
In 1994 the RHS Floral Trials Committee started to plan a programme of perennial grass trials. It was decided that the first should be of Miscanthus, a major genus of ornamental grasses, with many new cultivars from Europe and the USA coming on to the market. As with many RHS trials this was to highlight a trend, in this case, the increased use of ornamental grasses for garden decoration.

Cultivation of the trial

The plants were grown on a site in Wisley village, that had been brought back into cultivation from farm pasture by being rotovated and a general fertiliser applied at 56g/sq.m. The soil is light and sandy with a pH 6.5. Each March, the plants were cut down to soil level (except M. transmorrisonensis, it being the only evergreen in the trial). Most of the plants (except those of dwarf habit) grew so well in the first two years that one plant of each entry was removed to give more space. The trial site has a high water table and was flooded in the winter 2000/2001, which had no effect on the plants. It was reported that in areas of high rainfall many of the cultivars would not flower well. Cultivars of small habit, that had not performed well in the original site, were re-planted on a site in the Trials Field in the main garden at Wisley in 2002-2003 for further assessment.

Records

Height and spread were recorded, as was date of flowering. Other records included habit; colour of inflorescence; colour of foliage in summer and winter.

People involved

Floral Trials Committee (see page 11) met 16 times (from 1999-2001 and in 2003)

Co-opted member: Roger Grounds of Apple Court Nursery was co-opted to the trials committee and gave valuable background information and advice from his long experience with growing grasses in general and Miscanthus in particular.

Others: Ernst Pagels was approached by the Trials Office, at his nursery in Leer, Germany, and in response not only submitted a great number of cultivars from his own raising and selection, but also gave invaluable notes on their characteristics. Greg Speichert of Crystal Palace Perennials, Indiana, USA, visited the trial and advised on the characteristics and provenance of some of the US cultivars. Mary Thorp of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, who was responsible for the grass borders at Kew, organized the submissions of entries from Kew and advised on their cultivation and performance.

Objectives

Award of Garden Merit: By bringing together as many different taxa as possible and assessing their merits, the committee could recommend the Award of Garden Merit to those considered the best for the general gardener.

Correct Names: Although many entries were new cultivars, some queries regarding identity and nomenclature were already known to exist. For instance, we were keen to observe M. sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’ and M. sinensis ‘China’; M. sinensis ‘Strictus’ and M. sinensis ‘Zebrinus’; and a widely available grass known as Miscanthus floridulus.

Archive: To create a permanent record through detailed descriptions, images and herbarium specimens for future reference.

Entries: In spring 1997, a comprehensive list of plants required was compiled using the RHS Horticultural Database against which possible retail nursery sources were drawn up (using the The RHS Plant Finder, the European PPPI and the US Andersen lists). Other sources such as The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, RHS Gardens, wholesale nurseries and private gardens were also invited to submit entries. Senders to this trial are listed on page 11.

In spring 1998 three plants (two, in the case of the very large taxa) of each entry were planted. There were 117 entries in the trial, 12 of which were duplicates. All plants in RHS Trials remain the property of the sender, so at the end of the trial they were either returned, donated to the RHS Gardens (or a third party), or destroyed.
Findings

Miscanthus in the trial demonstrated their great variety in size and habit, as well as the long seasonal interest from the colour of the leaves to the varying shape and form of the flowering heads. Use in the garden could be visualised from those able to form large screens of rustling leaves to others that could make a dramatic statement as a specimen with their strong foliage and/or their flowers heads catching the light and the wind. Others were obvious candidates for looking good in a pot or large container. Their performance during the late autumn and even through the winter with their shifting silhouettes and pale colouring was particularly noteworthy.

It was known that both species and cultivars are, in general, easy plants to grow, tolerating different soils, requiring no fertiliser, being fully hardy, and, being clump-forming (with one or two exceptions), are not invasive in the UK. Though most will tolerate some shade, all benefit from full sun to obtain good flowering. Most cultivars can be left in situ for 3 years, thereafter they can be easily split. The only maintenance is the cutting down of the old stems in spring.

It was demonstrated in the trial that any propagation or splitting should take place in spring or early summer, before re-growth starts. The outer sections (minimum 15cm/6” in diameter) should be selected for re-planting. In general they are not susceptible to pests or diseases, although during the trial those cultivars with variegation on the margins of the leaves or as horizontal banding were found to be susceptible to browning. Some of this was found to be a form of rust.

They are good plants for those gardeners who have problems with deer – the sharp edges of the leaves is thought to deter grazing.

M. sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’ and M. sinensis ‘China’

Ernst Pagels advised that the two cultivars were similar but only M. sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’ had the distinctive white tips to the inflorescence. It was established that the true ‘China’ was not in the trial and therefore ‘Ferner Osten’ received the Award of Garden Merit.

M. sinensis ‘Strictus’ and M. sinensis ‘Zebrinus’

These two cultivars with horizontal yellow banding on the leaves, although very similar were distinct in their habit. M. sinensis ‘Strictus’ has a very stiff erect habit and M. sinensis ‘Zebrinus’ has more arching foliage.

Award of Garden Merit

M. sinensis var. condensatus ‘Cosmopolitan’ AGM (H3–4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Flamingo’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Gewitterwolke’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Ghana’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Gold und Silber’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Grosse Fontäne’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Kaskade’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Kleine Fontäne’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Kleine Silberspinne’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Morning Light’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Septemberrot’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Silberfeder’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Strictus’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Undine’ AGM (H4) 2001
M. sinensis ‘Zebrinus’ AGM (H4) 2001

Award of Garden Merit subject to naming and availability

Miscanthus sinensis from RHS Garden Wisley. Tall (2m) Stands up, well-furnished, good bold plant. Nice clean foliage colour. Silky flowers, held erect and clear of foliage, move gracefully in the breeze.


Award rescinded to the following:

Miscanthus sinensis AGM (H4) 1993
Miscanthus floridulus AGM (H4) 1993

AGM = Award of Garden Merit
(H4) = hardy throughout the UK
(H3–H4) = not reliably hardy
2001 = year AGM published

Award of Garden Merit criteria

The Award of Garden Merit requires a plant to be:
- excellent for garden decoration
- available
- of good constitution
- not subject to specialist care
- not susceptible to pests or diseases
- not subject to reversion.
Background

Miscanthus has a long tradition of use in Japan in decorative art and gardens as well as being used in a practical way as a thatching material. Its use in UK gardens has only been in the past 100 years – Gertrude Jekyll used M. sinensis ‘Gracillimus’ for its rounded shape and neat habit in her borders. But it was Karl Foerster, at his nursery in Potsdam, in the 1930s who first realised the potential of Miscanthus for year-long interest in the garden. Fellow German, Ernst Pagels, who worked closely with Foerster and took on many of his ideals, eventually set up his own nursery in the 1950s and concentrated on an intensive programme of breeding. Crossing M. sinensis ‘Gracillimus’ with other larger Miscanthus, he selected and introduced a large number of cultivars of intermediate size that would flower early in northern Europe. Pagels contributed not only a large number of cultivars to the trial but also advised us on names and the distinctive characteristics of his cultivars.

Botany

Miscanthus is a genus of about 14 species of perennial grasses native to Asia, some Pacific islands and south east Africa. In the wild they are found in grassland, forest edges, stream sides, slopes and coastal areas, often favouring damp habitats. The ornamental species used to be placed in the genus Eulalia and they may be found in older books under this name. Most species are clump-forming in cultivation although M. sacchariflorus is rhizomatous, especially in warm climates. The leaves vary in size depending on species, but normally have a prominent white midvein. The inflorescence consists of a fan-shaped plume made up of long branches attached to a central axis.

M. sinensis

This is the most commonly cultivated species in gardens and has given rise to numerous cultivars differing in height, leaf width, leaf colour and inflorescence colour. It is native to China, Japan, S. Korea and Taiwan. The flowers are usually produced in August or September. The inflorescence branches emerge erect and either retain this habit, adopt a horizontal position or start to droop almost immediately. Their colour varies from pale silver through to buff to deep purplish-red depending on the cultivar. Their skeletal remains are often retained well into the winter.

M. sacchariflorus and M. × giganteus

These are the two largest cultivated Miscanthus (2.5 to 3m) and are grown for their bold foliage. They are also grown as biomass crops. In cool temperate gardens they tend not to flow. Triploid M. × giganteus is a hybrid between tetraploid M. sacchariflorus and diploid M. sinensis. M. sacchariflorus differs from the hybrid in having elongated rhizomes, but this is only evident on established plants, and its shorter inflorescence axis. It is native to China, Japan, Korea and E. Russia. They are virtually impossible to distinguish when not in flower except by chromosome number.

M. floridulus

Both of the above have been grown in the past under the name M. floridulus, a species from E. and S.E. Asia, that is rarely cultivated. True M. floridulus in the trial had tall, greyish, rather hairy stems to 2.5m and flopped untidily. It differs from the other species in inflorescence details.

M. transmorrisonensis

This species, native to Taiwan, is included by some botanists in M. sinensis, but it has one feature that distinguishes it very readily – it is evergreen.

Judging criteria

The trial was assessed by the Floral Trials Subcommittee based on the following criteria:

- impact
- habit
- flower
- foliage colour (including winter)
Award of Garden Merit descriptions

**SHORT CULTIVARS**

*Miscanthus sinensis ‘Kleine Silberspinne’*

🌟 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers late August. Foliage height 0.7m. Flowering stems 1.2m. Narrow leaves are dark green with a white midrib turning a deep reddish orange and straw colour in autumn. Bright green flowering stems enhance effect. Erect inflorescences, rose-coloured turning brown and fluffy when mature. Particularly good for winter impact and foliage effect. Neat, distinct. Nice for small garden. (name in English: small silver spider)

**MEDIUM CULTIVARS**

*Miscanthus sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’*

🌟 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers early August. Foliage height 0.9m. Flowering stems 1.6m. Nice colour and form. Leaves with cream midrib, turning orange in autumn. Flowers are held at a uniform height, clear of the foliage. Flowerheads, arching, are a lovely rich red with white tips, one of the best for intensity of colour and catches the light well, fading to beige as they mature. (name in English: far east)

*Miscanthus sinensis ‘Flamingo’*

🌟 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers mid August. Foliage height 1m. Flowering stems 1.6m. Well balanced erect habit with graceful, arching, elegant foliage with white midrib, turning orange gold in autumn. Very floriferous. Rose-coloured, drooping flowerheads that become silvery as they mature. Described by E Pagels as “rose-coloured flower, light and easily hanging type is of special elegance, on top of this she looks beautiful in her autumnal tints”.

*Miscanthus sinensis ‘Gewitterwolke’*

🌟 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers early August. Foliage height 1.25m. Flowering stems 1.8m. Broad leaves, foliage turns orange in autumn. Striking. Very floriferous with good solid, silver and dark purple flower heads which are all out at same time. Arching plumes can be rather congested, with many held in the foliage. Tall, erect, narrow habit; “looks as though it’s been tied up”.

(name in English: thundercloud)

*Miscanthus sinensis ‘Ghana’*

🌟 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers early September. Foliage height 1m. Flowering stems 1.8m. Lovely arching leaves. Brown-red flowers are held upright and well above the thin-leaved, bright green foliage, which turns copper red in autumn.
Award of Garden Merit descriptions

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Gold und Silber’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Sent by Feldweber Nursery, Austria.

Flowers mid September. Foliage height 0.9m. Flowering stems 1.4m. Foliage turns orange-gold in autumn. Golden anthers on brown-red flower heads show like gold raindrops, compact and dainty. Good size for smaller garden.

**TALL CULTIVARS**

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Kleine Fontäne’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers early August. Foliage height 0.9m. Flowering stems 1.6m. Narrow foliage with white midrib turns a golden straw colour in autumn. Gracefully drooping inflorescence that opens red and quickly turns very pale. Spectacular fluffy showy seed heads. Attractive texture. Useful height. (name in English: small fountain)

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Septemberrot’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised by Ernst Pagels. Sent by RHS Wisley

Flowers early September. Foliage height 1.4m. Flowering stems 2.4m. Leaves with large white midrib turn a rich red orange colour in November. Good spacing between erect, silvery, red flower heads, which are held well above the foliage. Graceful, elegant, airy. Excellent colour, the best for late season effect. (name in English: September red)

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Grosse Fontäne’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised by Ernst Pagels, sent by Ernst Pagels and RBG Kew

Flowers early September. Foliage height 1.7m. Flowering stems 2.5m. Very long, arching, green leaves. Distinct red flower heads held high above the foliage, turning more straw-coloured with age. Thin, airy habit. Distinct. (name in English: large fountain)

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Kaskade’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised and sent by Ernst Pagels

Flowers mid August. Foliage height 1.25m. Flowering stems 1.9m. Narrow foliage, with white midrib, turns rich copper red in autumn and then displays a nice pewter effect. Attractive, cascading, rose-coloured, silky flowers are elegant and held well above the leaves, turning silver-buff when mature.

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Gold und Silber’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised by Ernst Pagels and sent by E Pagels and RBG Kew

Flowers late August. Foliage height 1m. Flowering stems 2m. Leaves with white midrib turn orange and straw-coloured in autumn. The arching red inflorescences turn rose and buff when mature. Tall, airy, fine and graceful. Particularly good for winter foliage.

**Miscanthus sinensis ‘Septemberrot’**

 AGM (H4) 2001

Raised by Ernst Pagels. Sent by RHS Wisley

Flowers early September. Foliage height 1.4m. Flowering stems 2.4m. Leaves with large white midrib turn a rich red orange colour in November. Good spacing between erect, silvery, red flower heads, which are held well above the foliage. Graceful, elegant, airy. Excellent colour, the best for late season effect. (name in English: September red)
An old cultivar from Japan, often used there as a bonsai companion plant, was first introduced to the West by the US National Arboretum, Washington, D.C., who obtained it from Masato Yokoi. Named by Kurt Bluemel, a US nurseryman.

Miscanthus sinensis ‘Strictus’

**AGM (H4) 2001**

Sent by Apple Court Nursery, Beth Chatto, RBG Kew

Flowers late October to early November. Foliage height 1.5m. Flowering stems 2.2m. Similar to ‘Zebrinus’ in leaf markings, but more upright in habit. Forms tight stiffly upright clumps. Cream transverse bands appear on leaves earlier than other varieties, with leaves turning a pale brown colour in autumn. Particularly good for winter impact. Buff, heavily flushed with pink, silvery flowers are crinkly when open. Common name porcupine grass

One of the first Miscanthus in cultivation in Western gardens.

Miscanthus sinensis ‘Zebrinus’

**AGM (H4) 2001**

Sent by RHS Wisley

Flowers first half October. Foliage height 1.5m. Flowering stems 2.2m. Long arching leaf blades with large transverse cream blotches. Erect buff-silver flower plumes. Common name zebra grass. Syn. Eulalia japonica

VARIEGATED CULTIVARS

Miscanthus sinensis var. condensatus ‘Cosmopolitan’

**AGM (H3-4) 2001**

Sent by Apple Court Nursery

Flowers October/November. Foliage height 2m. Flowering stem 2.2m. More or less evergreen, leaves very broad, foliage longitudinally variegated with white to cream stripes and edges. Very striking variegation. Most handsome of the variegated cultivars. Erect, silver flower plumes.

Originally found in Japan in the 1940s by Toyoichi Aoki of Tokyo. Introduced to the West by US National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. In the 1970s and named by Kurt Bluemel, a US nurseryman.

Miscanthus sinensis ‘Morning Light’

**AGM (H4) 2001**

Sent by RHS Wisley

Foliage height 1.6m. Did not flower in trial. Very elegant with light arching sprays of leaves with thick white central stripe and narrow cream margins. Narrow, arching habit wider at top than at bottom.
## Miscanthus selection guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foliage</th>
<th>Flower</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. × giganteus ‘Gilt Edge’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>2.1m</td>
<td>Very broad leaf striped and edged yellow. Non-running. Originated as a sport in Roger Grounds’ Hampshire garden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. × giganteus ‘Gotemba’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>2.4m</td>
<td>Strong yellow longitudinal variegation. Raised by Wada in Japan. Very colourful mauve flush to stems, handsome plant. Runs. Suffered from rust in trial. Very attractive variegated leaf, but a shame it spreads. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. ‘Herbstfeuer’</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td>0.8m</td>
<td>Similar to M. ‘Purpurascens’. In October lovely reddish tinge to foliage with attractive corkscrew-like curl to drying tips. Origin unknown. (in English: autumn fire) Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Adagio’</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td>0.5m</td>
<td>Narrow leaf. Sparse flowering. Stands well. Good for the smaller gardens, or containers. Introduced by Kurt Bluemel, US nurseryman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Afrika’</td>
<td>No flower</td>
<td>2.1m</td>
<td>Small with very good autumn colour. Raised by Ernst Pagels. Died in the trial. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Altweiber Sommer’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
<td>Broad, arching leaves that turn yellow and orange in November. Flowers elegant, not heavy, held very high. Raised by Ernst Pagels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Arabesque’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>Flowerheads held well above foliage, a bit thin, not quite the character of some. Introduced by Kurt Bluemel, a US nurseryman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘China’</td>
<td>No flower</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>Entry in trial proved to be ‘Ferner Osten’, ‘China’ flowers mid season and does not have white tips to inflorescence. Raised by Ernst Pagels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis var. condensatus</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>2.1m</td>
<td>Broad leaf with silver bloom on lower stems (“nice ankles”). Good background foil. Handsome and tidy. Not reliably hardy. Good for late season green. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis var. condensatus ‘Cabaret’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>Has central leaf variegation, other cultivars have marginal variegation. Bright, green edge, cream variegation. Very broad leaf. Lot of browning of cream areas occurred during the trial. Very old Japanese cultivar. Introduced to the West by US National Arboretum in the 1970s, named by Kurt Bluemel, a US nurseryman. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis var. condensatus ‘Cosmopolitan’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>Very broad leaf. Most handsome of the variegated cultivars. Long cultivated in Japan. Introduced to the West by US National Arboretum in the 1970s, named by Kurt Bluemel, a US nurseryman. Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis var. condensatus ‘Cosmo Revert’</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>1.8m</td>
<td>Green reversion of ‘Cosmopolitan’ hence the name ‘Cosmo Revert’. Sometimes listed under the later name of ‘Emerald Giant’. Introduced by Greg Speichert, US nurseryman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Cornet’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>Good large green leaf, becoming a glowing orange gold in November. Tendency to flop. Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Dixieland’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>Similar to ‘Variegatus’ and ‘Rigoletto’. A good bold plant with distinctive striped silver green foliage, tendency to flop. Introduced by Kurt Bluemel. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Ferner Osten’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>Flowerheads arching, good rich red colour with white tips held clear of foliage. Leaves broader than M. sinensis ‘China’. Foliage turns a rich orange in November. Raised by Ernst Pagels. (in English: far east) Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Flamingo’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>In autumn foliage turns orange. Very silvery, soft drooping flowerheads. Raised by Ernst Pagels. Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis ‘Gaa’</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>Excellent red blooms. Tendency to flop. Raised by Ernst Pagels Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foliage height</td>
<td>Flower height</td>
<td>Flowers size</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Gearmella' 0.7m</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
<td>mid Sept</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Gewitterwolke' 1.25m</td>
<td>1.8m</td>
<td>early Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Ghana' 1m</td>
<td>1.8m</td>
<td>early Sept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Gold und Silber' 0.9m</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>early Sept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Goldfeder' 0.9m</td>
<td>1.8m</td>
<td>mid Sept</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Goliath' 1.4m</td>
<td>2.5m</td>
<td>early Sept</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Gracillimus' 1.5m</td>
<td>late Nov</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>‘Gracillimus’ (syns M. sinensis var. gracillima, Pollinia gracillima, common name maiden grass) usually has a rounded habit and always very narrow leaves. It is sometimes raised from seed, which can result in inferior, wider-leaved plants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Graziella' 0.8m</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>early Sept</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Grosse Fontäne' 1.7m</td>
<td>2.5m</td>
<td>early Sept</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Hermann Müssel' 1.1m</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Hinjo' (syn 'Little Nicky') 1m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Juli' 0.85m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>July/Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Kaskade' 1.25m</td>
<td>1.9m</td>
<td>mid Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Kirk Alexander' 1.4m</td>
<td>late Nov</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Supposed to be a dwarf ‘Zebrinus’. In trial, bright green foliage turned yellow at tips (with a few cream bands). Found in Ashville N. Carolina, USA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Kleine Fontäne' 0.9m</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>early Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Kleine Silberspinne' 0.7m</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. sinensis 'Little Kitten' 0.5m</td>
<td>0.8m</td>
<td>mid Aug</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Foliage height</td>
<td>Flower height</td>
<td>Flowers Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>M. sinensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Malepartus'</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Morning Light'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>no flower</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Nippon'</td>
<td>0.8m</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Nishidake'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.6m</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'November Sunset'</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Poseidon'</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>2.3m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Positano'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.3m</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Professor Richard Hansen'</td>
<td>1.1m.</td>
<td>2.6m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Pünktchen'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Rigoletto'</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Roland'</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>2.6m</td>
<td>mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Rotsilber'</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Sarabande'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Septemberrot'</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>2.4m</td>
<td>early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Silberfeder'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.4m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Sioux'</td>
<td>0.7m</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
<td>mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Slavopour'</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Spätgrün'</td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foliage height</td>
<td>Flower height</td>
<td>Flowers size</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Strictus'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>late Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Tiger Cub'</td>
<td>1.3m</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>late Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Undine'</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Variegatus'</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Vorläufer'</td>
<td>0.6m</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>early Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Zebrinus'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
<td>early Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Zwergelefant'</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. transmorrisonensis</strong></td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Floral Trials Committee**
Made up of people who have spent a lifetime observing and growing plants both for pleasure and as a profession. It is this experience and their sharp eyes and deep knowledge that gives such unparalleled value to their recommendations.

**Chairman:**
Dr Tony Lord

**Vice Chairmen:**
- Roy Cheek
- Pam Schwerdt
- Bill Boardman
- Wendy Bowie
- John Coke
- Nigel Colborn
- Ivan Dickings
- Fergus Garrett
- Diana Hart-Dyke
- Tony Hender
- Sibylle Kreutzberger
- Christopher Lloyd
- Alison Mulvaney
- John Paton
- John Ravenscroft
- Graham Rice
- Jean Sambrook
- Keith Sangster
- Terry Snale
- Mike Smallwood
- Liz Strangman
- Brian Talman
- Ray Waite
- Victoria Wakefield
- Stuart Williams

**Co-opted members:**
- Rogers Grounds
- Mary Thorp

**Senders to the Trial:**
- **Apple Court**, Hordle Lane, Hordle, Lymington, Hampshire, SO14 0HU
- **Four Seasons**, Forncett St Mary, Norwich, Norfolk, NR16 1JT
- **Feldweber Stauden Blumenbinderei**, A-4974 ORT im Innkreis 139, Austria
- **Hoecroft Plants**, Severals Grange, Holt Rd, Wood Norton, Dereham, NR20 5BL
- **Ernst Pagels Staudenkulturen**, Deichstrasse 4, D-26789 Leer, Germany
- **The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew**, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB
- **The Royal Horticultural Society**, RHS Garden, Wisley, Woking, GU23 6QB
- **Green Farm Plants** (no longer trading)

**Further reading**

**Acknowledgements**
Plant records and descriptions by Chrissie Ferrirol, RHS Trials Recorder. Photography by RHS Herbarium where not otherwise stated.
Mike Grant, Senior Botanist, RHS Garden Wisley.
RHS staff in the Trials Dept, Wisley.

**Foliage Flower Flowers Size Comments Judges verdict**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foliage height</th>
<th>Flower height</th>
<th>Flowers size</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Judges verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong></td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>late Oct</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Tiger Cub'</td>
<td>1.3m</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>late Oct</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Undine'</td>
<td>1m</td>
<td>2m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Variegatus'</td>
<td>1.6m</td>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>Tall</td>
<td>Makes a wonderful fountain of strongly variegated green/white foliage. Crinkly heads emerge in November. Considered one of the hardier of the variegated cultivars. Several different clones of ‘Variegatus’ were entered into the trial and, uncertainty over which was the original clone prevented an AGM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Vorläufer'</td>
<td>0.6m</td>
<td>1.4m</td>
<td>early Aug</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Zebrinus'</td>
<td>1.5m</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
<td>early Oct</td>
<td>Tall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. sinensis</strong> 'Zwergelefant'</td>
<td>1.1m</td>
<td>1.7m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M. transmorrisonensis</strong></td>
<td>1.2m</td>
<td>2.2m</td>
<td>late Aug</td>
<td>Evergreen. Holds flower well above foliage. If not cut down but just dead-headed plants will flower earlier.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Royal Horticultural Society

The RHS is the UK's leading gardening charity dedicated to advancing horticulture and promoting good gardening. Its charitable work includes providing expert advice and information, advancing horticulture, training the next generation of gardeners, helping school children learn about plants, and conducting research into plants, pests and environmental issues affecting gardeners. The RHS Award of Garden Merit plant trial scheme is an important part of this work.

The RHS receives no government grants and for every pound received from members' subscriptions we need to raise more than twice as much again to fund our charitable work. We also rely on donations and sponsorship to supplement income from our garden operations, flower shows, shops and plant centres.

RHS Plant Trials

With so many different types of gardener and so many different cultivars available to them in each group of plants, it is important that a system of recommendation is in place to help with selection at point of sale. These recommendations must be clear and reliable to ensure that of the thousands of plants available in the UK, a proportion are known to be excellent garden plants. The RHS provides this information through its extensive programme of plant trials held at RHS gardens in the UK. The RHS Award of Garden Merit signifies the selection of the best cultivar for general garden use.

RHS plant trials serve the professional gardener who wants to know the range of plants available, including the latest breeding and selection programmes, with their distinctive characteristics and provenance. They also serve the amateur who wants to know which plants will grow and perform well in a particular garden situation.

The RHS has an unrivalled resource of knowledge and expertise and is therefore best placed to conduct plant trials for the UK gardening market.

RHS Herbarium

The Herbarium of the RHS is at Wisley where, like the Library, it is used continually as a reference tool by botanists and other interested parties. This herbarium is one of a small number in the world dedicated to horticultural plants. At present the collection contains about 80,000 herbarium specimens, 30,000 photographic images and 4,000 paintings of plants. Material is actively collected from a wide spectrum of sources, including RHS trials.

RHS Bulletins

Canna: September 2003
Daisies, Yellow, Perennial: September 2004
Delphinium: June 2004
Lavender (hardy): July 2003
Potentilla (shrubby): July 2002
Salad Potatoes: November 2004
Spiraea japonica (with coloured leaves): November 2003

These bulletins can be viewed at a larger size on the RHS Website.