

March Newsletter

New plants for 2004



This year is the bicentenary of the world famous Royal Horticultural Society and to tie in with this groundbreaking event, a whole new batch of plants has been named to celebrate this horticultural milestone.

We'll be stocking a great many of them – some are still under wraps and will not be unveiled until the Chelsea Flower Show in May.

To get the ball rolling, three new trees have been launched. First is a new apple tree, 'Sweet Society'. This is an attractive classic Cox type apple with superb aromatic eating quality. The flavour is described as sweet and rich, and it is best harvested late September onwards. It does store well into the New Year.

You can also plant a wonderful all-new mountain ash called *Sorbus aucuparia* 'Wisley Gold'. This self-sown seedling was found on Battleston Hill at Wisley gardens and produces stunning yellow fruits that are reliable and persistent. Well worth a look!

Finally, until the next new bicentenary plants are rolled out in early spring, we have the rather splendid *Malus* 'Hyde Hall Spire'.

This is an ultra compact dwarf crab apple, ideal for smaller gardens and it produces masses of large white flowers followed by mini green apples that turn golden yellow when ripe.

Floral treats

Rhododendrons grafted on to lime-tolerant rootstocks are going to be big in 2004. Marketed under the name 'Inkarho', they've already been featured on BBC Gardeners' World programme earlier this year. This new breed of toughies looks set to assist gardeners in our area to grow fantastic blooming rhodos in the local limy soil. We'll be stocking a wide range of varieties, including large-flowered and the wonderfully dwarf Yakushmanum hybrids. They start at £15.99 and go up to £59.99.

Elsewhere, don't forget to get planting those sweet peas – remember successional planting is the key to a prolonged display. Our autumn sown range are grown in 8cm pots and are priced at 65p each, or the spring sown crops are just ready, these being five seedlings in a 9cm pot for 99p. The varieties 'Royal Mixed' and 'Spencer Mixed' are offered in both autumn and spring sown, and are joined by 'Perfume Delight' and 'Cupid Mixed' (that's the dwarf one that looks great in hanging baskets) in the spring sown.

Elsewhere in the shrub department, daphnes in all their glorious guises have been selling well, prompted by varied weather.

Look out for the *Amelanchier* 'Obelisk', which was new last year and caused a stir when it came into

bloom. Larger specimens, in 3 litre pots, are priced at £10.95. Mail order sized plants are also available, pot grown at 1-1½ft high at £5.99 each.

Summer Flower Bulbs



There is still plenty of time for planting summer flowering bulbs especially Dahlias which will flower from July right up to the first frosts. We have an extensive range of Dahlias priced from £1.29 each including Cactus, Decorative, Miniature Topmix, Pompom and Ball types.

If you would like to try something special, why not try our classic varieties which all have fantastic bronze foliage. You will all probably know the Bishop of Llandaf with its scarlet flowers and dark foliage. We also have three other varieties that have equally stunning foliage to highlight those fantastic flowers.



Rosamunde is rich pink, Poeme is salmon and Swanlake is white with a buttercup centre.

It's now the perfect time to start Dahlias into growth under frost protection. If you don't have a greenhouse or cold frame, don't worry, you will be able to plant them direct outside or into patio pots when the fear of frost has passed.

Get cracking - under cover

Starter 'Plug U Grow' bedding plants have been selling exceptionally well, and this is just a reminder that the season for these plants will shortly be coming to an end. We've plenty of impatiens, petunia, lobelia and geraniums which are all ready to go. All you need are a few cell-pack trays, some multi-purpose compost and a warm, light frost-free spot indoors and you'll be away.

New arrival... pleach feature

The removal of a large unwieldy *Leylandii* hedge dissecting the garden centre left a huge void just waiting to be filled, so with thinking caps firmly on, the Buckingham Garden Centre team brainstormed all the options.

After some thought it was decided to decrease the planting bed width (which was far too wide and perhaps accounted for the extra vigour of the hedge!) and turn this over to additional selling space, and establish a new pleach hedge line as well. This was carried out a couple of weeks ago, setting up timber posts and training wires and, best of all, you'll be able to observe the entire training process over the next few years. Oh, we've used

blocks of red twigged lime, hornbeam, green beech and small-leaved lime trees in the pleach line, so the effect should look stunning.

Not sure what pleaching is? Here is the RHS definition, "the art of weaving together of branches of a row of trees". Still not sure? Come and have a look! We will be posting pictures of the feature on our web site as it grows.

Veg u like

We've started rolling out our vegetable plant range for the season... here are a few culinary delights on offer so far.

Broad beans – two varieties for this season – 'Bunyards Exhibition', a large podded bean and 'Stereo', a much dwarfer variety. £1.50 per pack or take advantage of our multi-buy offer, of £1 a tray for five or more trays.

If you've some heated glass, we've a batch of F1 hybrid 'Shirley' tomato available, sold in 8cm pots at 99p each.

Finally, we've got Calabrese 'Marathon' (new variety for this season), Cabbage 'Golden Acre', Cabbage Hispi and Brussels sprout Peer Gynt and Cauliflower All Year Round' ready for planting.

**** **STOP PRESS** **** Look out for our exciting range of 14 tomato varieties for 2004, more details next month.

Water Features

If you are standing in our seasonal plants canopy and you can hear the sound of running water, it is not that we have sprung a leak, it's our newly introduced water feature section. We have two fabulous ranges of water features all displayed running so that you can choose the one that will work best in your garden.

New Pots

There is lots going on in our outdoor sundries area. We are currently in the process of extending our fencing and landscaping section and the work will continue for the next few weeks, and when completed will include a bigger and even better selection of landscaping products.

We have already completed one phase which has seen the introduction of a brand new range of pots and planters by Apta sourced from all over the world. We have pots in sizes, shapes and colours that you would not believe possible.

Clothing/Giftware

Don't miss our new look gift area!

We have re-fitted the space between the coffee shop and houseplants to create a new look gift area – we have already introduced many new ranges including:

- Clothing by Tayberry with body warmers, fleeces, various jackets and hats.

- Claremont & May Home Fragrances - a whole range of products from candles, pot-pouri, room sprays, incense & oil burners and many more items each designed to bring a themed fragrance to your home. Each product is available in four fabulous fragrances - Honey & Vanilla, Lilac & Lavender, Orange Grove and Champagne & Roses.

- History & Heraldry gift centre - this range makes it easy for you to pick and mix from a selection of themed cards, mugs, mini books, picture frames, fridge magnets and gift bags.

- Woodstock wind chimes - we have completely re-vamped and extended our range – try them out, were sure that there is one on the stand for you.

- Fountasia ornaments - we have introduced two new ranges of ornaments, Quarry Critters and Marsha McCarthy cats

- Global Journey tapes and cd's - a whole variety of relaxing themes – try them on the machine and find one that suits your taste.

Watch this space because we are planning to add more to our giftware ranges so that you will be able to find a gift for all occasions or simply something special for yourself.

Garden Furniture & Barbecues

For 2004 we have introduced our best ever range of garden furniture and a new range of gas and charcoal barbecues

For furniture, we have three ranges of wood: keruing, teak & balau. We have also introduced a new range of quality metal furniture by Kettler which is suitable for use either in your conservatory or on your patio. Furthermore, we have put in place a special 10% mix & match set discount when you purchase any table with 4 chairs, cushions, parasol and base.

The ranges are coming in as we speak and will be fully merchandised for you to try in the next couple of weeks.

Greenhouse Offers

We are currently offering a 10% discount off all Halls painted (coloured) greenhouses and staging, shelving and ventilation.

Aquatics

Pond plants are coming in soon, as are pond fish. Don't buy cold water fish until the water has warmed up to at least 10°C and don't buy pond plants until all the frosts have gone. Carry on using the rest of your wheatgerm food and as the weather warms up mix it with a higher protein food to help your fish put on lots of weight over coming summer.

Fertilisers

There are some interesting additions to our fertiliser range this year. These include:

- Ken Muir Strawberry Fertiliser.
- Fito Organic Fertiliser which deters moles and voles as well as feeding your lawn and other plants.
- Growing Success Organic Plant Food Tablets. Two types – one for tubs and baskets, and one for ericaceous (lime hating) plants. The tablets are simply pushed into the soil or compost and one application lasts all season.
- Chempak Palm Fertiliser. If you don't have a palm tree, join the club. However, this fertiliser is ideal not only for palms (including parlour palms) but also for ferns, bamboos and ornamental grasses.

Once again we are stocking the Doff liquid fertilisers: Liquid Growmore, Tomato Feed and Container and Basket Feed. The 1.25 litre size is £2.25 and there is a 2.5 litre size of Tomato and Container & Basket for £3.99. These are excellent fertilisers at very reasonable prices and they have been very popular in recent years.

Phostrogen was one of the first general purpose plant foods to come onto the market and it is still an excellent choice. Being high in potash it encourages fruiting and flowering as well as being a good general fertiliser. It is the usual sad story: Phostrogen was an independent company which was taken over and then changed hands several times.

The brand was hit hard by the introduction of Miracle-Gro and slightly lost its way. It is now back with a bang as part of the Bayer group who are promoting it hard, and more important we are able to offer some very keen promotional prices. Last year 1 Kg was £3.49 and a 4 Kg tub was £11.49. This year 1.5 Kg is £2.99 and 4 Kg is £7.95. We have good stocks but at these prices it is likely to fly out, and the prices will have to go up again once the promotional stock is exhausted – so buy early to avoid disappointment!

We also have the Phostrogen soluble plant food tablets at the very special price of 99p for 8 tablets. Each tablet makes 1 gallon of liquid feed for garden use or 2 gallons of liquid feed for houseplants. (The tablets can be broken into 2 or more pieces of you need a smaller quantity).

To some extent the choice of fertiliser is a matter of personal preference, and Mircale-Gro is a good product and very popular. A 1 kg carton is still only £2.99. If you buy a 2 kg carton for £5.49 you can buy the extremely useful Miracle-Gro hose and feeder for £3.99 instead of our usual price of £5.99. Once again this is a limited offer which must end when the promotional stock is sold.

Also, do not forget Growmore, still only £2.25 for 5 kg or £5.95 for 25 kg. In addition to the products mentioned, we have our usual wide range of general and specialist fertilisers, both organic and non-organic, so there is no excuse for letting your plants go hungry this year!

If you are plagued with greenfly and reluctant to use chemical sprays it is well worth encouraging ladybirds. These, and especially their young, are voracious eaters of greenfly. We are agents for Just Green who sell ladybirds – but these are not available until April.

It is also useful to encourage the natural population of ladybirds by placing Agralan Ladybird Feeders in early spring near to where the ladybirds hibernate (full details on the pack). This keeps them going until their natural food become readily available. It is also beneficial to provide a 'Ladybird House', a specially designed nest area which provides perfect conditions for the ladybirds to nest in. The one we stock has been designed by the Oxford Bee Company who specialise in designing habitats for various insects.

Adopt an Artist

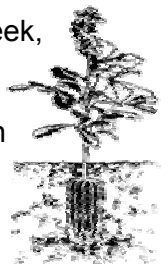
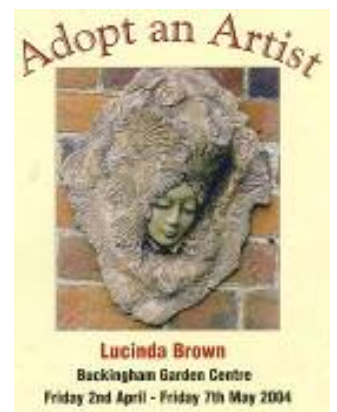
From Friday 2nd April until Friday 7th May we shall be holding a exhibition of works by the local artist Lucinda Brown. This has been organised in conjunction with Aylesbury Vale District Council.

After graduating from the University she has exhibited at 'New designers' at the Design Centre in Islington, at Top drawer at Olympia, the NEC Spring Fair and the BCTF in Harrogate, so we will be delighted to exhibit her work here. She is passionate about nature, especially the myriad of creatures that live or have lived in the ocean. This is clear when looking at her works – wall vases, birdbaths and wall plaques made from clay all decorated with marine fossils.

Each piece is unique and it will be well worth coming to look at the work, even if you are not interested in purchasing. You will find the works exhibited in our new water features area.

Cell Grown Hedging Plants

Launched on our Web Site last week, and available for collection from the Garden Centre, we are delighted to be able to offer a range of cell grown plants for the first time. Cell grown plants are a little more expensive than bare root field grown stock but they have the great advantage of having been raised in small containers (or cells), filled with a growing medium. The cells have been designed specially to prevent the root spiralling and to promote fibrous root growth. This method of production has been developed by a specialist nursery in Britain and most of the seed used is from



native plants and we are pleased to be able to offer their excellent stock to you.

The bare root stock we have offered over the last fifty years is of excellent quality but, by its nature, transplanting involves a shock to the growth of plants which take time to recover. With the cell grown stock the root system remains intact, and the fine fibrous feeding roots are sent out with the plant enabling rapid establishment once planted out. If the plants are cared for properly after planting the success rate is very high, thus eliminating replacing lost plants.



Although the plants we are offering in cells are generally slightly smaller than those offered bare root, because of their method of growth in the cell they establish faster and will often catch up or even overtake the size of bare root stock. They also have the great advantage that they can be planted out when not

dormant thus allowing all year round planting. This means that you can choose the time to plant when the weather is pleasant or when it is convenient to you. Watering of any newly planted stock is very important whether it is bare root stock or cell grown.

The root plug contains both naturally occurring mycorrhizae (symbiotic fungus which enhances the absorption of nutrients by the feeding root hairs) and added fertiliser. The uniform compact size of the cell grown plants makes planting considerably easier than the planting of bare-root stock which often have long straggly roots and need a large hole.

The varieties of trees, conifers and hedging plants we have available immediately for collection from the Garden Centre are as follows. These will also be available for our mail order customers by approximately at the end of March.

- Alder, Common (*Alnus glutinosa*)
- Beech, Green (*Fagus sylvatica*)
- Berberis darwinii
- Berberis Green (*Berberis thunbergii*)
- Berberis julianae
- Berberis Purple
- Birch, Silver (*Betula pendula*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Cherry, Bird (*Prunus padus*)

- Cherry, Wild (*Prunus avium*)
- Cotoneaster franchetii
- Cotoneaster lacteus
- Cotoneaster simonsii
- Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*)
- Larch (*Larix leptolepis*)
- Maple, Field (*Acer campestre*)
- Mountain Ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Oak, English or Common (*Quercus robur*)
- Pine, Austrian (*Pinus nigra nigra*)
- Pine, Scots (*Pinus sylvestris*)
- Plum, Myrobalan (*Prunus cerasifera*)
- Privet, Golden (*Ligustrum ovalifolium aurea*)
- Quickthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Spruce, Norway (*Picea abies*)

Cell Grown Wild Flowers

Wild flowers are wonderful in the garden as they not only look really attractive, but they attract pollinating insects which will be beneficial for the rest of the plants in the garden. We have a limited number of varieties available immediately, and more will be ready later in the year. They are all grown in cell packs like the cell grown hedging and will have a good strong root structure so can be planted either into a bed or directly into grass to develop a wild flower meadow. The following are now available:

- Betony (*Stachys officinalis*)
- Cowslip (*Primula veris*)
- Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*)
- Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)
- Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)
- Ragged Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*)
- Red Campion (*Silene dioica*)
- Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*)

Full descriptions and pictures can be found on our [website](http://www.buckingham-nurseries.co.uk).



BUCKINGHAM NURSERIES AND GARDEN CENTRE

Tingewick Road, Buckingham, MK18 4AE Tel 01280 822133, Fax 01280 815491

E-Mail: enquiries@buckingham-nurseries.co.uk Web: www.buckingham-nurseries.co.uk

Spring and Summer opening hours:

Mon.-Fri. 8.30am to 6.00pm, Late night opening Thurs. till 7.30pm.

Sat. 9am to 5pm, Sun. 10am to 4pm.