



## RHS Plant Trials and Awards

# Herbaceous Sedums

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# RHS Trial of Herbaceous Sedums 2004–2006

Sedum is a very large genus with a diverse range of species. They are most commonly thought of as rock garden plants, but there are also species suitable for growing as houseplants or large enough to be grown in the herbaceous border. It was with these latter species and their cultivars in mind that a trial was initiated in 2003 by the RHS Floral Trials Committee to examine their potential as ornamental garden subjects. The trial was restricted to those belonging to the section *Telephium* (sometimes regarded as a separate genus *Hylotelephium*) as this section contains the majority of the robust species, which can be considered for the perennial border. However, a number of the species in the section are also small enough to be grown on a rock garden and these were not excluded from the trial.

## Objectives

The objective of the trial was to grow under similar conditions as wide a range of cultivars and species, so that those best suited as ornamental for garden cultivation could be recommended for the Award of Garden Merit. The opportunity was also used to resolve confusion in naming to ensure that cultivars were assigned to the correct species. It was also useful to compare similar cultivars for noting diagnostic characters or to synonymise the names if they were considered indistinguishable.

## Archiving the trial

As with other trials, permanent records were collected of the plants by taking photographs and recording descriptions. Herbarium specimens were also made but they required special attention in their preparation. Under normal drying conditions, the succulent nature of the plants meant that they did not press and dry in a reasonable length of time. Even after several months, some plants still showed the

ability to regenerate. Therefore, after collection and pressing, the presses were placed in a freezer at -20°C for 24 hours. This treatment burst the cells in the plants and released the water. However, the presses then needed to be changed daily to help draw the water away from the plants before they went mouldy. The quicker they dried after freezing the better the specimens were preserved.

## Selection of entries

A list of possible entries was drawn from the RHS Horticultural Database. The RHS Plant Finder was used as a source of nursery suppliers, as well as RHS Gardens and private individuals. Senders to the trial are listed on p.15. Duplicates were requested of species thought to be confused in the trade. In total, there were 90 entries in the trial, of which 25 were duplicates.

## Cultivation

Entries were sourced in autumn 2003, plants were hardened off in March 2004 and on 6 April 2004 three plants of each entry were planted on a site previously tractor spaded in autumn 2003. Entries were planted in rows with 55cm between plants and 75cm between the rows. High soil fertility resulted in many plants growing up to 50% taller than normal, which resulted in the stems flopping outwards from the centre. Staking was only applied where this resulted in encroachment upon their neighbours. The front plant of each entry was given the “Chelsea Chop”, i.e. cut back hard, towards the end of May 2005 and 2006, generally producing a bushier habit not requiring support and flowering a bit later. Ideally, plants should be grown in as poor a soil as possible, which will keep them more compact naturally.



Front cover: *Sedum telephium* 'Purple Emperor' (photo Wendy Wesley)

Left: Demonstrating effect of “Chelsea Chop” on front plants (photo Wendy Wesley)

Opposite: *Sedum erythrostictum* 'Mediovariegatum' (photo Ali Cundy)



## Award of Garden Merit (AGM)

<i>Sedum</i> 'Bertram Anderson'	AGM (H4) 1993 reconfirmed
<i>Sedum cauticola</i> 'Lidakense'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum</i> 'Herbstfreude'	AGM (H4) 1993 reconfirmed
<i>Sedum</i> 'Matrona'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum</i> 'Mr Goodbud'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum</i> 'Ruby Glow'	AGM (H4) 1993 reconfirmed
<i>Sedum spectabile</i>	AGM (H4) 1993 reconfirmed
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Marchants Best Red'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Purple Emperor'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Red Cauli'	AGM (H4) 2006
<i>Sedum</i> 'Vera Jameson'	AGM (H4) 1993 reconfirmed
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>maximum</i> 'Atropurpureum'	AGM (H4) 1993 recommended to be rescinded at the next AGM Review in 2012
<i>Sedum</i> 'Class Act'	subject to availability
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Karfunkelstein'	subject to nomenclatural resolution;
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Xenox'	subject to nomenclatural resolution.

## Judging criteria

The Floral Trials Subcommittee assessed entries in 2005 and 2006, using the following criteria: foliage, habit, flower, length and season of flowering, character, attractiveness to bees and butterflies.

The Award of Garden Merit was conferred on nine entries, two of which were subject to nomenclatural resolution and one subject to availability. The awards for these three cultivars cannot be published until problems have been resolved.

## The Award of Garden Merit

The AGM is only awarded to plants that are:

- excellent for garden decoration
- available from nurseries
- reasonably resistant to pests and diseases
- of good constitution
- essentially stable in form and colour
- reasonably easy to grow

# Taxonomy of *Sedum* section *Telephium*

One of the great difficulties in dealing with the classification of cultivars in the genus *Sedum* is the lack of clear characters defining the species and frequent hybridisation, even in the wild. This has resulted in widely different treatments of species and infraspecific taxa, in particular of *Sedum telephium*, by different authorities on the genus. The taxonomy followed in this bulletin primarily follows that of Stephenson, *Sedum* – The Cultivated Stonecrops (1994).

## Tall Species

### *Sedum spectabile* Boreau

Probably the most distinctive of the larger species. Originally from northern China and Korea, it is easily recognised by the long stamens that protrude well beyond the petals. It is the most robust species in cultivation, a feature that is passed on to its hybrids, especially 'Herbstfreude' and 'Matrona'. The leaves are a mid-green colour, lacking the darker pigmentation or glaucous bloom of several selections of *S. telephium*. They are usually arranged in opposite pairs or whorls of three, but sometimes appear alternately up the stem. The colour of the flowers vary from pale pink through to dark pinkish red. White-flowered and variegated cultivars are also available.

### *S. erythrostictum* Miq. (syn. *S. alboroseum* Baker)

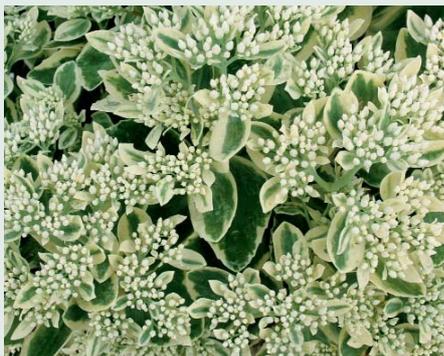
The flowerheads of this east Asian species are rather diffuse in comparison to the other species, with leafy bracts partially surrounding the flowers. The flowers are a mixture of whitish petals and pinkish carpels, and so do not give the impact of colour found in *S. spectabile* and *S. telephium*. The species is usually grown for its variegated selections with rather glaucous leaves and white blotching.



*Sedum spectabile*  
'Pink Fairy'



*Sedum telephium*  
subsp. *fabaria* var.  
*borderei*



*Sedum*  
*erythrostictum*  
'Frosty Morn'



*Sedum telephium*  
subsp. *maximum*  
'Gooseberry Fool'

### *Sedum telephium* L.

Found throughout Europe, this is a rather variable species, as revealed by the number of infraspecific taxa included within it. Some of these taxa have at one time or another been raised to specific rank. Indeed, it might be worth accepting *S. maximum* (including subsp. *ruprechtii*) as a species distinct from *S. telephium* (including subsp. *fabaria*) as the two subspecies are easily separated. However, intermediates do occur, especially in the garden, where hybridization has broken down previously distinct taxa. In such cases, it is easier to retain the parents as subspecies so that the offspring can be incorporated in a broad concept of *S. telephium*.

### *Sedum telephium* L. subsp. *telephium*

### *Sedum telephium* L. subsp. *fabaria* (W.D.J. Koch) Syme

These subspecies are rather similar to one another. They are the smallest in stature of the subspecies and generally have alternate leaves and reddish flowers. Subspecies *telephium* comes from central Europe eastwards, while subsp. *fabaria* has a western distribution including Britain. In the garden geographic distinctions are meaningless and the morphological characters used to differentiate them otherwise are of little help to the gardener: grooves on the follicles and the shape at the base of the leaves. The two subspecies, however, do appear to have different chromosome numbers, which could influence any breeding programmes that use them.

***Sedum telephium* L. subsp. *maximum* (L.) Krock.**

***Sedum telephium* L. subsp. *ruprechtii* Jalas**

These two subspecies share several characters in common. They are more robust plants than the other two subspecies with broad opposite leaves. The flowers of both subspecies are generally creamy white, but can have a greenish or pinkish tinge. Most cultivars of *S. telephium* belong to subsp. *maximum*, or at least have it predominating in their parentage. This includes most of the purple-leaved forms. Subsp. *ruprechtii* has only relatively recently been commonly available. It is distinguished from subsp. *maximum* by the cordate stem-clasping leaves.

***Sedum telephioides* Michx.**

This is the American version of *S. telephium*. It apparently differs on account of its shorter stature, leaves with short petioles and slightly larger flowers. Plants offered under this name to the trial proved to belong to *S. telephium* subsp. *maximum*.

**Sedum Herbstfreude Group**

*Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' is probably the best known and most widely grown of all the herbaceous sedums. It is reputed to be a cross between *S. spectabile* and *S. telephium* subsp. *maximum*. The most distinctive character is the lack of male parts, small petals, yet a persistent pink coloration to the sterile carpels that deepens as the flowers fade. The Herbstfreude Group has been coined by Eric Clement for all *Sedum* cultivars that show such characters, however, it might be more useful to have a hybrid binomial to reflect the parentage than a Group definition. 'Munstead Red', 'Red Cauli' and 'Marchant's Best Red' all fit within the Herbstfreude Group on account of their floral parts but vegetatively belong just to *S. telephium*.



*Sedum*  
'Herbstfreude'



*Sedum cauticola*  
'Lidakense'

**Dwarf species**

***Sedum cauticola* Praeger**

Endemic to Hokkaido Island, Japan this is the most commonly cultivated of the smaller species, forming loose trailing stems with opposite pairs of broad, almost circular, greyish leaves often spotted or flushed purple. The flowers occur late in the season and are usually a deep reddish purple colour.

***Sedum populifolium* Pall.**

This native to Russia is one of the most distinctive species. The leaves are broadly ovate and deeply toothed and held on long petioles. The plant forms a low mound of lax stems, which are rather brittle but have the advantage of spontaneously producing new plants. The petals are usually creamy white but often have a pink tinge, which is enhanced by the purplish anthers. The flowers reputedly have a hawthorn-like scent.

***Sedum sieboldii* Sweet ex Hook.**

This trailing species from Japan produces its round glaucous leaves in whorls of 3 around the delicate stems. The pink flowers are produced in autumn. As it is most commonly grown as a houseplant in the UK, usually as the variegated cultivar 'Mediovariegatum', it was not included in the trial but it is hardy enough to be grown in a rock garden if the drainage over winter is adequate.

***Sedum tatarinowii* Maxim.**

This is another distinctive central Asian species being probably the smallest cultivated species in the section. The deeply toothed bluish-grey leaves are crowded along loosely arching stems forming mats up to 30cm across. The clusters of light pink flowers provide a good show with their prominent stamens.



*Sedum*  
*populifolium*



*Sedum tatarinowii*

# RHS Award of Garden Merit descriptions



## **Sedum 'Bertram Anderson'**

**AGM (H4) 1993**

Sent by Phoenix Perennial Plants.

**Habit** low prostrate and sprawling, 12cm high, 100cm spread. **Leaves** oblong-ovate, up to 2.5cm long, 1.5cm wide, toothed towards tip; greyed purple 183A; stems dark red. **Inflorescence** up to 12cm diameter, flowers up to 10mm across; petals greyed purple 185B. Flowering from 26 Aug to 21 Sept 2006

*Interesting for a long period, and has good dark foliage, although paler in the trial due to the rich soil.*



## **Sedum caucicola 'Lidakense'**

**AGM (H4) 2006**

Selection of the species introduced from the wild. Sent by RHS Garden Wisley and Perryhill Nurseries

**Habit** prostrate, forming a flattish mound, 15cm high, 75cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs, broadly obovate to subcircular, up to 2.5cm long, 2cm wide, with a short petiole and sometimes toothed towards the tip; yellow mid green 137C, strongly glaucous 189B, upper with purple 187D flush especially at tips; stem green on underside, grey brown 197A above, very finely mottled and striated red 183D. **Inflorescence** up to 5cm diameter; flowers 11mm across; bud greenish white streaked pink 71B, petal pink 186B to N66C, carpel red 187D becoming greenish white streaked red. Flowering from 11 Sept to 18 Oct 2006.

*Excellent front of border plant; attractive in bud; striking glaucous foliage.*



## **Sedum 'Herbstfreude'**

(Syn. *S. Autumn Joy*, *S. 'Indian Chief'*)

**AGM (H4) 1993**

Raised by Georg Arends in 1955. Sent by Perryhill Nurseries Ltd, Howard Nursery and Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants.

**Habit** tall and upright, but can sprawl where not supported, 85cm high, 90cm spread. **Leaves** oblong to broadly obovate, up to 14cm long, 6.5cm wide, coarsely toothed margin; yellowish mid green 137C to 146A, light glaucous, upper leaf surface concave; stems pale green, glaucous. **Inflorescence** up to

22cm diameter, flowers 10mm across, lacking stamens; buds pale green with slight pink flush, petals tending to open to semi patent, carpels white, flushed pink 66C toward and including styles, becoming dark reddish purple 70A to 71B. Flowering from 13 Sept to 20 Oct 2006.

*Very vigorous and healthy; late flowering, excellent foliage; looks good even after flowering has finished.*

## **Sedum 'Matrona'**

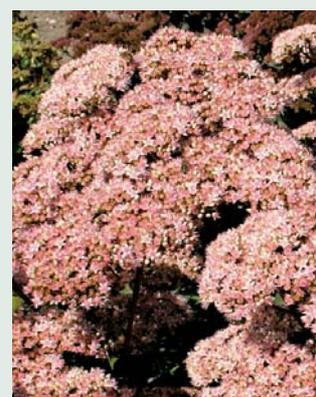
**AGM (H4) 2006**

Raised by Ewald Hügin, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Sent by Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, The Beth Chatto Gardens Ltd, and Howard Nurseries

**Habit** tall erect to spreading, 100cm high, 120cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs or alternate, oblong, up to 13cm long, 8cm wide, toothed margin; yellowish mid green 137A-C with fine dark red, almost black, edge, basal half of midrib red 183C; stem green, flushed greyed red 183D especially in inflorescence, deeper beetroot red 187A at stem base; lightly glaucous.

**Inflorescence** up to 15cm diameter, flowers 14mm across; bud greenish white tipped pink 182D, petal white tipped pink 62B, carpel pink 62C, styles slightly darker 62B, becoming greenish white with dark pink styles. Flowering from 8 Aug to 27 Sept 2006.

*One of the best; display carries on after flowers are over.*



## **Sedum 'Mr Goodbud'**

**AGM (H4) 2006**

Raised by Gary Gossett and introduced by Terra Nova Nurseries in 2006. Sent by Luc Klinkhamer

**Habit** erect, 60cm high, 60cm spread. **Leaves** broadly obovate, up to 13cm long, 4.5cm wide, margin toothed; yellow green 146B-C, trace of dark red on leaf edge and teeth, fairly pliant, mostly flat to slightly convex upper surface; stem green flushed pinkish purple 185C, glaucous. **Inflorescence** up to 14cm diameter, flowers 12mm across; bud white to very pale pink, petal white at base, pink 66C, carpel pink 66D tipped darker pink 66A. Flowering from 4 Aug to 25 Sept 2006.

*Good dark stems, sturdy; outstanding, excellent pink flower and height.*



All descriptions are based on plants grown in the RHS Trial of Herbaceous Sedums. Plants grown elsewhere may differ slightly according to cultivation conditions. Colour codes were taken using the RHS Colour Chart. The fifth edition (2007) is available from RHSE Mail Order, Wisley, Surrey GU23 6QB.

***Sedum* 'Ruby Glow'**  
(Syn. *S. cauticola* 'Robustum')

AGM (H4) 1993

Raised by Georg Arends, but named by Alan Bloom when he introduced it into the UK in 1952. Sent by The Beth Chatto Gardens.

**Habit** low growing spreading, 25cm high, 100cm spread. **Leaves** broadly obovate, up to 4cm long, 2.5cm wide, toothed towards tip; glaucous green 138B with reddish main vein and leaf tip 60C; stems red 60C. **Inflorescence** up to 8cm across, flowers 9mm across; petals small triangular only up to 6mm long, dark pink 61B to 64C, becoming much paler towards the base, stamens exerted pink with black anthers, carpels bright pink 61B. Flowering from 12 Aug to 21 Sept 2006

*An excellent garden plant; set off by dark leaves; good front of border plant.*

stamens absent; bud grey green, petal pink 57D, carpel strong reddish pink 60A. Flowering from 6 Aug to 29 Sept 2006.

*Glossy foliage, better autumn colour than 'Red Cauli', very effective with other plants; excellent.*

***Sedum telephium* 'Purple Emperor'**  
(syn. *S. 'Washfield Purple'*, *S. 'Washfield Ruby'*)

AGM (H4) 2006

Raised by Graham Gough. Sent by Marchant's Hardy Plants

**Habit** upright to slightly floppy, 60cm high, 100cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs, broadly ovate to oblong, up to 8cm long, 4cm wide, clasping the stem and toothed margins; mid green 137A, very strongly bronzed dark purple, darker than 187A, almost 200A; stem green at base and beneath nodes, strongly flushed red 187B-C elsewhere. **Inflorescence** up to 14cm diameter, flowers 8mm across; bud white base with pink 187D tips, petal off white with red 187C mid petal, carpel buff 161C flushed red 187D, becoming red 187C. Flowering from 25 July to 18 Sept 2006.

*Compact, standing well and not sprawling despite over fertile soil; attractive floral structure and dark leaves.*

***Sedum telephium* 'Red Cauli'**

AGM (H4) 2006

Raised by Graham Gough. Sent by Marchants Hardy Plants.

**Habit** erect to spreading, 70cm high, 90cm spread. **Leaves** oblong, up to 7cm long, 4cm wide, toothed margin; dark green 147A, lower leaves much paler, with dark purple brown 187A flush, basal half of midrib red 187D; stem red 187B-D. **Inflorescence** up to 9cm diameter, flowers 5mm across, lacking stamens; bud greenish white, tipped dusky pink 182C, immature petals 59C turning to 59A, carpel red 185B. Flowering 30 July to 25 Sept 2006.

*Wonderful red stems; outstanding red flowers still good after going over; attractive small flower.*

***Sedum spectabile***

AGM (H4) 1993

Sent by Howard Nursery.

**Habit** upright to slightly lax, 70cm high, 110cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs or whorls of 3, broadly ovate, up to 10cm long, 5cm wide, tapered at the base, toothed margin; mid green 137C, strongly glaucous, underside paler; stems green, strongly glaucous. **Inflorescence** up to 15cm diameter, flowers 8mm across; buds white becoming lightly flushed pink, petals pink 75C, carpels white with pink 74C tips to pink 74D with 74C tips. Flowering 21 Aug to 21 Sept 2006

*Standing up well; good pink flower heads and attractive foliage; stable with no sports.*

***Sedum telephium* 'Marchants Best Red'**

AGM (H4) 2006

Raised by Graham Gough. Sent by Marchants Hardy Plants

**Habit** neat erect, 60cm high, 70cm spread. **Leaves** opposite, oblong, up to 7cm long, 3cm wide, margin toothed; yellow green 146D, strongly flushed red 187A-B, less so on lower leaves; stem dark red 187A. **Inflorescence** up to 6cm diameter, flowers 4mm across,



# RHS Award of Garden Merit descriptions



## ***Sedum* 'Vera Jameson'**

**AGM (H4) 1993**

Raised by Vera Jameson and introduced by Joe Elliott. Sent by Southcombe Gardens.

**Habit** low mound, 20cm high, 55cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs, broadly obovate to orbicular, up to 4cm long, 3cm wide, with a short petiole and sometimes lightly toothed along the tip; dark green 147A, dully glaucous, with dark reddish purple 187B flush; stems dark red 187A.

**Inflorescence** up to 8cm diameter, flowers 10mm across; buds pink 186C to 70C edged dull green, opening to white with Pink 186A stripe from base to tip, carpels pink 186C, styles pale tipped, becoming dark pink 186A at base. Flowering from 22 Aug to 29 Sept 2006

*Another good front of border plant.*

**The following entries have been awarded an AGM subject to availability or cannot be published until queries have been resolved:**



## ***Sedum* 'Class Act'**

**AGM subject to availability**

Raised by Terra Nova Nurseries. Sent by Terra Nova Nurseries

**Habit** erect, 45cm high, 50cm spread. **Leaves** oblong, up to 7cm long, 3cm wide, mid green 137C; stem green, grey brown 199A to dark grey green 197A in inflorescence; lightly glaucous on stem and leaves. **Inflorescence** up to 11cm diameter; flowers 15mm across; bud greenish white, petal purplish red 71A-B, carpel reddish white streaked purplish red 71B, long styles darker 71A. Flowering from 28 July to 12 Oct 2006.

*A unique deep burgundy colour; flower colour and grey buds make a very effective combination, compact and stable.*

## ***Sedum telephium* 'Karfunkelstein'**

**AGM subject to nomenclatural resolution;**

Raised by Ernst Pagels. Sent by Phoenix Perennial Plants

**Habit** upright, 55cm high, 70cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs, ovate-oblong, up to 9.5cm long, 5.5cm wide, clasping stem, slightly toothed margin; green 147B, upper leaves strongly flushed beetroot red 187A; stem green, strongly flushed dark red 187B; dully glaucous.

**Inflorescence** to 15cm across, flowers 7mm across; bud white base, dark pinkish red 187D, petal reddish white, carpel dusky pink 186B, darkening to 187D. Flowering from 31 July to 18 Sept 2006

*Very good compact habit, no flopping; perfect for the modern small garden.*



## ***Sedum telephium* 'Xenox'**

**AGM subject to nomenclatural resolution.**

Raised by Hubertus Oudshoorn in 2002. Sent by Luc Klinkhamer

**Habit** semi-upright, 60cm high, 100cm spread. **Leaves** in opposite pairs, oblong-ovate, up to 8cm long, 5cm wide, clasping stem, slightly toothed margin; yellowish mid green 137C, upper leaves heavily tinged beetroot red 187A on upper surface, paler on underside; stem green, strongly flushed dark red 187A especially on upper portion; distinctly glaucous on leaf and stem.

**Inflorescence** up to 17cm diameter, flowers 8mm across; bud white at base, red 185B from middle to tip, petal white N155D with a tinge of red, carpel white flushed pink 58C, darker 58B at tip, becoming vivid reddish pink 57A, fading to 59B. Flowering from 14 Aug to 25 Sept 2006.

*Incredible colour, very dark bud, large leaves, harmonious colour range from bud to flower; neat habit.*



**Sunset List (recommended to be rescinded at the AGM review in 2012):**

***Sedum telephium* subsp. *maximum* 'Atropurpureum'**

# Selection guide



Plant Name	Max hght	Foliage colour	Flowers	Notes	Flowering time
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Beka' (syn. <i>S. Autumn Cheer</i> , <i>S. Autumn Attraction</i> ) (1)	45	Green with central yellowish green variegation	Greenish white, flushed pink, lacking petals and stamens	Variegation looks good early in the season but becomes inconspicuous as the plants mature. Found as a sport of 'Lajos' by Brent Horvath around 2001	early Sept to late Oct
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Herbstfreude' 🏆(2)	85	Green, slightly glaucous	Greenish white flushed pink, becoming dark reddish purple on fading, lacking petals and stamens	A very reliable and popular performer, adding important late season interest to the garden, let down only by its lack of attractiveness to bees and butterflies. Raised by Georg Arends in 1955	early Sept to late Oct
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Jaws' (3)	65	Green, slightly glaucous	Greenish white flushed pink, becoming dark reddish purple on fading, lacking petals and stamens	A more compact form of 'Herbstfreude', the more toothed leaves do not make as much of a feature as the name suggests. Found as a sport of 'Herbstfreude' by John & Ken Clifford in 1999	mid Aug to late Oct
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Lajos' (syn. <i>S. Autumn Charm</i> ) (4)	45	Green with broad cream margin	Greenish white, flushed pink, lacking petals and stamens	Good stable and compact variegated selection. Found as a sport of 'Herbstfreude' by Brent Horvath in 1997	early Sept to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Marchants Best Red' (5)	60	Green strongly flushed dark red	Deep reddish pink becoming dark red, lacking petals and stamens	Dark foliage with long-lasting deep-red flowers, which will combine well with other plants. Raised by Graham Gough	early Aug to late Sept
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Munstead Red' (syn. <i>S. 'Munstead Dark Red'</i> ) (6)	70	Green, glaucous, stems flushed red	Deep reddish pink becoming dark red, lacking petals and stamens	A good old cultivar but the stems rather flopped in trial. Found by Gertrude Jekyll before 1915	early Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> (Herbstfreude Group) 'Red Cauli' (7)	70	Dark green, red stems	Deep reddish pink becoming dark red, lacking stamens	Red stems contrast wonderfully against green foliage, with the added attraction of long-lasting bright red flowers. Raised by Graham Gough	late July to mid Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Abbey Dore' (8)	70	Green, stems flushed purplish	Pink with darker carpels	Attractive deep red flowers but stems flopped badly in trial. Found at Abbey Dore Court Gardens around 1990 and named by Graham Stuart Thomas	late July to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Bertram Anderson' 🏆(9)	12	Brownish red	Dark red	Very good black foliated plant, although the ones grown in trial were poorly coloured	late Aug to late Sept



# Selection guide



Plant Name	Max hght	Foliage colour	Flowers	Notes	Flowering time
<i>Sedum</i> 'Carl' (10)	55	Green, glaucous	Pink	Neat habit, bright flowers and long-lasting. Found by Monksilver Nursery amongst a batch of <i>S. spectabile</i> 'Meteor'	early Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum cauticola</i> 'Lidakense' (11)	15	Greyish green, strongly glaucous	Whitish pink with bright pink carpels	Very good glaucous coloured foliage which looks attractive throughout the season, it has a compact habit and is easy to grow. Introduced before 1953	mid Sept to mid Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Class Act' (12)	45	Green, slightly glaucous	Purplish red, greenish white on reverse	Colour of the flowers against the grey buds make a very effective combination and lasts a long time. Raised by Terra Nova Nurseries	late July to late Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Cloud Walker' (13)	70	Green, flushed purplish on margins	Dark pink	Flowers are attractive with a contrasting darker pink centre. Raised by Gary Gossett and introduced by Terra Nova Nurseries	late July to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Dark Jack' (syn. <i>S.</i> 'Black Jack') (14)	35	Purplish brown	White flushed pink	Very dark leaved cultivar but some reversion. Found growing amongst <i>S.</i> 'Matrona' by Jerry Van Der Kolk	late Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum erythrostickum</i> 'Frosty Morn' (15)	70	Grey green with cream margin	White flushed pink	Variiegated but with a bad tendency to revert to all green. Introduced from Japan by Barry Yinger	early Sept to late Oct
<i>Sedum erythrostickum</i> 'Mediovariegatum' (16)	60	Green with central cream variegation	White flushed pink	An old variegated cultivar but still with some tendency to revert. First described in 1872	early Sept to late Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Green Expectations' (17)	80	Green, stems flushed red	Greenish white	Interesting colour but has a bad habit and dies poorly	late July to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Joyce Henderson' (18)	90	Green, slightly glaucous, stems flushed red	White flushed pink with pink carpels	Robust dramatic plant but is surpassed in colour by 'Matrona'	mid Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Matrona' (19)	100	Green, stems flushed red	White flushed pink with pink carpels	One of the best cultivars with strong erect stems carrying broad pink and white flowers which are very attractive to insects. Raised by Ewald Hügin in 1988, as a cross between <i>S. spectabile</i> and <i>S. telephium</i> Atropurpureum Group	early Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Mr Goodbud' (20)	60	Green, stems flushed pinkish purple	Pink, greenish white on reverse	Good compact plants with sturdy dark stems and bright pink flowers. Raised by Gary Gossett and introduced by Terra Nova Nurseries in 2006	early Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum populifolium</i>	40	Green	White	A curiosity for the front of the border with interesting leaves and whitish flowers. First described in 1776	early Aug to early Sept





Plant Name	Max hght	Foliage colour	Flowers	Notes	Flowering time
<i>Sedum</i> 'Ruby Glow' (syn. <i>S. cauticola</i> 'Robustum') 🏆 (21)	25	Green, glaucous, stems flushed red	Dark pink	Ideal plant for the front of a border, the dark pink flowers are set off well by foliage. Raised by Georg Arends in 1960	mid Aug to late Sept
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> 🏆 (22)	70	Green, strongly glaucous	Pink	A consistent performer, which does not suffer from reversion in the way many of the selections do. All <i>S. spectabile</i> are excellent for insects. First described in 1866	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Abendrot' (23)	30	Green, glaucous	Purplish pink	Deep pink selection	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Brilliant'	70	Green, strongly glaucous	Dark pink	One of the original deep pink selections of <i>S. spectabile</i> , but has a tendency to revert and true identity is rather obscure. Originated in the USA before 1913	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Hot Stuff' (24)	40	Green, slightly glaucous	Dark pink	Compact deep pink selection. Raised by Gary Gossett and introduced by Terra Nova Nurseries	early Sept to late Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Lisa' (25)	60	Green, slightly glaucous	Purplish pink	Dark pink selection. Found as a sport of <i>S. spectabile</i> by Barbara Jeyes in 1993	late Aug to late Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Pink Fairy' (26)	70	Green, glaucous	Bright Pink	Not particularly distinct from other <i>S. spectabile</i> and possibly just a reversion. Found as a sport of a white <i>S. spectabile</i> by Hillview Hardy Plants around 2000	mid Aug to late Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Rosenteller' (27)	70	Green, strongly glaucous	Dark pink	Plants sported easily and so difficult to determine true colour. Raised by Bruske	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Septemberglut' (28)	70	Green, strongly glaucous	Dark pink	One of the most reliable of the dark pink <i>S. spectabile</i> , with a compact habit. Raised by Bruske before 1968	mid Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> (Brilliant Group) 'Steven Ward' (29)	65	Green, strongly glaucous	Pink	Very similar to the other bright pink selections	late Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> 'Iceberg' (30)	60	Green, glaucous	White	Creamy white flowers, but with a tendency to revert to pink. Originated in the USA	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> 'Pink Chablis'	50	Grey green with cream margin	White flushed purplish pink	The only variegated <i>S. spectabile</i> in trial. Good foliage although tendency to revert but flowers rather lost amongst whiteness. Found as a sport of <i>S. spectabile</i> by Christopher Howe in 1995	early Aug to early Oct



# Selection guide



Plant Name	Max hght	Foliage colour	Flowers	Notes	Flowering time
<i>Sedum spectabile</i> 'Stardust' (31)	70	Green, strongly glaucous	White	Another white <i>S. spectabile</i> , but purer white and slightly earlier than 'Iceberg', still has a tendency to revert	late Aug to mid Oct
<i>Sedum</i> 'Stewed Rhubarb Mountain' (32)	80	Green with red midrib	Greenish white, lightly flushed pink	Interesting mixture of green and pink on the white flowers, but habit can be untidy unless trimmed back. Raised by Bob Brown in 1993	late July to mid Sept
<i>Sedum tatarinowii</i> (33)	15	Greyish green, strongly glaucous	White flushed pink	Delightful small plant for rockery or front of the border with small toothed grey leaves and pinkish flowers. First described in 1883	mid July to early Oct
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'African Pearl' (34)	60	Very dark brown	White flushed dull pink	One of many dark-leaved cultivars. Raised by Paul Spijker	early Aug to early Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Black Emperor' (35)	60	Bronzed dark red	White flushed dull red	A version of 'Purple Emperor' but with blacker leaves. Found as a sport of 'Purple Emperor' by Graham Gough	late July to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Karfunkelstein' (36)	50	Dark brownish red, glaucous	White flushed dusky pink	Good compact plants with deep purplish foliage. Raised by Ernst Pagels	late July to early Oct
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Lynda et Rodney' (37)	70	Dark brownish red	Dusky pink with dark red carpels	Dark-leaved selection but with poor habit and dying badly. Found near Rennes and named by Jean-Pierre Jolivot	early Aug to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Möhrchen' (38)	60	Strongly bronzed green	White flushed red	Dark-leaved selection which scorched and reverted. Raised by Zur Linden in 1998	late July to mid Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Picolette' (39)	55	Purplish red	Whitish darkening to dark red	Dark-leaved selection which sprawled and deteriorated. Raised by Hubert Oudshoorn in 1999	mid July to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Postman's Pride' (40)	70	Dark brownish red	Dull red	Dark-leaved selection but the leaves became marked and had a poor habit. Raised by Jose de Buck in 1999	early Aug to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Purple Emperor' (syn. 'Washfield Purple', 'Washfield Ruby')	60	Bronzed dark purple	White flushed red	Dark-leaved with compact habit, which still looked good as the flowers went over. Raised by Graham Gough	late July to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> ( <i>Atropurpureum</i> Group) 'Purple Moon'	70	Dark purplish red	Greenish white flushed dull red	Black-purple leaved which stood well. Raised by Graham Gough	late July to late Sept





Plant Name	Max hght	Foliage colour	Flowers	Notes	Flowering time
<i>Sedum telephium</i> (Atropurpureum Group) 'Xenox' (41)	60	Dark brownish red, glaucous	White flushed red	Indistinguishable in the trial from 'Karfunkelstein'. Raised by Hubert Oudshoorn in 2002	early Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Bronco' (42)	50	Green, with red midrib	White flushed pink	Stood up well with good foliage colour. Raised by Hubert Oudshoorn in 2002	early Aug to mid Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Jennifer' (43)	80	Dark brownish green, glaucous	Pale pink flushed dark pink	Good strong stems with pinkish flowers but which fade badly. Found as a seedling by Jennifer Hewitt in 1998 and introduced by Bob Brown	mid July to mid Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Strawberries and Cream' (44)	70	Dark green, with purplish brown midrib	White to dusky pink, carpels becoming dark red	Interesting colour of white and pink in flowers but plants sprawled badly. Found as a seedling at Bridgemere Nurseries around 1995	late July to late Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>fabaria</i>	60	Green, stems flushed red	Dusky pink	The native orpine with small heads of dull pink flowers. First described in 1837	late July to early Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>fabaria</i> 'Roseovariegatum' (45)	50	Green, but young leaves and stems bright pink	Dull pink	Despite its name, this only produces rosy coloured leaves on the new growth, by midsummer it is indistinguishable from typical orpine. Found by Canon Ellacombe in Bitton and first described in 1921	late July to early Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>fabaria</i> var. <i>borderei</i> (46)	70	Greyish green	Dark red	A variation of orpine with prominently toothed leaves. First described in 1866	mid July to mid Sept
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>maximum</i> 'Gooseberry Fool' (47)	70	Green, with purplish red midrib and stems	Greenish white	Unusual combination of greenish flowers with reddish stems, but plants rather flopped on rich soil. Found by Graham Stuart Thomas	late Aug to early Oct
<i>Sedum telephium</i> subsp. <i>ruprechtii</i> 'Hab Gray' (48)	70	Greyish green, glaucous	Greenish white	Good greyish foliage but rather sprawled on rich soil	late July to early Oct
<i>Sedum telephium</i> 'Sunkissed' (49)	80	Green	Greenish white	Greenish flowers on compact plants are impressive, but they fade to brown which detracts. Raised by Hubert Oudshoorn in 2002	late July to late Sept
<i>Sedum</i> 'Vera Jameson' 🏆 (50)	20	Dark reddish purple	Pinkish white with pink carpels	Good plant for the front of a border with pinkish flowers contrasting with dark purplish foliage. Found as a chance seedling by Vera Jameson and introduced by Joe Elliott around 1971	mid Aug to early Oct



# Nomenclatural and taxonomic problems in the trial

## ***Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' and 'Indian Chief'**

'Indian Chief' supposedly differs from 'Herbstfreude' in producing larger flowerheads. However, all plants submitted to trial were identical to 'Herbstfreude'. A similar trial at Königshof, Austria, also found them to be indistinguishable. If 'Indian Chief' did ever differ significantly, the plants in cultivation have since reverted and it should be considered synonymous.

## ***Sedum* 'Karfunkelstein' and 'Xenox'**

These two cultivars appeared indistinguishable in trial. However, the plant breeder right authority CPVO granted 'Xenox' protection without comparing it against 'Karfunkelstein'. The CPVO were asked to reconsider their decision, but they concluded that there were small differences between 'Xenox' and 'Karfunkelstein'. They reported that 'Karfunkelstein' has darker pigmentation in the flowers and leaves than 'Xenox', although the plants were only examined after one summer and these characteristics are affected by soil fertility and weather. It is very doubtful that anyone examining these cultivars in isolation would be able to determine the correct name. If these cultivars are considered synonymous then the name 'Xenox' will have to take precedence as that has legal status.

## ***Sedum* 'Munstead Red' or 'Munstead Dark Red'**

Both these names are frequently applied to this cultivar. The report of the trial at Königshof suggested that 'Munstead Dark Red' was the earlier name citing two references from around 1950. However, 'Munstead Red' is mentioned by H. Thomas in *The Book of Hardy Flowers*, which is dated 1915. We therefore continue to use this name.

## ***Sedum spectabile* cultivars**

Several selections of *S. spectabile* were entered into trial with brighter or darker pink flowers than is typical for the species. However, most were plagued with a tendency to revert to different shades of pink. As a result, it was difficult to be sure that what was entered was correctly named. This in particular applies to popular old cultivars such as 'Brilliant', 'Carmen' and 'Meteor', all of which have been selected at some point for the better coloration of their flowers. As a result of the regular reversion, only the unnamed selection of *S. spectabile* was considered worthy of an AGM although many of the named clones had better colour. Furthermore, considering the confusion around 'Brilliant' and its very similar relations, a Brilliant Group is created here to circumscribe the dark pink selections and to provide a convenient name to attach to a plant when its identity is questionable.

## ***Sedum telephium* Atropurpureum Group**

Three plants were entered as *Sedum telephium* subsp. *maximum* 'Atropurpureum' but all differed noticeably from one another. It is believed that many seedlings with purple leaves are sold under this name and that there is not a single clone that can be identified as 'Atropurpureum'. The epithet appears to have been first mentioned by Masters in 1878 (in synonymy of var. *haematodes*) for plants with a robust habit and deep purple stems and leaves. It is probably better to regard this as a group name for all dark-leaved cultivars of *Sedum telephium*.



The RHS Trials Field 2006

## ***Sedum telephium* 'Jennifer' or 'Jennifer Hewitt'**

This name was registered by Bob Brown as Jennifer Hewitt. However, Mrs Hewitt later wrote to Bob Brown stating that she had only wanted it to be known as 'Jennifer'. Mr Brown agreed to change it and informed the registration authorities accordingly. However, it is still cited on the ISU Perennial Register as 'Jennifer Hewitt'.

## **Pests and disease**

Plants suffering from powdery mildew and oedema were cut down in August 2004; the trial was subsequently sprayed fortnightly with a fungicide against powdery mildew, rust and leaf spot.

**A fungal pathogen, *Phoma telephii***, was found on *Sedum telephium* 'Sunkissed' and *Sedum telephium* 'Black Emperor' causing die back. Stems affected with this pathogen should be cut out and burned as sticky spores spread by rain splash.

**Larvae of the sedum ermine moth, *Yponomeuta vigintipunctata*** appeared on plants in the garden in 2006 but did not affect trial entries. Larvae produce a conspicuous communal web and feed on foliage, leading to defoliation. Affected plants should be pruned back hard, removing damaged stems, and occupied webs cut out and burned.



Plants affected by *Phoma telephii*



Plants affected by ermine moth

## **Wildlife**

The best cultivars for bees and butterflies were the selections of *S. spectabile*, with their large flat heads and prominent stamens. Unfortunately, the very popular *S. 'Herbstfreude'* (as well as closely related cultivars) was amongst the poorest for attracting insects as it has only small petals and lacks stamens.

## Floral Trials Sub-committee

Members of the Floral Trials Sub-committee who have assessed the *Sedum* include:

<b>Chairman:</b>	Tony Lord
<b>Vice-chairmen:</b>	Roy Cheek, Pam Schwerdt
<b>Members:</b>	
Bill Boardman	Bob Brown
Marina Christopher	John Coke
David Creese	Ivan Dickings
Fergus Garrett	John Gibson
Diana Hart Dyke	Tony Hender
Ian Howell	Sibylle Kreutzberger
Alison Mulvaney	John Paton
Graham Rice	Chris Sanders
Keith Sangster	Terry Smale
Mike Smallwood	Brian Talman
Ray Waite	Victoria Wakefield



Committee judging in the first year of the trial, 2004 (photo Andrew McSeveney)

## Senders of plants to the trial:

Abbey Dore Court Garden, Abbeydore, Herts HR2 0AD.  
[www.abbeydorecourt.co.uk](http://www.abbeydorecourt.co.uk)

Beeches Nursery, Ashdon, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2HB.  
[www.beechesnursery.co.uk](http://www.beechesnursery.co.uk)

The Beth Chatto Gardens Ltd, Elmstead Market,  
Essex CO7 7DB. [www.bethchatto.co.uk](http://www.bethchatto.co.uk)

Binny Plants, Nr Broxbourn, West Lothian EH52 6NL.  
[www.binnyplants.co.uk](http://www.binnyplants.co.uk)

Cotswold Garden Flowers, Evesham, Worcestershire  
WR11 5EZ. [www.cgf.net](http://www.cgf.net)

Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, Whitchurch, Hants  
RG28 7NJ. [www.hardys-plants.co.uk](http://www.hardys-plants.co.uk)

Hillview Hardy Plants, Worfield, Shropshire WV15 5NT.  
[www.hillviewhardyplants.com](http://www.hillviewhardyplants.com)

Howard Nurseries Ltd, Wortham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 1PX.  
[www.howardnurseries.co.uk](http://www.howardnurseries.co.uk)

Intrinsic Perennial Gardens, Hebron, IL 60034, USA.  
[www.intrinsicperennialgardens.com](http://www.intrinsicperennialgardens.com)

L Klinkhamer, PO Box 350, 2180 AJ, Hillegom,  
The Netherlands

Marchants Hardy Plants, 2 Marchants Cottage, Ripe Rd,  
Laughton, East Sussex BN8 6AJ

Monksilver Nursery, Oakington Rd, Cottenham,  
Cambridge, Cambs CB4 8TW

Perryhill Nurseries Ltd, Hartfield, East Sussex, TN7 4JP  
[www.perryhillnurseries.co.uk](http://www.perryhillnurseries.co.uk)

Phoenix Perennial Plants, Paice Lane, Medstead,  
Hampshire GU34 5PR

The Plantsman's Preference, Garboldisham, Norfolk  
IP22 2QW. [www.plantpref.co.uk](http://www.plantpref.co.uk)

RHS Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB

Rougham Hall Nurseries, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk  
IP30 9LZ. [www.roughamhallnurseries.co.uk](http://www.roughamhallnurseries.co.uk)

S J Spijker BV, Oosteinderlaan 322181 H J Hillegom –  
The Netherlands. [www.sjspijker.com](http://www.sjspijker.com)

Southcombe Gardens, Kenton, Exeter, Devon EX6 8H4

Terra Nova Nurseries, Canby, OR 97013, USA.  
[www.terranovanurseries.com](http://www.terranovanurseries.com)

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## References and further reading

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## Societies

**The Sedum Society:** Secretary: Les Percy, 43 Hawleys Close, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5LY

## 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 AGM 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 RHS Herbarium keeps a record of trial cultivars as dried specimens with detailed descriptions and photographic images. This forms an important reference for the horticultural industry. Any new cultivars are highlighted and a Standard specimen is preserved and described.

The RHS Herbarium, stored at RHS Garden Wisley, is the largest active horticultural herbarium in the world. At present the collection contains about 80,000 herbarium specimens and over 30,000 images of plants. Material is actively collected from a wide spectrum of sources including RHS plant trials.

## RHS Bulletins

*Begonia* Rex Cultorum Group: December 2006  
*Canna*: September 2003  
Daisies (yellow perennial): September 2004  
*Delphinium*: June 2004  
*Fuchsia* (hardy): December 2005  
*Geranium* (hardy) Stage 1: June 2005  
*Geranium* (hardy) Stage 2: June 2006  
*Geranium* (hardy) Stage 3: June 2007  
*Hyacinthaceae* (little blue bulbs): September 2005  
*Iris* (bearded): May 2007  
Lavenders (hardy): July 2003  
*Miscanthus*: October 2004  
Peppers (sweet): November 2006  
Potatoes (salad): November 2004  
*Potentilla* (shrubby): July 2002  
*Rhododendron yakushimanum* and hybrids: May 2006  
Runner Beans: October 2007  
Saxifrages (silver): May 2005  
*Spiraea japonica* (with coloured leaves): November 2003

## RHS Plant Assessment

online publications, to complement *RHS Plant Trials and Awards* series

*Pittosporum tenuifolium* hybrids and cultivars: July 2006  
*Caryopteris*: December 2007  
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