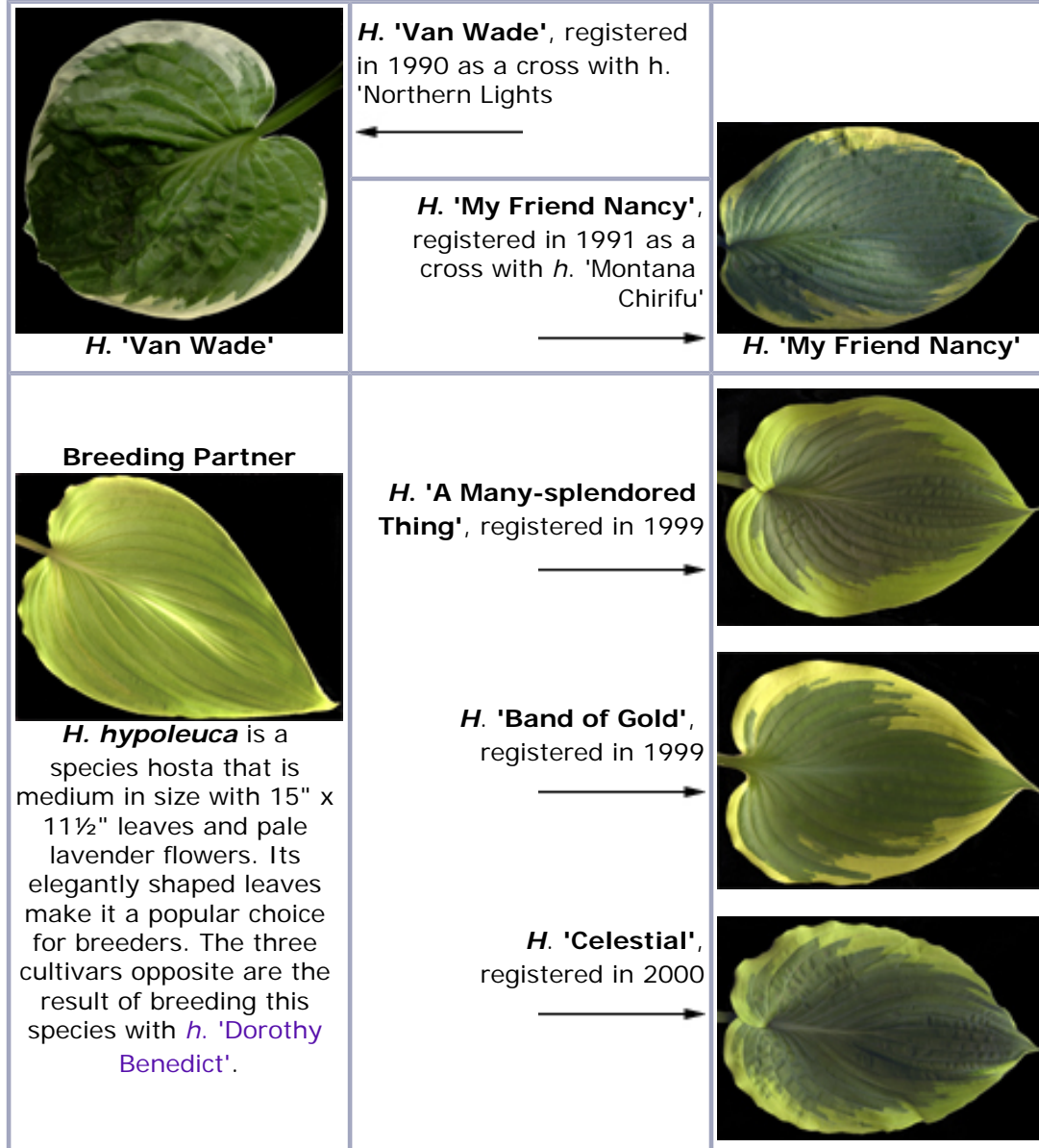


Spring has sprung... at last

Now that the weather has warmed up nicely the hostas are shooting out of their dormancy and almost growing in front of our eyes. The first shows on our 2009 calendar are fast approaching so why not take a day out and come and see us. Our '2009 tour' starts at Harrogate - hope to see you there...

Back to the future

This month we return to our parentage series but this time with a twist. Over the next four newsletters we will be tracing the ancestry of *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'* backwards to its species origin, *h. sieboldiana*. The following list of sports and crosses from *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'* is arranged chronologically, according to the date of registration:








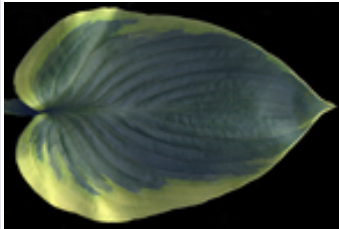
H. 'Dorothy Benedict'... is a striking cultivar, which exhibits deliciously varied leaf markings with some mottling and rugosity. The result is a plant mound full of leaves that look highly individual. It is a small hosta with leaves typically 6" x 6". The near white flowers have purple markings and sit on 12" scapes. *H. 'Frances Williams'* is the pod and pollen parent and will be the subject of the next newsletter.

H. 'Dorothy Benedict'



Herb Benedict registered this cultivar in 1983 and named it after his wife, Dorothy.

Looking at *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'* it is easy to imagine it would make a fascinating breeding hosta. The following sports and crosses listed do not constitute an exhaustive list as it only focuses on those varieties we have in our collection. However, it might be enough to whet your appetite to find more and an excellent place to start is the Hosta Register.

	<p>H. 'Memories of Dorothy', registered in 2002 as a cross of <i>h. 'Montana Aureomarginata'</i> x <i>h. pycnophylla</i></p>	
H. 'Memories of Dorothy'	<p>H. 'The Leading Edge', registered in 2002 as a hybrid seedling</p>	
	<p>H. 'Cinderella', registered in 2004 as a sport of <i>h. 'Dorothy Benedict'</i></p>	
H. 'Cinderella'	<p>H. 'Miss Tokyo', registered in 2004 as a cross with <i>h. 'Montana Aureomarginata'</i></p>	
	<p>H. 'Alligator Shoes', an unregistered <i>h. 'Montana'</i> cross</p>	
H. 'Alligator Shoes'	<p>H. 'Heavenly Beginnings', an unregistered <i>h. 'Elatior'</i> cross</p>	

Last year we added three more *h. 'Dorothy Benedict'* cultivars to our collection: *h. 'Nifty Fifty'*, *h. 'Red Hot Poker'* and *h. 'Surf and Turf'*.

The Benedict Awards and Medal

Established in 2006, the [Benedict Garden Performance Award](#) recognises hosta varieties that have proven themselves stars in the garden.

Hostas that gain any aspect of this award will have been voted for by judges from across North America. Therefore, we can assume that, given the wide range of weather and environmental conditions experienced across the continent, the chosen varieties should perform at least as well in our own UK gardens. We will be watching the [AHS website](#) later this year to see which varieties receive the first medals.

PSST... beware dry weather in the spring

Warm, dry spring weather is a wonderful respite but don't forget your pot-based hostas may need watering from quite early on to ensure they do not dry out.

Next month: We profile *h. 'Frances Williams'*...

The advice and opinions contained within this monthly newsletter have been formed over more than 30 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](#).

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2009 Tour Dates

It's that time again when we go on the road with our lovely hostas - click on the show names to visit the show websites:

[Harrogate Spring](#)
23-26 April

[Malvern Spring](#)
7-10 May

[Gardener's World Live](#)
10-14 June

[Hampton Court](#)
7-12 July

[Tatton Park](#)
22-26 July

[Harrogate Autumn](#)
18-20 September

Suffolk dates:

24 May
[NCCPG Plant Sale](#)
Helmington Hall

24-25 May
[Flower & Continental Market](#)
Bury St. Edmunds

Check out our [show page](#) for more details.

We re-open the nursery gate this month so if you are planning a visit to Suffolk, do call in.



We would love to show you around the collection.