



H. 'Vanilla Cream'

In this issue we feature perhaps the most stable offspring of *h.* 'Little Aurora', which was the featured cultivar last month. As we close the nursery gate for the 2012 season we reflect on progress with our plans...

Another charming cultivar

H. 'Vanilla Cream' is a favourite of ours at Mickfield Hostas. It is not difficult to see why, as there are few varieties with such distinctively shaped leaves. This little gem has produced a series of offspring, which share the leaf shape, and intensity of colour. Another cultivar from the Paul Aden stable of introductions, this hybrid is a stronger grower than others related to *h.* 'Little Aurora'.



Note: Lake Ontario (not shown) lies along the northern boundary of the state.

The growing conditions of the registered introduction are similar to those we experience in the UK - click on the map above for more details.

H. 'Vanilla Cream' was registered in 1986 as a hybrid of a seedling (Aden 456) and *h.* 'Little Aurora'. The leaves have excellent texture and change colour during the season from a chartreuse yellow in the spring to bright gold in summer. The leaves tend to fade to creamy yellow before going over in the autumn:



These gradual colour changes are illustrated well in the image above, as the newer leaves emerge with the chartreuse tinge and the older leaves have already turned gold.

Nursery update

This has been a really busy year at the nursery.



Robin has managed to build the new shade tunnel for the National Collection, and has almost completed re-building the benching in the original shade tunnel. This was no mean feat considering the challenging weather we have experienced, and the amount of work involved, and Robin's tendency to over engineer.

As the gate closes on the season we have had our most successful year for the nursery so far. Now that Robin and Yvonne have handed over the flower show reigns to Melanie and Roy, the nursery has been open throughout the season. Many customers have missed them at the shows but they have been able to catch up with them at the nursery. It was great to see so many regular customers, and to welcome many new visitors to the nursery. Our new entrance signs probably helped, but most importantly we didn't miss holidaymakers visiting our lovely county.

Second generation

We hold five cultivars in our National Collection, which originate from *h.* 'Vanilla Cream'.

Each one has the same distinctive leaf shape and growth habit of the parent, making lovely dense mounds of foliage. The *h.* 'Vanilla Cream' series, with their slightly glossy leaves, would make ideal companion plants to the 'Mouse Ears' series, with their predominantly matt blue colours.

Click on the individual plant names to find out more.



***H.* 'Academy Flaxen Spades'**

Registered in 2002

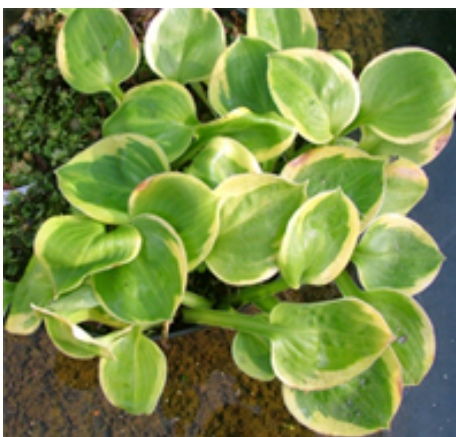
This cultivar has very glossy leaves, which emerge dark green and become chartreuse by summer.



***H.* 'Heart and Soul'**

Registered in 2000

This sport has green margins to the gold leaves, which emerge almost plain. The margins develop as the season progresses.



***H.* 'Ice Cream'**

Registered in 1998

This sport has the reverse colouring of *h.* 'Heart and Soul'.



***H.* 'Peppermint Cream'**

Registered in 2009

This sport has very subtle chartreuse margins to the gold leaves.



***H.* 'Wylde Green Cream'**

Registered in 1996

Perhaps our favourite sport, this cultivar has darker green margins to the gold leaves, making a startling variegation.

Disruption

We were sorry to have the National Collection less accessible this year, due to the upgrading of its home. Visitors were able to see the work in progress, and the plants all over the place and appreciated the work involved in housing such a large collection.

Thank you for your patience with the work on the home of our National Collection this year.

It will be a much more comfortable stroll around the Collection in future with wider aisles and better labelling.

Next year we will have the collection back in catalogued operation, to enhance our visitors experience

Next month we review the 2012 season, which has been an interesting experiment for our business, with our decision to split our efforts between the nursery and the shows. It is always difficult to change direction, especially after experiencing our best ever year in 2011. However, change is good and we couldn't contrive extra coverage at shows with limited resources, to the detriment of the nursery.

NOTE: Although the nursery is now closed until next year, **we are still sending out mail ordered plants**, and will continue to do so until at least the end of October.

Next month: Our review of the 2012 season...

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 35 years of experience with the Hosta genus. We are constantly learning and refining that knowledge and would welcome any suggestions that readers of this newsletter would like to make so please **contact us**.

[Subscribe >](#) | [Unsubscribe >](#) | [Archive >](#)