

PRESS RELEASE – MAY 2007



Hillier Garden Centres and Nurseries

Chelsea 2007 – 'Planting with Trees'

The Dove Clinic
sponsors of the Hillier exhibit

Hillier Nurseries will be hoping for their 62nd consecutive Chelsea Gold Medal at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show, with a design that plays to the company's core strengths: 'Planting with Trees'.

Hillier's Chelsea designer, Andrew McIndoe, is so passionate about communicating the value of trees in garden schemes that he conceived the design concept to "give trees the profile, respect and attention they deserve. We've felt for some time that the role of trees in gardens and the wider environment has been completely undervalued."

Trees make even the smallest garden seem larger. They provide shade and a sense of privacy and tranquillity, and provide year round interest with their changing foliage, tactile bark and graceful forms.



And, if that were not inspiration enough to plant trees, they are vital in the battle against climate change. Monty Don writes: "Anyone with a garden should be planting trees and shrubs to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere." (BBC Gardener's World magazine – Jan 2007)

Highlighting Species of Trees

Andrew McIndoe's design creates a series of garden rooms to illustrate how best to incorporate trees into different garden situations.

An **avenue** of *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*, the magnificent white-barked Himalayan birch, leads visitors into the centre of Hillier's exhibit, whilst multi-stemmed birches **frame a pool and paving feature**.

Trimmed and trained specimens such as *Ilex aquifolium* (holly), the aromatic *Laurus nobilis* (sweet bay) and *Olea europaea* (olive) in contemporary containers feature in a **courtyard** setting.



In more **naturalistic** planting schemes, visitors will see the wonderful *Liriodendron tulipifera* (tulip tree). A large and relatively fast-growing tree, the tulip tree has mid-green leaves with unique indented tips, turning rich butter-yellow in autumn. Mature trees boast tulip-shaped, yellowish green flowers in summer.

Look out also for *Prunus maackii* 'Amber Beauty', the Manchurian Cherry, with its distinctive amber peeling bark, and *Tilia x euchlora*, a magnificent and aphid-resistant Lime with deliciously fragrant flowers.

There is a special place on the Hillier stand for *Ulmus* 'New Horizon', a ground-breaking species of Elm. Dutch Elm disease has devastated elm stocks in Europe and North America since the 1920s, but in *Ulmus* 'New Horizon' there is fresh hope that elms will once again become a feature of the British landscape.

What to plant with trees

Hillier's display serves as a masterclass in successful planting with trees. Drawing on over 3000 shrubs and hardy plants from the company's own Wholesale Nursery in Hampshire, Hillier's planting schemes illustrate how to plant in dappled to dense shade. Evergreen shrubs and plants from woodland habitats relish the growing conditions beneath trees. Euonymus, aucubas, viburnums and cotoneasters are some reliable favourites that provide evergreen structure alongside ferns and foxgloves. Rhododendrons, azaleas and pieris add colour in the dappled shade.

New Plants for 2007

Hillier's Wholesale Nursery will be showcasing its new plant releases at Chelsea 2007:

Albizia julibrissen 'Summer Chocolate' (pictured): a graceful small tree from Japan with fern-like foliage of a reddish-brown chocolate colour, complemented by pink, fluffy flower heads in late summer on mature plants. Height: 3m over 10 years.



Berberis thunbergii 'Golden Torch': a small slow-growing shrub, formal and upright in habit with bright golden foliage with warm pink tints in autumn.

Cornus sericea 'Hedgerows Gold': a superb new form of red osier dogwood. The young leaves have a pronounced yellow margin turning creamy-white with age.

Juncus 'Curly Gold Strike': striking gold line curls along the spiralling leaves and stems of this quirky rush.

Phormium 'All Black': a new form of New Zealand flax. It has a strong-growing upright habit with very dark purplish-black foliage. Height: 1.5-2m.

Spiraea x vanhouttei 'Gold Fountain': arching habit and golden-yellow, scallop-edged leaves bearing clusters of pure white flowers in summer.

Soil micro-organisms

This year's collaboration with The Dove Clinic, Germain's and Yakult highlights the benefits to plant health of micro-organisms in the soil, and draws direct comparisons with the benefits of micro-organisms in the human digestive system. Visitors to the Hillier Chelsea exhibit can view live amplified images of soil micro-organisms at work!

Hillier Vital Statistics

Hillier Nurseries has the largest exhibit of all at Chelsea Flower Show at 23.5m x 18.5m. By Press Day on Monday, 21 June, Hillier will have used:

- Over 3000 trees and plants
- 16 tons of sand, cement and ballast
- 1300 concrete blocks to raise terraces and ponds
- 4 tons of paving and walling
- 10 tons of bark chips
- 750 hand-written labels

The Hillier stand will have taken a year to prepare, 10 days to build and will take just *10 hours* to dismantle.



Some specimen trees are returned to the nursery for much needed rest and recuperation! whilst the rest of the Hillier Chelsea stock is sent to Hillier's Sunningdale garden centre for a Chelsea sale bonanza. Early on Sunday morning, queues of excited bargain hunters will be awaiting the Hillier lorries, as they arrive in from Chelsea direct.

Notes to Editors

Hillier Nurseries was founded in 1864 by Edwin Hillier, and has an unrivalled and (to date) unbroken run of Gold Medals at the Chelsea Flower Show since 1945. Hillier has 3 divisions:

Hillier Wholesale Nursery: supplies a network of UK stockists, producing around 2 million container-grown hardy plants, shrubs and herbaceous perennials per year.

Hillier Amenity Nursery: is Britain's largest tree nursery, growing semi-mature trees for commercial projects and local authorities in the UK on 500 acres at Liss in Hampshire, and 20 000 trees a year in containers ranging from 45 litres to a staggering 2000 Litres at the Broadmead Nursery beside the Company's head office in Ampfield, Hampshire.

Hillier Garden Centres: are specialist garden centres at 13 locations in England where the focus is on premium plant quality and range, gardening advice and customer service. Hillier has the largest membership of any garden society other than the RHS with over 200 000 members, who receive the Hillier Gardening Club Magazine three times a year. Hillier Garden Centres are in Bath, Newbury, Hemel Hempstead, Sunningdale, Chichester, Eastbourne, Horsham, Redditch, Botley, Braishfield, Liss, Romsey and Winchester.

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