

Notes from

HORNBAKER

GARDENS

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New Plants For 2013

You can find a complete listing of the new plants that we have for this year on our website, but here are some that we are pumped about:

Hostas: We have 23 new hostas this year. Big hostas are always popular, and we have a couple of extra large ones with great names. 'Bigga Luigi' (\$15.00) forms a huge mound of blue-green leaves that are moderately cupped and intensely corrugated. It is reputed to be a rapid grower. 'Humpback Whale' (\$18.00) is another monster blue from the late Mildred Seaver. It forms a massive, dome-shaped mound of blue, corrugated, heart-shaped foliage.

Two new white centered hostas are looking awfully good. 'Andrew' (\$18.00) is a large hosta with unique, tri-colored leaves that are corrugated, puckered, folded and ruffled. It has feathery white centers, blue margins, with green jetting in between. 'Half and Half' (\$15.00) is a real eye-catcher, forming a medium sized clump. It is brightly variegated right away in spring, with dark green margins, pure white centers, and nice light green jetting in between.



Hosta 'Andrew'
Photos by Walters Gardens.

We got a piece of 'Tea and Crumpets' (\$15.00) several years ago from a friend, and grew it into a nice clump in the back yard. We divided it a couple of years ago, and can now offer some for the first time. It is a little cutie with round, chartreuse leaves with white margins and nice purple flowers. Another new small hosta is 'Pocketful of Sunshine' (\$18.00), which is a sport of 'Rainforest Sunrise', this year's Hosta of the Year. Like its parent, it has excellent substance and cupped foliage. Chartreuse centers lighten to yellow, with wide, dark green margins.

Daylilies: There are 11 new daylilies, all potted up, and all priced at \$15.00. 'Blackthorne' has outstanding color contrast and is a standout performer. It is a light creamy yellow with a prominent wine purple eye and matching picotee edge and green throat. 'Marque Moon' is reputed to be a heavy bloomer with heavily ruffled, fragrant, sparkling cream colored blooms with a radiating yellow throat and yellow picotee edge.

In the red/orange color spectrum is 'Mighty Chestnut', which has unique, russet red-orange blooms with a deep burgundy eye and gold throat. If 'Red Hot Returns' reblooms as described, it will be a very popular daylily, indeed. The cherry red blooms have a bright yellow halo, an apple green throat, and ruffled petals. The description says that it blooms all summer and into the fall.

Perennials: There is a new series of naturally compact asters known

as the "Kickin" series. Keeping asters from getting tall and floppy has always been an issue, and this series should stay short—from 15" to 22" tall. They are all covered with blooms from late summer into the fall, in colors of lavender, lilac blue, and pink.

Everyone should have a clump of *Baptisia* somewhere in the garden. The new 'Blueberry Sundae', at 3' tall, is more compact than most other varieties, allowing it to better fit into smaller gardens. The indigo blue flowers in late spring; the compact, well-branched, blue-green foliage; and the decorative seed pods in fall all make for a great plant.

Shorter and more compact seems to be the order of the day in the world of *Echinaceas*, as well. Three new varieties are listed at 16-18". 'Cleopatra' has large, vibrant gold flowers that mature to creamy yellow, with an orange cone. 'Julia' has large, glowing tangerine orange flowers with a copper cone. And 'Butterfly Kisses' is an improved double pom-pom selection with bright pink, fragrant flowers.

We even have some new miniature *Heuchera* this year. 'Coco' is a miniature version of 'Obsidian', with dark chocolate foliage and soft pink flowers. 'Sugar Berry' is a member of the Little Cutie Series, forming a small mound of berry-violet foliage. These miniatures should be great edgers and good companions for small and dwarf hostas. But foliage color is still the focus of the hybridizers of Coral Bells. 'Fire Alarm' claims to have the reddest foliage, and 'Paprika' lays claim to the brightest orange.

Several other new plants want in on the shorter/more compact

action. *Monarda* 'Pardon My Pink' is listed at 10-12". *Penstemon* 'Violet' is a member of the dwarf, Pinacolada series. It has blue, violet and purple flowers all summer long, and grows to only 8-12". Not to be left out is *Perovskia* 'Peek-a-Blue' a dwarf Russian Sage standing only 2' tall.



Monarda
'Pardon My Pink'



Baptisia
'Blueberry Sundae'

Photos by Walters Gardens.

HOURS: From April 10 through July 7, we will be open Monday through Saturday from 8:00 to 5:00 and Sundays 12:00 to 5:00. From July 8 through October 10, we will be closed on Sundays, but will continue to be open Monday through Saturday 8:00 to 5:00.

Gardening Together WORKSHOPS

We're all in this gardening thing together, and learning from one another as we go. What's wonderful is that there is always more to learn. In 2013, we will again host a series of Saturday workshops that we call "Gardening Together". We'll keep the workshops short and to the point, but you may want to bring along lawn chairs. All except for the fairy garden workshop will be free.

Saturday, April 20 at 10 am

Pruning 101: Your shrubs can perform so much better with some regular, simple pruning. Rich and Dave will discuss when and how to prune various shrubs, including hydrangeas, lilacs, spiraeas, and several others.

Saturday, April 27 at 10 am

Ask the Arborist: Learn about the benefits of root pruning and watch a live demonstration of the process. Certified Arborist, Dennis Taylor, from Taylors Trees & Turf will be root pruning a tree on our farm. And Dennis will be available for Q&A on all things trees. Bring your questions!

Saturday, May 4 at 10 am

Let's Talk Hostas:

Rich will discuss some of the more important things you need to know to help you enjoy your hostas to the fullest--including dividing hostas, dealing with slugs, and planting hostas that go well together. He'll also talk about the new hostas that he's excited about, and good companion plants and bulbs to plant with your hostas.

Saturday, May 11 at 10 am

Canning 101: There are many reasons to can your own fruits and vegetables. Canning is eco-friendly, cuts down on waste, uses no additives, and provides great tasting, homegrown food throughout the year. We're talking all natural folks! David Hornbaker will be discussing what materials are needed, what techniques are used and why canning is a lot easier than most people think.

Saturday, May 18 at 10 am

All Things Water: So you want a water feature, but don't know how big or small to go? Dave will discuss the relative merits and costs of the various water features that we offer, including ponds, pondless waterfalls, container water gardens, fountains, and bubblers. Q&A session to follow.

Saturday, May 25 at 10 am

Keeping Your Gardens from Becoming Too Much with Kathy O'Malley:

Former WGN radio personality (of Kathy and Judy fame), avid gardener, and our friend, Kathy O'Malley, will share her thoughts about how to keep your love of gardening from getting out of control, and what to do about it if it's already happened. Kathy is always humorous and entertaining, so come and enjoy.

Saturday, June 1 at 10 am

Fairy Gardens:

Fee: \$30. This is a hands-on workshop for all ages in which you will learn how to create and care for your very own miniature fairy garden. Molly will provide information on how to get started and assist you along the way. You simply bring your creativity for this cute and fun workshop! Fee includes your container, soil, and plants. You pick out and purchase your choice of miniature accessories, at a special 20% discount for workshop participants. Reservations are required, so please call to reserve your spot.

Saturday, June 8 at 10 am

Pruning Perennials with Jane Morris:

Jane Morris, previously our head gardener for 12 years, says that early June is the ideal time to take out the pruners to pinch and cut back perennials to control height and shape and make for sturdier, more floriferous plants, thus preventing sprawling plants and the need to stake. This continues to be one of our most popular workshops for our customers, as well as our employees! Jane has her own business, The Garden Governess, advising clients on pruning and other general gardening techniques and timing.

Saturday, June 8 at 1 pm

Basic Garden Design with Jane Morris:

The basics of good garden design are the same whether a person is planning and planting a small intimate area next to their patio, or a two acre property. Learn about form, line, texture, color, repetition, contrast, focal points and more to create an outdoor space you love. Learn how to use all types of plants: annuals, perennials, evergreens, shrubs and trees, and man-made items to bring these design basics to life.

What's New In The Shop

Keep your eye out for many new additions to our selection of home and garden décor and gift items in The Shop. We are excited to offer a collection of Melissa and Doug kids' toys for the children or grandchildren in your family who love to play outside or help in the garden. You'll find everything from rakes, shovels and gloves to bug houses, nets and binoculars. We also will have a new line of metal dragonfly and butterfly garden stakes that range from 8" to 24". They are quality welded, very sturdy, and

brightly painted and are sure to add a little color and whimsy to your garden. And if you are familiar with our collection of Mad Mats, outdoor rugs made of recycled plastic, we will have several new designs and colors on display and available this year. There are many other exciting new additions to The Shop, and as new products begin to arrive here in the next few weeks, we will keep you informed by sharing pictures on our Facebook page. "Like" us to keep up to date on these new arrivals.

Pruning Clematis

One question often asked by customers in the spring is, “How far back should I prune my Clematis?” The answer is dependent on knowing which pruning group your clematis variety belongs to. Clematis are divided into three pruning groups, each with different requirements. We list the pruning group for each variety we sell on our vine price list, the vine section being listed at the end of the perennial list. If you don’t know the variety name of your clematis, you might be able to determine which group it belongs to by knowing what time of year it flowers. If you make the once-a-year effort to properly prune your Clematis, you can keep your Clematis lush and full of blooms year after year!



Clematis 'Fireworks'

First-year pruning: Regardless of which group your Clematis is in, you should cut it 6 inches from the ground in late winter/early spring the first year after it is planted. This will create a bushier, stronger plant that will flower from the base instead of 4 feet off the ground. If your Clematis is in group 1 or 2, the bad news is that this first-year pruning will prevent it from blooming this year. However, the beautiful plant that you will be rewarded with is worth

this sacrifice.

Group 1: This group is made up of the ramblers and early bloomers. (Most Clematis that you find at garden centers, including ours, belong to Groups 2 and 3.) These Clematis bloom mostly on old wood (the previous season’s growth) and begin to flower in mid to late spring. Generally, they don’t require any pruning. If you need to prune, wait until right after flowering to do so. Reasons

for pruning would be to remove any dead or diseased growth, or to keep your Clematis at a desired height.

Group 2: These are the early, large flowered varieties that bloom in the spring and again in the fall. The first flush of flowers is the heaviest and blooms on old wood, while the second flush appears on new growth. You don’t want to prune this group too radically. In early spring, cut back each stem about 6 to 8 inches, to right above the first pair of new swollen leaf buds. You will find these buds right above the place where each stem branches. Also remove any dead or weak stems at this time.

Group 3: This group contains the late flowering varieties and they bloom from new growth. In February or March, look for new leaf buds beginning to show low on the plant and cut back all old stems above these buds, usually about a foot from the ground.

Once you know which group your Clematis belongs to and you have that first-year trim out of the way, keeping your beautiful climber looking great and blooming like crazy simply requires a few minutes once a year.

HOSTA SALE

We keep taking on 20 to 50 new varieties of hostas every year, but haven’t had the heart to eliminate that many as we go. So this year, it’s time to sell off around 100 varieties at \$3.99 each. The sale table will be stocked, but you might want to look for the Hosta Sale sign, directing you to the hoop house where they will all be gathered together. No, we do not have a list of these varieties. You’ll just have to come see for yourself.

There’s A Geocache At Hornbaker Gardens

What is a geocache you ask? Geocaching (geo-caching) is a great outdoor recreational activity that’s similar to a scavenger hunt. You search for a hidden object using clues and GPS (global positioning system) coordinates. It’s an incredibly fun way to explore the outdoors and becoming more and more popular every day.

The Illinois River Road folks have hidden the cache at our nursery. There are 90 geocaches located within the six Gateway Communities along the Illinois River Road. While hunting for these geocaches, you will discover communities and natural Illinois like never before. And there are 100+ caches hidden within a 10 mile radius of Princeton.

If you are new to geocaching, you can learn all you need to know at the website: www.geocaching.com. And check out www.illinoisriverroad.org to learn about their logbook and trackable geocoin challenge. If you are already an avid geocacher....our cache awaits you!



GEOCACHING.COM



Polygonatum 'Variegatum'

Variegated Solomon's Seal Is 2013 Perennial Of The Year

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' as this year's Perennial of the Year. We love this plant, which is better known as Variegated Solomon's Seal, and use it all season long in bouquets.

The plant grows into a clump of two feet tall, arching stems with green and white variegated leaves. It is easy to grow and extremely hardy, being listed as hardy to Zone 3. Although it is generally listed as a shade plant, it can handle quite a bit of sun, especially morning sun. It is grown primarily for its foliage. However, in the spring, it does have small, pendulous, white flowers hanging all along the arched stems. We like to use small sprigs in ikebana vases, especially when it is in bloom.

Variegated Solomon's Seal will colonize, spreading slowly by underground rhizomes into a good sized clump. If left unchecked, the clump can become quite large, but it is easy to control because the rhizomes are just below the soil surface and are easily dug out. The nice thing about having a large clump of it is that you can take cuttings to use in bouquets over and over, throughout the season, and the clump will still look great.

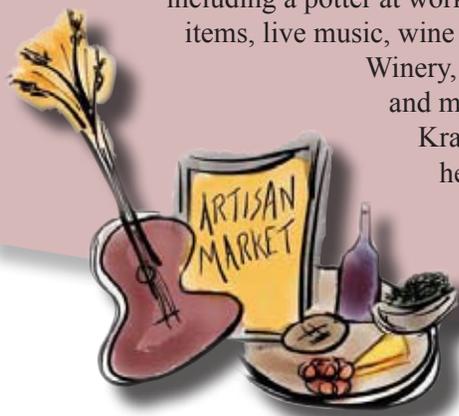
Events At Hornbaker Gardens

Kids' Containers for Mother's Day: Saturday, May 4, at 10:00 a.m.—Here's a chance for the kids to come get their hands dirty and create something pretty for Mom or Grandma, before Mother's Day. We'll give them some ideas, and then help them, as needed, to get something nice potted up. They can bring their own container, and we will have a good selection of inexpensive containers available here. Cookies and lemonade will follow.

Open House and Hosta Walk: Our annual Open House and Hosta Walk will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 7, 8 and 9. The hostas should be looking great at that time. Refreshments will be served, and drawings for prizes will be held each day. We will also have a selection of specially priced plants, including a good selection of hostas. There will be two excellent workshops on Saturday as mentioned in the Workshops article.

Bocce Ball Tournament! Saturday, August 17th at 1:00 p.m. Two \$50 gift certificates to the winning team! We'll have other outdoor games available, too!

Artisan Market at Hornbaker Gardens: The first annual Artisan Market at Hornbaker Gardens is planned for Saturday, September 7th from 10 am – 4 pm! Join us in our beautiful country setting for a day filled with fine artists including a potter at work, delicious home-baked items, live music, wine tasting with August Hill Winery, fresh-picked local produce, and more. Our local favorite, Kramer's Kitchen, will be here serving up lunch. Mark your calendars now and plan to spend a beautiful, fall day in the country.



'Rainforest Sunrise'

Hosta Of The Year: 'Rainforest Sunrise'

The American Hosta Growers Association has named 'Rainforest Sunrise' as the 2013 Hosta of the Year. We couldn't be more pleased. We nominated this hosta for Hosta of the Year several years ago and have been touting its attributes to our customers ever since.

'Rainforest Sunrise' is subtly, but beautifully, variegated. It starts out in the spring with chartreuse centers and dark green margins. As the season progresses, the centers lighten to a rich gold, going through a bit of an orange tinted stage along the way. The leaves are cupped and puckered, with good substance. It is not a big hosta. We list it as medium-small, and some growers list it as small, but our display clump is around 30" wide now that it has been in the ground for several years.

'Rainforest Sunrise' is a sport of 'Maui Buttercups', which is all gold. 'Tropical Storm' is a reversed sport of 'Rainforest Sunrise'. These three "sister" hostas go well together. Although it is not a sister to these three, 'Deep Blue Sea' is an excellent cupped and puckered blue hosta that goes well with this trio.