shaped than the larger species. This is another plant previously thought to be too tender for most gardens, I've found it very easy to please so far, given full sun and free drainage. Height ultimately about 2ft, 4ft across.

Phlomis samia

one big specimen left £9

A very unusual species grown for its smoky suede brown flowers. These are born in whorls on upright stems like other *Phlomis*, but this is a hardy herbaceous perennial dying down to a leafy rosette in winter rather than a shrub. There are a few other herbaceous *Phlomis*, including the more familiar *russeliana* and *cashmeriana* but despite the less colourful flowers I like this one best. Tough and adaptable.

Phytolacca acinosa

£8

A big wide branching perennial mainly grown for the fruits, like elongate mutant blackberries, in late summer, by which time the entire plant will have developed a rhubarb-pink hue. Earlier on it's a big lush green thing decorated with spikes of creamy flowers. It looks well with other large herbs, such as *Datisca* or *Zantedeschia*, or *Ligularia*. Grows quickly in any moist fertile soil in sun or part shade.

***Pilea plataniflora* Pelling PBO2-518**

A low bushy woodlander with smooth elliptical fresh green leaves with three prominent veins, and branching sprays of tiny creamy flowers. For damp shady conditions

Pilea sp. DS 834

Another luxuriant woodland ground-cover, more like the tropical *P. cadieri* with serrated, silver splashed leaves

Piptanthus nepalensis

£14

An unusually choice member of the laburnum fraternity with dense heads of acid yellow flowers, lustrous olive-green leaflets and glossy black/green stems. A tall arching shrub, either free-standing or trained against a wall. Sun or semi-shade. Hardy but better with shelter.

Plectranthus excisus

£8

A succession of violet labiate flowers in long slanting racemes in late summer and autumn - really glows in the autumn light. The foliage is unusual in shape and takes on dark tints as the season progresses. Best in semi shade and not too dry and the stems are brittle so avoid exposed sites. Late to emerge in spring.

***Potentilla atrosanguinea* Sundermannii**

£6

A fine form of this popular border perennial, with neat single warm yellow flowers, marked with red toward the centre over silver-backed strawberry leaves. Colourful but not at all garish.

Potentilla (Sibbaldia) tridentata

field grown £6

A nice little arctic alpine with three notched leaflets per leaf and pretty pure white flowers. Easy and hardy, and inclined to run about in damp peaty soil.

Primula elatiormeyeri

£6

This is a lovely Caucasian form of oxlip with nodding heads of rich violet blue flowers on slender stems. From seasonally damp mountain meadows and light woodland - it wants plenty of light and moisture in winter and spring - not waterlogged or heavily shaded.

Pseudowintera colorata

£9

A colourful medium-sized evergreen shrub from New Zealand - the foliage olive green/khaki, speckled and tinged with purple and black. It sounds weird but is actually rather lovely. The

flowers are small and mustard yellow and not especially ornamental but pleasant. This has proved to be a good hardy shrub for sun or part shade, but best kept out of freezing winds.

Psoralea glandulosa

£12

A very lovely light and airy shrub with pea green leaves and blackish stems and slim racemes of violet and white pea flowers in summer. Very fresh and remarkably hardy here. A nice change from the more solid presences of so many other 'hardy exotics'.

Pulsatilla bungeana

£7

A very lovely Chinese pasque flower with the nearest blue flowers I've seen in the genus. Easy and hardy in 'alpine' conditions (freely drained but not parched soil and full exposure to the sun and air).

Ranunculus alpestris

£6

A true alpine with finely divided deep green leaves and good white flowers. An easy hardy plant for raised beds among rocks – not too dry

Ranunculus calandrinioides

£8

Ranunculus is an amazingly varied genus and I have a bit of a thing for them. This is one of the species found in the Western Mediterranean region with glaucous elliptical leaves, almost like a small *Hosta*, and gorgeous white flowers, slightly pink tinged. This species (from the Atlas Mountains of Morocco) is winter green and winter flowering and although cold-hardy, is not generally recommended for outdoors. Word has it though that it will grow in dry shade, perhaps peeking out from under a myrtle or bay into the low winter sunlight. Perfectly easy in a pot in an unheated greenhouse, kept dry in summer but well-watered and fed when in growth.

Ranunculus cortusifolius

£7

The Madeira buttercup – a splendid species - bigger and bolder in all its parts than normal buttercups, and flowering for months from late winter to early summer. Not generally regarded as terribly hardy, I've not tried it outdoors here yet. One thing is for sure, it starts into growth very early and those big lush leaves do look vulnerable. If you want to grow it outdoors, my feeling would be to try it in a moist, shaded, sheltered spot, but failing that, keep it for the cool greenhouse. Gardeners in Cornwall or Brittany should give it a go. Kevin Hughes says treat it like a marsh marigold.

Ranunculus platanifolius

£6

A very easy and adaptable, and frankly just very lovely white flowering buttercup. Fresh and easy, and did I say lovely? Suitable for any retentive soil in sun or semi shade. Not even slightly invasive.

Ranunculus malessanus

£6

A miniature species from Southern Spain with glossy dark green palmate leaves - tinted black when young, red stems, and substantial fresh yellow flowers. It has tuberous *Ficaria*-type roots but without any invasive tendencies. It appears in spring, flowers, and disappears again, and is therefore ideal for combining with other small Mediterranean bulbous and tuberous plants. An extremely neat and satisfying little buttercup for troughs and raised beds.

Retama (Lygos) sphaerocarpa

£12

A large shrub made up of a mass of soft silvery leafless branchlets, covered in a profusion of soft mustard yellow pea flowers - very like a *Cytisus* but better.

Retama tend to be assumed to be tender in the UK but that might be because previously the seed have been collected in North Africa or the Middle east. In this case the seed was collected in central Spain (which believe me, is very cold in winter) and the plants have proved pretty hardy so far. Dry soils in full sun.

Rhamnus ilicifolia

£9

A Californian evergreen shrub with small, somewhat holly-like leaves. The yellow flowers are not exactly eye-catching but they are followed by orange fruits. Well-drained soil in full sun.

***Rhamnus ludovici-salvatoris* £9**

A terrific dense twiggy shrub endemic to the Balearic Islands, very little known in the UK. These are from seed collected on Ibiza and are remarkably variable but generally have small rounded leaves, some more or less spikey (like a tiny holly), some more or less glaucous, some turning glossy green with age. The stems are deep red. The flowers will be yellow and clustered close to the stems among the foliage, and the fruits that follow will be dark red. For sun and free drainage and so far quite undamaged outside at the nursery.

***Rhamnus lycioides* £9**

Another Mediterranean species – this time with narrow needle-like leaves.

***Rhodotypos scandens* £14**

Like a choice white flowered *Rubus* but actually more closely related to *Kerria*. A lovely and not too big arching shrub with attractively textured leaves. Very adaptable and easy in almost any conditions.

CALIFORNIAN RIBES

The Pacific states are particularly rich in *Ribes* species - the common flowering currant is one, as is the fabulous *R. speciosum*, but there are several other good species of interest to the keen gardener. The ones offered here are all grown from wild seed collected by a friend of mine, Dennis Carvalho.

***Ribes aureum gracillimum* £12**

The western counterpart of the popular (but rather coarse) *R. odoratum*, with much the same bright yellow, fragrant flowers. However, this species is smaller and in all respects more attractively put together. The buds are often tinged red. Should also be another good hardy species for drier, sunnier sites but probably more adaptable than *cereum*. Very few available as yet.

***Ribes aff. californicum* £12**

Clearly related to *R. speciosum*, with small pale Fuchsia-like dangling under the spiky branches. This is an easy species to grow, with a quiet charm

***Ribes cereum* £12**

An attractive Californian species with profuse palest rosy white flowers in spring among small greyish leaves on a compact gnarly shrub. An ideal species for Mediterranean style gardens growing among other sun loving drought-tolerant species.

***Ribes speciosum* £12**

A classic with its rich red somewhat fuchsia-like flowers dangling all along the undersides of the stems in spring. The leaves are gooseberry-like and fresh green and the red stems are viciously thorny. Best trained on a sunny wall, but surprisingly tough with a little protection.

***Robinia hispida fertilis* £12**

I've been wanting to reintroduce some of these shrubby *Robinias* for a long time – nobody seems to be doing them any more but they're a beautiful group (quite unlike the immense and frankly weedy black locust tree - *R. pseudacacia*) with lovely fresh green pinnate leaves and beautiful rosy pink pea flowers. The new shoots and seed pods are bristly red. Very classy. Medium-sized multi-stemmed shrubs, easy to grow in any well-drained soil in sun.

***Rostrinucula dependens* £9**

My sources tell me this might actually be *R. sinensis*, but either way, this is definitely turning out to be one of my favourite plants.

The arching habit, elegant 6in blackish sea green foliage and pale bloomy stems and leaf undersides are a feature all summer. Exquisitely sculpted 3-4 inch pearly white 'catkins' sprout mauve/pink filaments in Autumn. The whole thing has a most unusual pale/dark effect - restrained but very classy and unlike anything else. To 4ft tall. Easy in any sunny well-drained site.

Rubus acuminatus**£8**

Surely the most un-bramble-like bramble you've ever seen, and one of my absolute favourite shrubs of any kind. A low arching evergreen shrub that neither scrambles nor suckers. To me it looks a bit like *Ribes laurifolium*, with very attractively ribbed leaves and plentiful good-sized nodding white flowers. Many thanks to Barry Clarke – the National Collection holder, for the cuttings.

Rubus formosensis**£8**

A low, arching species with very attractive deeply quilted palmate leaves, pale felted underneath and fawn when new. Not one of the more vigorous species and makes a relatively compact sprawling patch. The white flowers are nice too. For sheltered woodland. Not invasive. Thanks again to Barry Clarke – the National Collection holder, for the cuttings.

Rubus Rushbrook Red Leaf**£12**

Deeply textured and felted palmate leaves start out quite distinctly red and turn rich green. This one is somewhere between a sprawling ground cover and a climber and is one of those that might need a certain amount of space and/or cutting back. Another of Barry Clarke's babies.

Rubus pectinellus trilobus**field grown £5**

One of the low ground-covering species, this one has crinkly green three lobed leaves with a black zone toward the centre. Not rampant like some but can cover a large area, rooting as it goes. Good in deep and dry shade, but better with more moisture.

Rudbeckia maxima**£9**

Nothing like the other species one sees. This produces an upright clump of quite large, intensely glaucous, paddle-shaped leaves followed in summer by bolt-upright stems to well over head height, topped by the classic black centred golden flowers we expect of this group. Very striking indeed. For fertile retentive soils in sun. Needs a sunny open site among low vegetation or in a gravel garden to show the leaves off best. I have no idea why this is not better known.

Sagittaria graminea**bare-root plants £4**

A small aquatic with linear submerged leaves but without the arrow-head shaped emergent leaves of some other *Sagittaria*. The 3-petaled white flowers appear on short stems above the water in summer. Hardy and suitable for shallow ponds. Spreads in muddy soil by runners.

Salix fargesii**£16**

Not at all your average willow, with big glossy green, beautifully textured leaves and long green catkins. The new growth and stems are deep red. A magnificent medium-sized shrub for any site that is not too dry. See if you can find a place where the sun shines through it at the end of the day. It really glows.

Salix gracilistyla melanostachys**£16**

A wacky willow for you, this time grown for its bituminous black catkins in early spring which sprout pale yellow anthers and have red highlights. Potentially a large shrub but responds well to quite hard pruning immediately after flowering.

Salix gracilistyla Mt.Aso**£16**

Maybe the idea of a pink flowered willow sounds a bit kitsch but I promise you this one carries it off very tastefully indeed. This is a naturally occurring form of *gracilistyla* (not *chaenomeloides* as was originally thought) and can be quite a substantial shrub in time, very much like its relative the black willow (*melanostachys*) but with greyish twigs and leaves. An easy and adaptable willow in any retentive soil in sun or part shade

Salix lanata**£12**

An excellent small to medium sized shrub and unusual in that most plants with silvery or glaucous leaves prefer dry conditions. Our native woolly willow however, like most willows, thrives in heavy and wet soils and does not mind some shade (though more silvery and compact in sun.) For any soil that does not dry out too much, in sun or semi shade.

Salix myrtilloides* Pink Tassels*£8**

A remarkable little alpine willow with shimmering mauve pink catkins in spring and periodically through the summer.

Forms a low, gnarly shrublet, probably covering a sizeable area eventually, but not to the extent of smothering other things. So far very adaptable and not bothered by drought but probably better on a moist gritty 'alpine' sort of soil, in a raised bed or rock garden.

Salix nakamuraana yezoalpina**£12**

On the face of it a lovely small, low growing alpine willow with glossy deeply veined 2 in round leaves and silky catkins – like a large hairless version of *reticulata*. However, be prepared. This is a vigorous ground-coverer. Not so good for your rockery but excellent for not-too-dry situations with more vigorous neighbours such as *Narcissus* or *Camassia*, *Trollius* or *Caltha*, *Chrysoplenium* or ericaceous plants, for example.

Salvia azurea**£8**

A tall slender late-flowering herbaceous perennial with spikes of sky blue flowers over narrow greyish foliage. From north-eastern North America so should be very hardy, and plays well with other prairie plants like *Asclepias* or *Helianthus*, and grasses in particular. Mesic conditions in full sun.

Salvia chamaedryoides**£6**

An absolutely gorgeous little *Salvia* from Texas and thereabouts, sprouting spikes of intense indigo violet over low ash-white bushes. It will, like so many species from this area, need the driest sunniest site you've got but is very cold tolerant and can eventually make quite a sizeable patch.

Salvia deserta**£7**

A rather posh version of the meadow clary from China, with upright plumes of vivid violet blue flowers for months in late summer over rosettes of crinkly grey green leaves. For well-drained soils in sun.

Salvia disjuncta**£7**

This is a very distinct almost shrubby sage from southern Mexico with impossibly vivid scarlet flowers among rounded fresh green leaves. In a group with, one might say, almost too many ornamental plants, it really stands out. I have received mixed messages regarding its hardiness. The top growth is destroyed by frost but the roots move about quite freely and given a good mulch it might well regenerate. At any rate it's easy from cuttings and is a good pot plant as long as it doesn't freeze through. For well-drained soil in sun.

Salvia nipponica**£8**

An Asiatic woodlander making low clumps of arrow-head shaped green leaves and short stems of butter yellow flowers in autumn. For cool moist conditions

Salvia reptans**£7**

Very different – this is a tall bushy species with very narrow, almost grassy green leaves, giving a very light fresh effect in the garden among grasses or grey leaved shrubs. The flowers are exquisite – small but plentiful and of intense cobalt blue on fine stems above the foliage. For open dry sunny sites, but quite cold hardy.

Sanguisorba applanata**field-grown £6**

Not flowered here yet for some reason but an excellent foliage plant, reminiscent of a low spreading *Melianthus* or a giant *Acaena*. The flowers should be white bottle brushes, but are not the main reason for growing this plant. Suitable for any moist fertile soil in sun.

Saruma henryi**£7**

An unusual small spring-flowering herbaceous perennial (related to *Asarum* - *Saruma* being an anagram of course) but with crinkly three petalled yellow flowers.

Naturally a woodlander but easy-going in ordinary soils as long as not too dry.

Schisandra chinensis**£14**

A strong deciduous woody climber grown for the nodding creamy heavily scented flowers. Easy in woodland conditions.

Schisandra grandiflora**£16**

A very choice woody twining deciduous climber with rounded waxy creamy flowers dangling under the stems in spring. Strong but not rampant. Hardy and adaptable but probably best in cool moist conditions.

Schisandra rubriflora**£16**

As for *grandiflora* but with rich red flowers. Jolly nice.

Flueggea ramiflora (aka Securinega suffruticosa)**£10**

More of a curio really than a thing of great beauty perhaps - this is a broad, eventually weeping deciduous shrub with small rounded leaves and clusters of small yellow flowers along the wiry stems. Extremely hardy and adaptable.

Scrophularia calliantha**£8**

A very choice member of this often rather weedy genus from Gran Canaria. It has relatively large (2cm) pouch shaped flowers – lemon yellow within contrasting with relatively large rich red petals. The resemblance to the related *Phygellus* is quite noticeable in this species. The foliage is lush rich dark green.

Untried in the UK but almost certainly tender, requiring a frost-free greenhouse in winter but flowering throughout so worth it. Any well-drained soil in sun or part shade.

Senna corymbosa**£16**

Aka *Cassia corymbosa*. A splendid South American subtropical shrub that produces a succession of large rich golden yellow flowers over dark green pinnate leaves through the summer. This species can be grown in a sheltered situation outside in the UK and can put on a wonderful display after a mild winter. After a hard winter it tends to get cut by frost but this just means it begins to flower later in the autumn. The parent plant of these has lived against a south facing wall in mid Sussex through at least the last 10 years and always came back vigorously and flowered before the autumn frost came. If in doubt - mulch heavily, or alternatively, an excellent pot plant for patio or cool greenhouse.

Senna hebecarpa**£10**

Big exotic looking herbaceous relatives of the tropical *Sennas* – these American species occur as far north as the Great Lakes so should be very hardy indeed. The foliage is wonderfully luxuriant and the yellow flowers, while individually small, give a good show in the latter part of the summer. For moist rich soils in full sun.

Seseli hippomarathrum**£5**

A lovely small umbellifer with a compact cluster of finely divided dark green foliage at the base but fairly tall flowering stems. The buds are reddish, opening white. Easy in any well drained sunny spot. Long lived but seeds about mildly and easy to control.

Seseli montanum**£5**

Very much like *hippomarathrum* but the flowers are white

Setaria palmifolia**£7**

A large and dramatic grass with strikingly ribbed leaves and forming a tussock to about 2ft high and twice that across. The flowers are relatively modest millet-like sprays but the overall effect is very lush and exotic. Usually considered a tender species for subtropical bedding but I've had it for years in open borders both on heavy clay soil and the better drained soil at the nursery, mulched with straw in winter. It usually gets heavily bitten back in winter but there's always been enough root for it to come back strongly in spring.

Silene asterias**£7**

A lovely little Bulgarian species unlike any of the other *Silene* in cultivation that I'm aware of. This has tiny flowers massed into thrift-like heads well above the rosettes of fresh green

leaves. An easy and adaptable species suitable for any moisture retentive soil but is particularly useful for wet sites where something smaller is required.

Silene regia

£6

One of a number of intensely red flowered North American catch-flies. Like the better known *S. virginica* (of which I should have some next year) the vivid scarlet flowers are held on upright stems above a rosette of leaves. Both species favour dry shade in the wild which should be good news. The main difference between them is the shape of the petals – notched in *virginica*, entire in *regia*.

Silene zawadskii

£5

If you have ever admired the fresh white blooms of the white campion but wished it wasn't quite so weedy this might be the answer. This 'alpine' version is very neat and adaptable with the pure white flowers held on slender stems over smart glossy green rosettes. A very nice contrast. Any well-drained soil in sun.

Silphium laciniatum

£10

My favourite sunflowers, and very unfairly neglected in the UK – this and its close relative, *S. terebinthinaceum* (below) produce among the biggest, most luxuriant leaves of any hardy border perennial. In this case they are impressively lobed, like some huge tropical fern. The stiff bristly upright flower stem is a bonus. Easy in any fertile, retentive soil, and best at the front of the border where its stature can be appreciated. Perfect for prairie-style plantings.

Silphium terebinthinaceum

£10

Leaves huge and heart-shaped (like a *Colocasia* or *Anthurium*?) to 12ins across. The flower stem is more slender and smooth than *laciniatum*.

Solanum umbelliferum incanum

£8

A very pretty Californian species combining good sized lavender flowers all summer, and greyish stems and foliage on a low spreading subshrub. Not at all coarse or weedy. This is untried in the UK to my knowledge but is rated as z7 in the USA. Full sun and excellent drainage will probably be the crucial things

Soldanella villosa

£5

Probably the easiest *Soldanella* for the open garden, spreading happily in well-drained but moist semi shade. The nodding flowers are not as elegant as the true alpine species, being smaller and more open, but are a good violet and nicely fringed.

Like many *Primulas*, it performs better with regular division and replanting in fresh soil

Sophora davidii

£14

A very lovely medium sized evergreen shrub with fresh green pinnate foliage and white flowers tinted dark violet. The more vigorous stems are also dark violet and can be a feature in winter. The seed pods too are a bit unusual. Adaptable and easy in any well drained sunny site. Older stems have small hooked spines.

Sophora flavescens

£9

A herbaceous species from China with pale yellow, somewhat monk's-hood like flowers on slender stems over elegant pinnate foliage. A cool airy alternative to *Baptisia* and *Thermopsis*. Fully hardy.

Spiraea densiflora splendens

£9

The Spiraeas are another group that is unfairly ignored due to a few nondescript but all too common representatives, but *S. splendens* is a neat little shrub with small rounded pale sea green leaves and vivid pink flowers. Very pretty indeed, and easy too, given sun and free drainage. Thanks to Dennis Carvalho once again, for the seed.

Spiraea thunbergii

£9

Hardly an obscurity (it has an AGM after all) but I hardly ever see this in gardens or nurseries. Sprays of pure white flowers with the lightest and freshest of pale green leaves, all in a loose billowing (but not overly large) arching shrub to about 4ft tall and across. Mine flowers

surprisingly early in the year (March) and goes on into May. After that the form and foliage make a very pleasant contrast to darker heavier plants, and it's never even slightly ugly. Can be pruned quite hard after flowering if necessary and I imagine it would make a good informal hedge. Very easy to please on any soil in sun. Absolutely spiffing in every way.

Stachys discolor

£7

A very beautiful species a bit like *officinalis* but larger in all parts and with flowers of palest yellow on compact greyish bushes. Hard to explain but this plant has a real refinement compared to many of its coarser relatives and is not even slightly weedy. Easy and adaptable in the border. A real charmer.

***Stachys lavandulifolia* Bolkar Dag, Turkey**

£8

An extremely choice member of a normally fairly unexciting genus. This is a low-growing Turkish plant, making low mats of small fuzzy leaves, topped with short but striking inflorescences made up of wine-red pointy calyces, pink flowers and white fluff! Needs a sheltered warm site in full sun, kept on the dry side in winter.

Strobilanthes angustifrons

£12

A relatively tall sub-shrubby species almost unknown in cultivation it seems - the name is very much in doubt too (aka *Pteracanthus* or possibly *Goldfussia*). Nonetheless an interesting species looking somewhat like a *Weigela* out of flower but with typical purple *Strobilanthes* flowers in late summer. Hardiness is uncertain but there has been a good-sized specimen in the walled garden at Wakehurst for some time now.

Strobilanthes nutans

£6

A really nice change from the more well-known upright purple flowered species – this one trails over the ground and is seen at its best in a shady raised bed (or a hanging basket? Why not?) with its pure white, hop-like inflorescences dangling over the side. Hardy so far here and unusually classy.

Sutherlandia montana

£8

A really gorgeous South African shrub of small size, with very fine silvery green foliage and large rich red flowers. The fruits are shiny coppery pink balloons. *Sutherlandias* are normally recommended only as container plants in the UK, to be brought in for the winter but *montana* occurs at higher altitudes and might be worth a try in a very sunny, very dry situation.

Talbotia elegans

£6

A bit of an obscurity this one - this is a member of the southern hemisphere family, the velloziaceae, and is probably the hardiest of them. They are particularly known for being among those plants that look dead during the dry season but miraculously revive when the rains come. (Sometimes included in the genus *Xerophyta*, meaning 'dry plant'.) This is a dense, tussock-forming plant with rather fibrous leaves – green above, purple under. Pretty white flowers appear on fine hair-like stems in summer. Probably best in an unheated greenhouse, but I've not tried it outside. Although it will take low temperatures it should probably be kept dry in winter. The leaves will look dead but will revive in spring so don't cut them off unless they get really tatty. For well-drained soil in sun.

Teucrium fruticans Azureum

£12

A strikingly better form of the species than the commonly available one. The flowers are a good strong clear blue and the stems, new shoots and leaf reverses are pure white. An easy but wide-spreading species - not for a small space. Flowering over a very long period from early spring into summer, it can be cut hard and will flower on the new shoots. It is possibly a bit less hardy than the common form but I've found it easy and vigorous in a sunny dry spot, especially against a sunny wall

Teucrium flavum

£6

A pretty glossy-leaved shrublet with upright stems of pale yellow flowers in summer. For dry sunny sites.

Thalictrum rochebrunianum**£12**

Purple flowers and shimmering columbine style foliage to 6ft. A fabulous species, related to *delavayi* but larger in all parts, and very fine. For moist, cool sites, sheltered from drying winds. Grows beautifully here on the Wealden clay, among *Acers*, *Hostas*, *Trollius* and *Dicentra*.

Thladiantha dubia**£8**

A tuberous herbaceous climber allied to cucumbers and with similarly remarkable golden flowers. The leaves are fresh green and heart-shaped with a soft texture. A nice luxuriant species for a quick temporary screen. Be aware - each seasons new tubers will be formed some distance from the original, so not a thing for the very tidy gardener.

Tinantia pringlei**£5**

A hardy Mexican relative of the popular houseplant *Tradescantias*. It dies back completely in winter but comes back strongly from the roots in spring forming a dense ground-cover. The foliage is black spotted (not diseased) and there is a succession of the little three-petalled mauve flowers through the summer.

Completely hardy through the last few winters here in Sussex, and in fact inclined to turn up in unexpected places around the garden.

Tradescantia bracteata**£7**

If, like me, you tend to prefer wild or natural-looking plants over cultivars, I think this wild spiderwort is likely to appeal to you. It's a much more graceful, slender plant than we are used to, with pale green grassy foliage and soft purple flowers over a long period in summer. Just as adaptable as the commonly cultivated types, and one of the few plants that really grow almost anywhere, dry or wet, sunny or shady.

Tradescantia ohiensis**£6**

Another wild spiderwort – choosing between this and *T.bracteata* is a matter of variations on a theme.

Tritonia disticha rubrolucens**£8**

A dainty relative of *Crococsmia*, looking like a small *Dierama*, with dangling rosy bell flowers on fine stems. Well-behaved and hardy in any well-drained garden soil in sun.

Ugni molinae* PAB1347*£15**

This is the plant originally circulated as *U.candollei* (which is another species) – it's a taller and more open than the more common forms and is perhaps less hardy. Provide shelter and/or grow among other shrubs. Very choice. Thanks to Gary Firth for this.

Veronica urticifolia**£7**

A larger, more upright relative of our native germander speedwell with sprays of palest pink flowers in early summer. Unexpectedly pleasant for semi-woodland conditions and not invasive.

Vestia foetida**£8**

A narrow upright evergreen from Chile with tubular lemon yellow flowers in Spring. The whole plant has an unusual black tint - especially the stems and calyxes - which really sets off the flowers and foliage. Usually recommended for a cool greenhouse or only the sunniest sites on freely drained soils, but I've found it to be remarkably tough in Sussex and to grow better on richer soils. (a.k.a. *Vestia lycioides*)

Viburnum atrocyaneum**£12**

A neat evergreen with small rounded very glossy leaves with a distinct wine red cast. The flowers are the usual small pinkish white affairs, followed by bloomy black berries. Very adaptable and easy.

Viburnum cinnamomifolium**£15**

A taller, tree-like version of the common (and unfairly despised) *V.davidii*. Both species have among the very best evergreen foliage of any hardy shrub, and are well worth growing even without the flowers, which are the usual small rosy white, or the berries, which are intense

blue with red stems. You will need male and female plants to get fruits but *dauidii* will pollinate *cinnamomifolium* apparently.

Viburnum cylindricum

£16

An evergreen species grown for the unusual greyish cast to the foliage and panicles of creamy flowers in summer. Bloomy black fruits. A rare large shrub – excellent on chalk.

Vicia gigantea

£8

This is a good form of a Californian native vetch. In the wild a potentially vigorous coloniser but here I've found it no more so than some of the popular climbing *Lathyrus* such as *L.latifolius*, and it makes a very nice change from that with its fresh green pinnate foliage and spikes of rich pink flowers. Even so I'd give it plenty of space somewhere it won't swamp small treasures. Spring flowering - cut it back to the ground after flowering for fresh new growth.

Vitex negundo Heterophylla

£8

A hardier Chinese species than the more familiar *V.agnus-castus* that seems to flower over a longer period in summer so possibly better for ordinary garden conditions. The flower spikes are looser and paler and the leaflets are broader and paler. In the form *Heterophylla*, the foliage is attractively toothed and the whole effect is fresh and light. Can make a large shrub in a sunny spot.

Violets

Another group that I have a bit of a thing for. I'm surprised how few of the many species are regularly offered for sale in the UK. These are choice woodlanders and alpiners for the most part but there are violets from all over the world for almost all garden situations. Some seed or creep about but few are troublesome. More on the way.

Viola aff chaerophylloides

£6

A bit of a mystery this one but very fine. I obtained the seed from a seed exchange under various names. They all have somewhat Hellebore-like jagged-cut palmate foliage. Some have dark green foliage and dusky rose pink flowers, others have paler foliage and very pale pink flowers. Whatever they are they are extremely lovely, and seem so far fairly easy in a cool woodsy spot, but watch for slugs.

Viola douglasii

£7

An extremely choice species from California with rich golden flowers, black at the centre, and with deep red reverses to the petals. The foliage is finely cut. In the wild this is a species of open grasslands and needs sun and free drainage. Thus far on the nursery they've been easy to grow and have made slow but steady progress.

Viola glabella

£5

A really gorgeous little golden yellow violet from California (Thanks Dennis) - much nicer, I think, than the European *V.biflora*. A lovely woodlander. Will probably seed about but doesn't seem to want to run.

Viola mandshurica small white form

£5

A very pretty form with delicate pink markings in the otherwise white flowers over rosettes of relatively elongate spear-head shaped foliage. A lovely small species – very easy and adaptable in a variety of situations. I was selling this as a form of *V.japonica* but Toshi Tsuzuki tells me that is unlikely.

Viola mandshurica albiflora

£5

Like *japonica* but more robust, with lovely big pure white flowers.

Viola phalacrocarpa

£5

A quietly attractive eastern Asian with soft mauve flowers and hastate leaves. Woodlands.

Viola pinnata**£5**

Pretty purple violet flowers produced in profusion among a clump of most un-violet-like fingered foliage. This is a European alpine species, almost never seen in cultivation to my knowledge, but which seems very happy indeed here in our sunny raised bed.

Viola yezoensis**£5**

A Japanese species with maroon tinted foliage - the substantial white flowers are attractively marked with fine purple lines.

Weigela coraeensis**£17**

A rarely seen *Weigela* whose flowers open white and turn through dusky pink to wine red. It sounds like it could be garish but isn't. Extremely easy and adaptable, the only problem might be that it is a very vigorous species. The leaves are lush fresh green and up to 5 ins long. Luckily it responds well to hard pruning immediately after flowering.

Wyethia

These are a group of stemless sunflowers from the mountains of Western North America. In the wild they form magnificent colonies in meadows and forest clearings. The large rosettes of leaves (known locally as Mule's Ears) are very striking in themselves as they emerge in spring and the white or yellow daisy flowers, which are held on short stems just above the leaves, are of excellent size and quality. It seems that they are used to plentiful water in spring, from snow-melt, but tend to dry out in summer and may die back as the season progresses. In cultivation they are rare and seem to be regarded as almost impossible to grow. I'm not sure why. I've raised a several species from seed and they don't seem especially more difficult to manage than many other mountain plants.

Wyethia angustifolia**£8**

Narrow Leaf Mule's Ears. In this species the leaves are plain green and about 2 ins wide. The flowers are golden yellow on short leafless stems just above the foliage. Easy and hardy here so far.

Xanthoceras sorbifolium**£12**

A rare and highly sought-after small tree or medium sized shrub from Central Asia. As the name implies it has pinnate (*Sorbus*-like) leaves and in spring it produces handsome clusters of good sized white flowers, turning pink with age. Easy and hardy in a sunny well-drained spot and an excellent choice for poor chalky soils.

Zingiber mioga* Crûg's Zing BSWJ4379*£8**

An excellent form of this hardy ginger which produces orchid like blossoms directly from the ground in spring and then the standard upright leafy stems afterwards. Crûg's Zing differs from other *mioga* commonly in cultivation in that the flowers are pink instead of creamy yellow. This is a genuinely hardy species (or at least, as hardy as any of the *Hedychiums* or *Roscoeas*) needing nothing more than perhaps a bit of mulch to stop the roots freezing. It does not need a dry winter. The new shoots can be harvested as a vegetable.

VISITING THE NURSERY

The nursery is open to customers most Saturdays and Sundays, March to September, from mid-morning until dusk, and I am more than happy to meet you at other times by arrangement. Either way it is best to phone or email ahead to avoid disappointment.

ACCESS

The ground is somewhat uneven but there are no steps. There is a toilet if there is an emergency but it's not really a customer toilet and it is down some steps.

BUYING YOUR PLANTS

I am now able to take credit and debit card payments at the nursery, as well as of course cash, or, if pushed, a cheque.

On line I can accept payments by Paypal, international bank transfer, cheque (with a not-to-exceed amount written across the lines in case not everything you order is available, and payable to Brighton Plants) with card details of course.

I recommend phoning ahead if you want me to put things by for you for when you arrive.

Please enquire about availability before ordering. Some plants are only available in very small numbers.

Although I am more than happy to discuss your choices and give advice, I would strongly recommend having a good look at the information and photos here on the website before coming, and making a list of the things that interest you.

Post and packaging

Within the UK (including Scottish Highlands and islands, Northern Ireland and other UK islands) delivery charges are as follows:

p&p	Order value between -	
£6.00	£3.00	£10.00
£11.00	£10.01	£105.00
£18.00	£105.01	£140.00
£30.00	£140.01	£210.00
£60.00	£210.01	and above

Deliveries to other parts of the EU are perfectly possible but can be very expensive. Please contact me before ordering.

I am entirely open to other options concerning the best way to get your plants to you, and if you live locally I might well be able to deliver in person. Please feel free to contact me.

Time of dispatch

Please note - as yet we are far from Amazonian in our speed of dispatch. I have no staff and still have a day job so **please allow three weeks or so from time of ordering to receiving your plant**. If you need your plants at a specific time - if they are a gift for example, or you are planning to be away, please let me know.

Unlike many nurseries, I am prepared to send plants out at any time of year. Plants in full growth in summer often travel remarkably well if they are properly packed in a large box and don't overheat. Foliage and even flowers spring back and plants establish quickly given the correct planting and after-care. Be aware that some plants though have very brittle stems (members of the poppy family for instance) and might suffer more than others.

On the other hand, buying plants in the winter (the traditional time to sell plants) can be something of a lucky dip, especially with plants that go completely underground. We've all had the experience of buying an apparently lifeless pot in winter and in the spring discovering it is indeed completely lifeless.

Generally I prefer to send plants out as they begin growth in the spring or are dying back in the late summer-autumn period.

Please let me know if you want the plants to arrive by or at a particular time.

On arrival

On arrival, it is best to unpack your plants immediately and give them some water, especially in hot weather. I sometimes find it best not to plant them immediately but to stand them somewhere sheltered from excess heat, cold and wind for at least a day or two to adjust. If conditions are not right for planting immediately or if it is inconvenient it may make sense to

pot plants on temporarily until you get around to them, rather than leave them in the containers they arrived in.

Plant sizes

Some nurseries I know send out what are little more than seedlings or rooted cuttings among their consignments which, realistically, need growing on in the nursery for another season before they can be expected to survive in the open. I am happy to send out immature plants at reduced prices to customers who enjoy growing things on but as a rule I send only mature plants or strong young plants that can go into the ground more-or-less immediately.

Mistakes and problems

For my part I will endeavour to make sure that the plants I send are strong and healthy and correctly identified. I cannot guarantee that plants will have no evidence of 'wildlife' on them at all but in the unlikely event that a plant is not the one you ordered, has been seriously damaged in transit, is infested, desiccated, rotted off or otherwise moribund, do not hesitate to contact me as soon as possible to arrange a replacement or refund.

With consignments sent abroad, I can't accept responsibility if the customs men decide to get whimsical with your package. I'll fill out any paperwork required but after that it's out of my hands. They seem to be a law unto themselves. That said, I've had no problems yet, touch wood...

Availability

Some varieties are available only in small quantities so contact me first to avoid being disappointed. If you see anything that especially interests you in the Blog or in the Gallery Flickr photo set that is not listed please don't hesitate to ask about future availability. I might not be able to reserve plants individually long term but depending on how busy I get, I may be able to alert you if something you've asked about becomes available.