



# CHARLOTTE HARRIS'S

*essential garden plants*



Charlotte Harris is one of the UK's most exciting designers with a string of awards under her belt – including two gold medals at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show – and is co-founder of Harris Bugg Studio with Hugo Bugg, a practice well known for its range of projects. Here Charlotte reveals her go-to garden stalwarts, the must-have plants she uses all the time for year-round interest, or to fit particular needs or situations or functions in the garden, and that she turns back to again and again.

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY



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## Annuals and biennials

**1 CALENDULA OFFICINALIS 'INDIAN PRINCE'** Exuberant calendulas are indispensable in gardens of every size. This fine cultivar is burnt orange with a rich russet heart. **Height (H)** 75cm. **Spread (S)** 45cm. **Conditions (C)** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **Season of Interest (SI)** May – October. **Hardiness Ratings (HR)** RHS H5, USDA 2a-11†.

**2 LUNARIA ANNUA 'CORFU BLUE'** I love honesty for the contrast between boisterous cheer in spring and the later elegant papery seedpods. This cultivar is lovely in gardens, bringing a slightly more refined yet still spirited presence with rich purple stems, violet-blue flowers and purple-flushed, silver seedpods. **AGM\***. **H** 90cm. **S** 75cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6.

**3 PANICUM MILIACEUM 'VIOLACEUM'** At a recent open day at Perch Hill, Sarah Raven raved about this annual panicum, and I can see why. Its bountiful green and purple seed tassels animate containers, fill in borders, and contrast well with bright colours. **H** 90cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – October.

**4 SMYRNIUM PERFOLIATUM** I love this biennial for its early season injections of acidic lime on sturdy umbels that light up dappled areas in and around the base of trees. It self-seeds, so will meander nicely. We use it with ferns, epimediums and *Melica altissima* 'Alba'. Good foliage for cut flowers. **H** 80cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April – May. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

## Bulbs

**5 CAMASSIA CUSICKII** Spires of pale-blue, starry flowers in May and June, perfect for planting in swathes and weaving through damp meadows or around water. Will enjoy both sun and dappled shade, so a good way to connect spaces and give rhythm. **H** 60cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-11.

**6 CROCUS TOMMASINIANUS** The lilac-purple goblets and warm-orange stamens of the early crocus are a welcome herald of spring, both for us and any pollinators out roaming on milder days. Let it meander naturally through grass, borders and woodland edges. **AGM**. **H** 10cm. **S** 3cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** February – March. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-8b.

**7 LILIUM 'CLAUDE SHRIDE'** The most beautiful of the Turk's cap lilies. Its striking and graceful flowers are a regal shade of dark wine-red flecked with gold, and give way to handsome and long-lasting seedheads. Plant in swathes in deep soils but watch out for pesky lily beetles and their shredding powers. **H** 1.2m. **S** 25cm. **C** Moist but

well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**8 NARCISSUS POETICUS** It's hard to pick just one narcissus, but the pheasant's eye is the epitome of style, with crisp, white petals and an egg-yellow heart outlined delicately in red. Full of fragrance, good for naturalising and lovely as a cut flower. **AGM**. **H** 35cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** March – May. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-10b.

**9 SCILLA LUCILIAE** Pop them in pots, in gravel, at the front of beds, through grass or under deciduous trees and shrubs in large swathes to enjoy the sparkling blue of the small starry flowers with their white-blue centres. **AGM**. **H** 15cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** March. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

**10 TULIPA SPRENGERI** This elegant species tulip flowers into June with a brazen scarlet and a hint of gold. It is tolerant of dappled shade and breathtaking when it naturalises and drifts. The seedheads are attractive in their own right. **AGM**. **H** 40cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil, chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

## Ferns and grasses

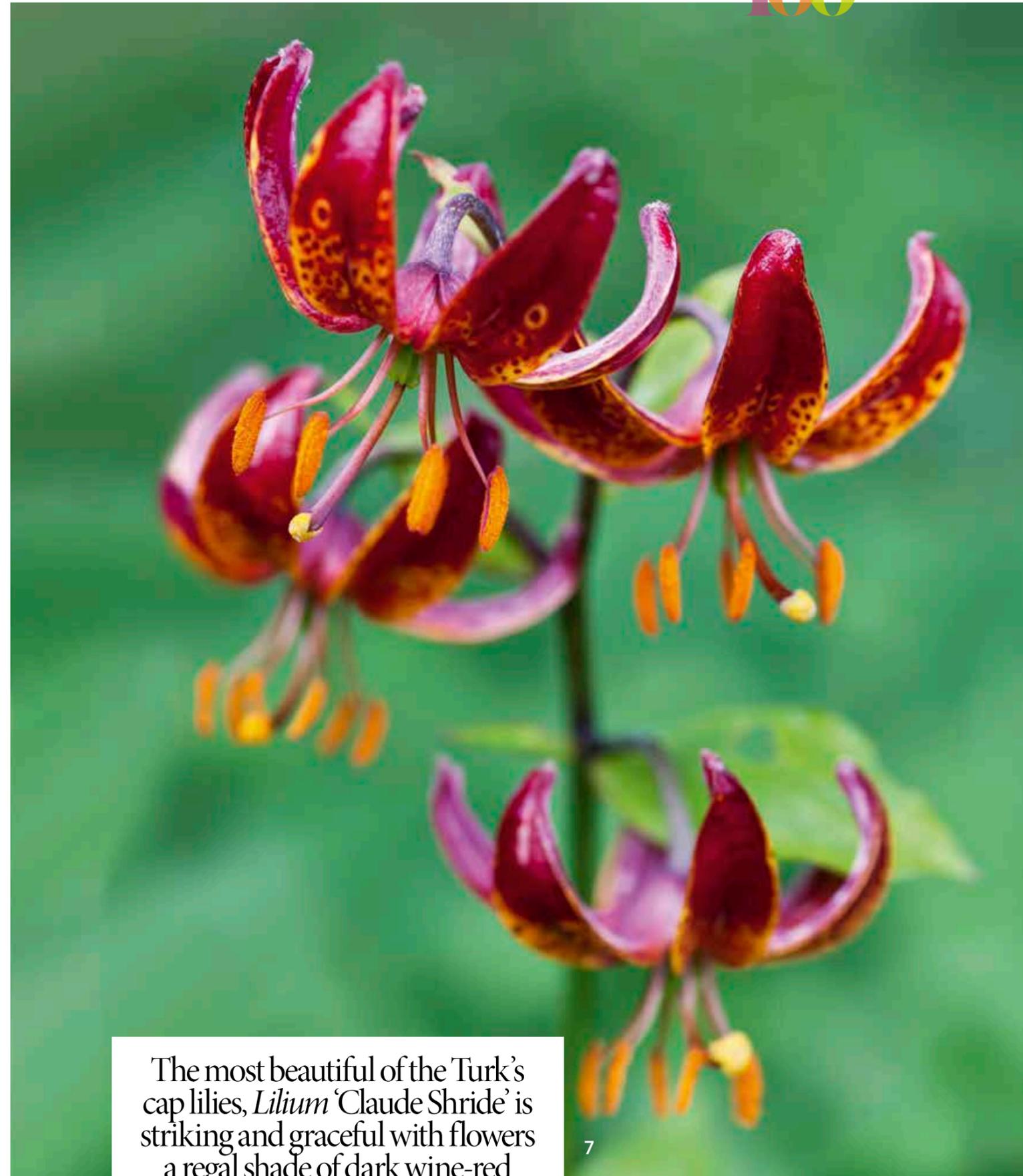
**11 CALAMAGROSTIS BRACHYTRICHA** The strappy foliage of this deciduous grass provides early season green, while the translucent plumes of silvery-pink feathers arrive in July. A helpful textural stitch from sun to dappled shade, giving rhythm in clumps. **AGM**. **H** 1.5m. **S** 90cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

**12 DRYOPTERIS WALLICHIANA** A dignified and handsome fern, rising shuttlecock-like in spring. The glossiness of the mid-green foliage is particularly valuable in shadier, drier spaces, while a dark-brown midrib gives extra oomph. **AGM**. **H** 90cm. **S** 75cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**13 MELICA ALTISSIMA 'ALBA'** A grass to animate and brighten woodland planting in the first half of the year. The flowers resemble droplets of water held delicately above green foliage. It can start to look tired later in the season, so weave through successional planting or a more structured grass such as *Hakonechloa macra*. **H** 80cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers May – June. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

**14 MISCANTHUS SINENSIS 'YAKUSHIMA DWARF'** This compact cultivar of the magnificent ornamental grass has feathery, musky plumes that shimmer to silver as they mature. **H** 80cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Flowers August – October. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b. ▷

\*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.  
4, 5 & 12 JASON INGRAM; 6 AMMENTIME / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 7 BJORN HANSSON / GAP PHOTOS



The most beautiful of the Turk's cap lilies, *Lilium* 'Claude Shride' is striking and graceful with flowers a regal shade of dark wine-red

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▷ **15 ONOCLEA SENSIBILIS** Simple, broad fronds open out a pinky-red and mature to apple green. Plant in swathes for a naturalistic effect, but keep sheltered and in light shade; its common name is sensitive fern for a reason. AGM. **H** 90cm. **S** 2m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**16 SESLERIA AUTUMNALIS** Straddling both part-shade and sun, this well-behaved grass is useful as groundcover or understorey, and for planting through. Fresh-green spring foliage is joined in summer by airy flower spikes of silver that evolve to biscuit brown. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.



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**17 SPOBOLOUS HETEROLEPIS** The fine arching foliage and diaphanous clouds of frothy flowers create a shimmering effect that looks great when punctuated by other seedheads. A very special grass for a hot, dry spot. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** Flowers July – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

## Perennials

**18 ACHILLEA 'MONDPAGODE'** Achilleas are indispensable in many settings and 'Mondpagode' is particularly attractive. Soft lemon-yellow buds open to creamy flat umbels held above grey-green filigree leaves. AGM. **H** 75cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** May – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**19 ACTAEA 'QUEEN OF SHEBA'** Chocolatey, finely cut foliage lends this actaea a particular airiness and elegance. Tall stems of headily fragrant flowers arch, twist and swoop, giving height and animation as well as drawing in pollinators. **H** 2.4m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist, fertile, humus-rich clay, loam; partial shade. **SI** August – October. **HR** USDA 4a-8b.



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**20 AMSONIA ILLUSTRIS** The stand-out star of our RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2021 garden, with pale-blue flowers, an attractive clumping form and splendid autumn colour. Leaves turn from mid-green to butter and bronze, with attractive seedheads held aloft. **H** 1m. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – October. **HR** USDA 5a-9b.

**21 ANEMONE HUPEHENSIS 'HADSPEN ABUNDANCE'** Invaluable for late-season colour, whether in light shade or sun. The alternating lighter and darker petals of the pink flowers are particularly fetching, and the golden stamens add interest. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**22 ARALIA CORDATA** Growing as wide as it is high, its scale means it holds space gracefully in a woodland-edge planting palette. The foliage is a wonderful complement to companion shade plants, and the creamy flower umbels turn to



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dark jewel-like berries. The young shoots are edible, and a great delicacy in Japan, China and Korea. **H** 1.2m. **S** 1.2m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**23 ARTEMISIA LUDOVICIANA 'VALERIE FINNIS'** A terrific foliage plant of ghostly silver-green for sunny spots. The leaves are broader and less finely cut than other artemisias, providing visual contrast to more feathery textures in the gravel garden. Offers a punch of colour with plums, purples and pinks. AGM. **H** 70cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

**24 ARUNCUS 'HORATIO'** Graceful spikes of creamy flowers on red stems, light up shady spaces. In autumn, these hold their structure well, becoming deliciously biscuity, while the ferny foliage turns a spectacular coral-red. Best planted in groups. **H** 1.2m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained to poorly drained clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

**25 ASTRANTIA 'ROMA'** This masterwort is a vigorous performer with great colour, character and presence, flowering from June to September. Long-lasting and abundant pincushions of dusky pink bracts and paler centres set off darker pink stamens. AGM. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

**26 BEESIA CALTHIFOLIA** A class act among woodlanders, with glossy, deep-green, heart-shaped foliage and marbled veining. Delicate white stars held on wiry vertical stems flower all spring and summer, eventually turning to bobbing seedheads. Best used in drifts. **H** 30cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained loam; partial to full shade. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-8b.

**27 BERGENIA CILIATA 'WILTON'** Its large hirsute leaves are a wonderful mid-green that can turn rich red in autumn, and provide moments of calm among other woodland textures. If you can keep mice from snacking on the flowers in spring, they're lovely as seedheads. **H** 30cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b.

**28 BOEHMERIA JAPONICA** A very special injection into shade planting, with a slightly exotic feel to its nettle-like serrated leaf. Unlike nettles, though, it's compellingly strokable. Gentle tasseled flowers in late summer. **H** 1.2m. **S** 1.2-1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; sun to part shade. **SI** August. **HR** USDA 5a-8b.

**29 BUPLEURUM FALCATUM** Airy structure and light umbels of zesty yellow enliven planting with pinpricks of sparkle. Undemanding apart from its need for very well-drained soil. **H** 60cm. **S** 20cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

**30 CENTRANTHUS LECOQII** The lilac flowers of this pretty Mediterranean valerian are softer and more subtle than the pink of our native *Centranthus ruber*, and it is less forceful in its self-seeding. Very at ease in hot, dry conditions. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – October. **HR** USDA 5a-8b.

**31 CRAMBE MARITIMA** Sea kale is a coastal native to the south of the UK, famously seen in Derek Jarman's garden alongside California poppies. The crinkly, chunky, glaucous leaf is a good foil for gravel gardens and its foaming, tiny white flowers are a boon for insects. **H** 50cm-1m. **S** 10-50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – July. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**32 CROCOSMIA 'HELLFIRE'** Crocosmias keenly evoke memories of gardening with my mother, which is one of the reasons I hold them so dear. This new cultivar has stunning crimson flowers and a more controllable swagger than 'Lucifer' and the like. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 45cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-9b.

**33 CYNARA CARDUNCULUS 'VIOLET DE PROVENCE'** Globe artichokes make architectural and beautiful interjections to the ornamental garden. This is a fine-flavoured early cropping cultivar, with strong violet buds that contrast well with the grey-green foliage. If left unpicked, they open to luminous and imperial purple, thistle flowerheads. **H** 1.5m. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – September. **HR** USDA 7a-9b.

**34 DICENTRA FORMOSA 'LANGTREES'** This versatile woodlander has unusually glaucous foliage, which is helpful when combined with greener shade lovers. Its ferny foliage makes a good groundcover and sprays of white, heart-shaped flowers with the faintest blush of pink appear in late spring; they last well in cooler conditions. AGM. **H** 30cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Moist but well-drained to poorly drained chalk, clay, loam; part shade. **SI** April – June. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

**35 DIERAMA PULCHERRIMUM 'BLACKBIRD'** The angel's fishing rod is a show-stopper of a specimen plant. It can be slow to flower but is worth every moment of the wait. Graceful stems, a metre tall, arch lithely and hold clusters of plum-purple bells. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-10b.

**36 DIGITALIS LUTEA** We use this slender perennial foxglove often, especially when the scale of the space is not suitable for other foxgloves but a vertical accent is still required. Slim, lemon-yellow flowers contrast well with the deep-green leaves. Captivating with ferns in dappled light. AGM. **H** 90cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to full shade. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b. ▷



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▷ **37 DISPORUM LONGISTYLUM 'GREEN GIANT'** Disporums are elegant in their own right, but they also associate well with many other plants, so you can use them to create planting connections in lightly shaded spaces. This cultivar is graceful and vase-shaped, with fine green leaves that emerge purple tinged and are followed by cream-green bell-shaped flowers. Tender in frost. **H** 1.8m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist, but well-drained clay, loam; part to full shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** USDA 6a-9b.



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**38 EPIMEDIUM X VERSICOLOR 'SULPHUREUM'** Semi-evergreen, this good groundcover for tough locations brings contrasting colour tones to woodland associations. Early and late foliage has bronze marbling, and is held on deep-red stems upon which lemon-yellow flowers nod in early spring. **AGM.** **H** 35cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to full shade. **SI** March – April. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.



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**39 ERYNGIUM X ZABELII 'JOS EIJKING'** Of the many eryngiums to enjoy, this long-flowering sea holly is set apart by the intensity of its blue and its pleasing proportions. A striking presence in the border, and useful as a cut flower. **H** 70cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

**40 EUPHORBIA PALUSTRIS** This clump-forming evergreen boldly announces itself with vibrant, yellow-lime bracts atop rich-green foliage that mellows to butter and orange in autumn. Found in moist meadows, it associates well with camassias, primulas and irises, and can handle the dappled light of a woodland edge. **AGM.** **H** 1m. **S** 90cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; full sun. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-10b.

**41 EUPHORBIA SEGUIERIANA** A lovely textural euphorbia, bushy and bright, that combines well with metallic blues and wine reds. Stems tinged with red with fine needle-like leaves and an abundance of tiny acid-lime flowers. **H** 80cm. **S** 80cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-11.



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**42 EURYBIA X HERVEYI** Previously known as *Aster macrophyllus* 'Twilight', this grafter is widely used for good reason. Robust, mildew-resistant, tolerant of dappled shade and loved by pollinators, its early season groundcover foliage is followed by upright stems hosting a profusion of lavender-blue flowers that turn to attractive senesced heads. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

**43 GERANIUM HIMALAYENSE 'GRAVETYE'** This steady and undemanding cultivar, with violet-blue flowers that have a pale centre and tints of maroon, is good for groundcover, connecting sunny and dappled shade plantings. In autumn, the foliage turns shades of orange and red. **H** 30cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soils; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – July. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 6a-9b.

**44 GILLENIA TRIFOLIATA** An abundance of airy white flowers emerge from contrasting red calyces, and float above delicate mid-green foliage. In autumn, foliage is a rich orange and russet with burnt umber seedheads. Lovely for textural woodland-edge planting, with *Iris sibirica* or roses. **AGM.** **H** 1m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; part shade. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**45 HELLEBORUS FOETIDUS WESTER FLISK GROUP** I use hellebores a lot, valuing their evergreen optimism in late winter and early spring. Leaves are deeply cut, palmate fingers, their grey-green providing a good foil for the clusters of pale-green bells hanging from dark-red, upright stems. **H** 80cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** January – April. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**46 HEUCHERA VILLOSA 'AUTUMN BRIDE'** Plumes of creamy panicles held on arching stems above scalloped mid-green leaves. Planted en masse, this contributes a welcome freshness to late summer and early autumn. Leave plumes standing for winter interest. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – September. **HR** USDA 3a-9b.

**47 HOSTA 'DEVON GREEN'** The classiest of all hostas. It has an upright habit and heart-shaped leaves with a gentle arching curve down and immaculate side veins. The glossy leaves give a good ping of light in more dappled settings, and they contrast well with ferns, grasses and more delicate or feathery elements. **AGM.** **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; part shade to full shade. **SI** Foliage May – August; flowers August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

**48 HYLOTELEPHIUM 'JOSÉ AUBERGINE'** One of the finest of the purple sedums that performs for months and is both sturdy and resilient. Flat umbels of tiny pink-red flowers sit atop near-black fleshy leaves with a hint of grey well into autumn. **H** 50cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** USDA 4a-8b.

**49 HYSSOPUS OFFICINALIS** Plant in a sunny spot with free-draining soil, and you will be rewarded with a constant buzz of pollinators. Spikes of indigo tubular flowers rise above dark-green leaves, which are a good contrast to silver greys. The aromatic leaves have a strong thyme-mint flavour and the edible flowers are beautiful sprinkled in salads. **H** 60cm. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

**50 IRIS 'PAPILLON'** The soft mid-blue flowers, with hints of yellow and white, have a luminous quality, and are lovely as cut flowers – but then you miss the handsome, long-lasting seedpods. **H** 90cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, moisture-retentive soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b. ▷



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The soft mid-blue flowers of *Iris* 'Papillon', with hints of yellow and white, have a luminous quality

37: MARVE DE RIDDER; 39, 42 & 44: JASON INGRAM; 50: DIANNA JAZWINSKI



The opulent flowers of *Penstemon* 'Raven', in mellifluous deep purple, look just as good as cut flowers as they do in the garden

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57, 58, 62 & 63 JASON INGRAM, 54 VISIONS/GAP PHOTOS

▷ **51 KALIMERIS INCISA 'CHARLOTTE'** A long-flowering hard-worker with abundant chalky-lilac daisy flowers. It resembles an aster, but unlike asters doesn't fall foul of mildew. It can tolerate a little shade and looks wonderful with ferns, but also loves the full warmth of the sun. A firm favourite with pollinators. **H** 85cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**52 KIRENGESHOMA PALMATA** One of my favourite woodlanders, its elegant palmate leaves are lovely in their own right, then it delivers the late-season gift of plump lemon-yellow flowers in woodland and shady spots. Native to mountainous woodland areas of Japan, it combines well with ferns and *Hakonechloa macra*. **H** 1.2m. **S** 75cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**53 LINARIA 'PEACHY'** A slender, dreamy soul of a plant, perfect for weaving through a dry and sunny gravel garden. The soft cream, yellow, peach and purple flowers held up on vertical stems go from June to October, are very drought tolerant and look lovely in a vase. **H** 90cm. **S** 30-40cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – October. **HR** USDA 5a-9b.

**54 MONARDA BRADBURYANA** Robust, mildew-tolerant and resistant to deer and rabbits, this *Monarda* prefers sun, but can tolerate light shade, which makes it useful for connecting planting spaces. The pale lilac-pink flowers and aromatic leaves look good in a prairie-like setting with grasses and *Rudbeckia*. **H** 60cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** May. **HR** USDA 5a-8b.

**55 NEPETA X FAASSENII** Nepetas, such as this compact cultivar, *N. racemosa* 'Walker's Low' and *N. gowaniana*, appear in every garden we make. Lovely for edging and good under roses along with *Salvia* 'Nachtvliender'. **AGM**. **H** 60cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

**56 OENOTHERA LINDHEIMERI 'WHIRLING BUTTERFLIES'** Its dancing white flowers with their pinkish hue animate the border. Incredibly useful for weaving through areas of planting. Good in pots with *Anemanthella lessoniana*, *Tulbaghia violacea* and *Cosmos atrosanguineus*. **H** 75cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – September. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.

**57 ORIGANUM LAEVIGATUM 'HERRENHAUSEN'** A hardy marjoram that handles dry, sunny conditions in style and is perfect for edging. I love the contrast of the dark-green foliage and wiry stems against the tiny rich purple flowers, which are a butterfly magnet. **AGM**. **H** 60cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full-sun. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 7a-10b.

**58 PAEONIA DAURICA SUBSP. MLOKOSEWITSCHII** Ephemeral beautiful when she flowers, the plant nicknamed Molly the Witch gives us a fleeting week, a few days more if you're lucky, of her perfect bowls of lemon yellow with intricate golden stamens. **AGM**. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April – May. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**59 PAPAVER CAMBRICUM** There is nothing sunnier than a swathe of the yellow Welsh poppy rambling through the wilder margins of a garden or in nooks and crannies around a house. Will self-seed with abandon. Warm red 'Frances Perry' is also of note for those with an unfathomable dislike of yellow. **H** 50cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; part shade. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 7a-8b.

**60 PAPAVER SOMNIFERUM 'LAUREN'S GRAPE'** The lustrous purple colour and black mottling at the base of the petals combine to make this one of the most seductive poppies. The glaucous seedheads left behind after the flowers have died back are handsome in their own right as they senesce to deep brown. **H** 90cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam; part shade. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b.

**61 PATRINIA MONANDRA** This tall, umbel-like valerian zings through planting. Its tiny flowers give the impression of puffs of yellow clouds, held on stems with hints of red and combined with chartreuse foliage. It packs a punch of colour alongside purples, wines and rusts, adding an elegant lightness, and is best planted individually rather than in swathes. **H** 1.3m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** USDA 5a-9b.

**62 PENSTEMON 'RAVEN'** Opulent foxglove-like flowers in mellifluous deep purple. This long-flowering sun-lover looks fabulous with pale blues and silvers. It looks just as good as a cut flower as it does in the garden. **AGM**. **H** 1m. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 9a-10b.

**63 PERSICARIA BISTORTA 'SUPERBA'** Pale-pink bottlebrushes start in late spring, swaying above dense semi-evergreen leaves to give vertical interest. Vigorous, so plant at low densities, in moister conditions with irises and rogersias. **AGM**. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**64 PERSICARIA 'INDIAN SUMMER'** The globular, bright-red flowers arrive in late summer and hold well into autumn. A good space connector with late-season colour that is shrubbier and more rotund than many persicarias and always alive with pollinators. **H** 70cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – October. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b. ▷

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▷ **65 PHLOMOIDES TUBEROSA 'AMAZONE'** The elegant, lilac whorls of this Jerusalem sage are held in rhythmic interludes above attractive arrow-shaped foliage. As they fade, the architectural seedheads deliver long-season value, with strong silhouettes and autumnal character, as well as food for birds come winter. Drought tolerant, reliable and low maintenance. AGM. H 1.2m. S 90cm. C Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. SI July – August. HR RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**66 PHLOX PANICULATA 'BLUE PARADISE'** I love the way the light makes the flowers on this phlox so captivating, shifting from darker blues to lilacs as the sun moves. Their fragrance, the way the blooms float above their sturdy tall stems, is so beguiling. Long-flowering, with good green foliage and resistance to powdery mildew. Straddles full sun and partial shade. H 1.2m. S 45cm. C Moist but well-drained chalk, clay, loam; full sun to part shade. SI June – September. HR RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**67 PRIMULA SIKKIMENSIS** A good-sized primula with long, strong stems above tidy, well-proportioned leaves, carrying charming lemon-yellow bells that nod gently. Sweetly scented too. Beautiful in a streamside, bog or moist woodland garden. AGM. H 50cm. S 30cm. C Moist but well-drained loam; full sun to full shade. SI April – June. HR RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

**68 PYCNANTHEMUM MUTICUM** A less thuggish member of the mint family, but still with expansionist tendencies, so plant with something that will hold its own. It delivers an attractive presence of silvery-grey with an aromatic, tactile heart-shaped leaf. H 80cm. S 50cm. C Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. SI July – September. HR RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**69 RODGERSIA PODOPHYLLA 'BRAUNLAUB'** *Rodgersia* is a go-to genus for us. Its large leaves contrast well with more delicate or strappy woodland plant combinations, creating moments of calm in dappled shade and waterside planting when used en masse. I especially love this cultivar for its foliage, which unfurls bronze and matures to deep green, before taking on gorgeous coppery autumn hues. H 90cm. S 90cm. C Moist but well-drained loam, clay; full sun to part shade. SI Flowers June – August; foliage spring and autumn. HR RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**70 SALVIA 'AMISTAD'** This is a doer and a half. It is awash with velvety imperial purple flowers from the start of summer until October and sometimes even into November, especially when regularly deadheaded. Midnight blue calyces and stems give it even more visual punch. It enjoys a sheltered sunny position and is easily grown in pots, provided you offer regular seaweed feeds. Loved by bees. AGM. H 1.2m. S 50cm. C Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. SI June – October. HR RHS H3, USDA 9a-11. ▷



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*Salvia 'Amistad'* is a doer and a half, awash with velvety purple flowers from the start of summer until October

66 & 70 JASON INGRAM / 65 FLOREK / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 67 TOMMY TONBERG / GAP PHOTOS; 68 EVERDAY ARTISTRY PHOTOGRAPHY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 69 RIONA McLEOD / GAP PHOTOS.



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▷ **71 SALVIA OFFICINALIS 'BERGGARTEN'** A very useful evergreen foliage plant in sunny, sheltered planting where its large, oval, felted leaves act as a foil for frothier or more dissected plants that enjoy similar conditions, such as artemisia and rosemary. A good, tidy habit with insignificant pale-blue flowers. AGM. **H** 60cm. **S** 1m. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** May – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**72 SANGUISORBA 'TANNA'** The claret-coloured buttons, held on wiry stems, look beautiful punctuating frothy grasses, or simply planted in swathes on their own. This compact form delivers summer interest in smaller spaces and at the front of beds. AGM. **H** 50cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**73 SELINUM WALLICHIANUM** When backlit by the afternoon sun, the cloud-like creamy umbels of this long-lasting showstopper seem to float hazily through planting. Make sure it has space to breathe: I weave it through planting and use near the front where its finely cut foliage and veined red stems can be enjoyed. AGM. **H** 1.2m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**74 TEUCRIUM X LUCIDRYS** This low-growing, evergreen trooper provides such pleasure, whether for its crinkled, glossy-green, aromatic foliage or its spires of pink flowers. Effective for hedging and edging, it contrasts well with silver-leaved plants. Clip after flowering. **H** 25cm. **S** 45cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

**75 THALICTRUM ACTAEIFOLIUM** I fell in love with this delicate and compact *Thalictrum* at Elizabeth MacGregor's nursery. Frothy, fluffy, white-tipped lilac flowers haze above very pleasing, actaea-like foliage. **H** 80cm. **S** 65cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, clay, loam; part shade. **SI** June – August. **HR** USDA 5a-8b.

**76 TULBAGHIA VIOLACEA** Society garlic is a must for its understated elegance, its clusters of lavender blooms and its scent. My most abiding memory of this plant is Tom Stuart-Smith's use of it woven strongly through a simple mix of massed *Stipa tenuissima*, rosemary and lavender around olives and citrus trees at Le Jardin Secret, Marrakech. AGM. **H** 60cm. **S** 25cm. **C** Well-drained loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 7a-10b.

**77 VANCOUVERIA HEXANDRA** This exquisite shade perennial is slow-growing but worth every moment of your patience. Delicate wire stems hold the daintiest of creamy flowers in late spring and early summer. I'm not sure there is a more beautiful leaf to be found than this: it emerges pea green and vaguely heart-shaped. **H** 40cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-7b.



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**78 VERBASCUM CHAIXII** A favourite vertical accent for sunny spots, particularly effective when randomly woven through a well-drained gravel garden. This medium-height, slender form may not have the bombastic branching of some of its cousins, but it is both useful and beautiful. **H** 90cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**79 VERBENA OFFICINALIS VAR. GRANDIFLORA 'BAMPTON'** This vervain's chalky, lilac-pink stars dance airily on dark wiry stems and gently serrated small leaves. It rambles through gravelly spots in our garden, taking on more dramatic foliage colour in the hotter spots. It also looks good in pots with richly coloured dahlias. **H** 1m. **S** 50-75cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H6.

## Shrubs, climbers and roses

**80 BALLOTA PSEUDODICTAMNUS** False dittany is an essential in a gravel or rock garden, thriving in poor soil that is well-drained. A tactile small evergreen shrub with ash-grey stems, felty green-grey leaves, and tiny, pale-pink flowers in summer. Chop back hard in spring to prevent legginess. AGM. **H** 10-50cm. **S** 10-50cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

**81 CAMELLIA SASANQUA** These autumn and winter-flowering camellias provide colour and fragrance when it's needed most. They are more reserved and refined than their spring-flowering cousins, and can illuminate shadier, sheltered spots. I prefer the pale pinks and whites: *C. sasanqua* 'Narumigata' is a favourite. **H** 2.5-4m. **S** 1.5-2.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full shade to full sun. **SI** October – December. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-9b.

**82 HAMAMELIS X INTERMEDIA 'ARNOLD PROMISE'** I love the vase-like form of witch hazels and their spidery, bright flowers in January with heady fragrance. We use the yellows of this cultivar and 'Pallida' and the burnt orange of 'Jelena', underplanted with snowdrops. At home we have them in pots to brighten the front doorstep, planted in ericaceous compost with good drainage. AGM. **H** 4m. **S** 4m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** Red or yellow leaves in autumn; flowers late winter. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**83 HYDRANGEA QUERCIFOLIA** Autumn is when this shrub takes its star turn: the leaves turn an array of intense bronze, orange and red, giving glimpses of the attractive bark before they fall. Make sure this hydrangea has space to flex into; we use it in shrub borders or in more relaxed transitional spaces. The creamy-white summer flowers are the icing on the cake. **H** 2m. **S** 2.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** Red and

purple autumn leaves; flowers July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**84 HYDRANGEA SEEMANNII** It's taken a couple of years to settle in, but this evergreen climbing hydrangea is now happily romping and flowering away in my garden at home, holding itself to the wall via aerial roots, so there is no need for wires or frames. It's in a slightly shady corner, so the glossy mid-green leaves help to reflect light and the green-tinged, white lacecaps are luminously beautiful. **H** 10m. **S** 3m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun, part shade and full shade. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

**85 OSMANTHUS HETEROPHYLLUS** We like to use this evergreen shrub for cloud hedging. Its leaves resemble a slightly smaller and more elegant holly, and are a shade of deep green that would make Farrow & Ball envious. Produces small, headily fragrant creamy flowers in October. **H** 3m. **S** 2.7m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers late summer – autumn. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-9b.

**86 ROSA GLAUCA** Has the look of a wild rose while having a good manageable character. The attractively glaucous foliage on deep-red stems is followed by small, hot-pink flowers with white centres and yellow stamens, and glorious jewel-like red hips that complete the show in autumn. Perfect for a naturalistic garden. AGM. **H** 1.8m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soils; full sun. **SI** Flowers June – August followed by hips in autumn. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 2a-8b.

**87 ROSA X ODORATA 'MUTABILIS'** If I could plant just one rose it would be this. Elegant single blooms unfurl in kaleidoscopic colours from ivory through soft honey to peach; from champagne pink to deep cerise, and more. Will flower away happily from June; mine at home is still enthusiastically going in mid-November. I love it surrounded by planting of limes, pale pinks and maroons. AGM. **H** 2m. **S** 2.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Flowers July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**88 ROSA 'THE GENEROUS GARDENER'** (= 'AUSDRAWN') A terrific climbing rose that has a knockout musky fragrance, delicate and graceful good looks, and plentiful repeat flowering of its lovely pale-pink blooms. It is also hard-working and adaptable, happily establishing in all aspects and soils, and from sun to partial shade. AGM. **H** 4.5m. **S** 2.5-4m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers June – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-10b.

**89 SALVIA ROSMARINUS 'MISS JESSOPP'S UPRIGHT'** Compact rosemary with upright habit. Light-blue flowers in spring and early summer above aromatic, dark-green foliage. AGM. **H** 2m. **S** 2m. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** Flowers May – June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b. ▷

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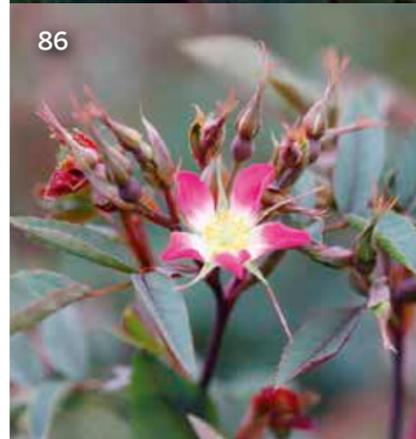
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72 CLAIRE TAVACS; 73, 76 & 79 JASONINGRAM; 78 MARK BOLTON / GAP PHOTOS; 81 AFLO CO. LTD. / ALAMY; STOCK PHOTO; 82 RACHEL WARNE; 83 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / GAP PHOTOS; 86 ANNAICK GUITTENY



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▷ **90 VIBURNUM FURCATUM** My favourite viburnum, possibly my favourite shrub, which I discovered at the treasure trove that is Crùg Farm Plants. Round, pleated leaves start a wonderful green, followed by almond-scented lace-cap flowers in May. In autumn, the foliage diffuses to yellow, orange and finally red leaf edges. A very special thing for a dappled edge. AGM. **H** 2.5-4m. **S** 2.5-4m. **C** Moist but well-drained loam; full sun. **SI** Spring – autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-10b.

## Trees



93

**91 ALBIZIA JULIBRISSIN** The silk tree has filigree, pinnate leaves and, in summer, fluffy pink flowers that look like a drag queen's eyelashes. A small deciduous tree that brings a touch of the exotic to town or city gardens, and is also ideal for large pots. Protect in cold winters. **H** 4-8m. **S** 2.5-4m. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** Flowers in summer. Pods in winter. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.



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**92 BETULA NIGRA** The most charismatic of the birches, with handsome furrowed bark of cream, cinnamon and bronze to provide valuable winter structure. Attractive spring catkins and mid-green leaves form an airy, open canopy. The river birch is associated with watery settings but can handle drier conditions once established. Just as good in cities as it is in the countryside. **H** 12m+. **S** 4-8m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers spring; yellow leaves autumn. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

**93 CERCIDIPHYLLUM JAPONICUM** This graceful tree's heart-shaped leaves turn from fresh green to spectacular yellows, oranges and pinks in autumn – the colour is more intense on more acidic soils – and have an intoxicating candyfloss scent in late summer and early autumn. AGM. **H** 12m+. **S** 8m+. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** Autumn foliage. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.



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**94 CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA** Does anything beat seeing clouds of hawthorn flowers in spring, or their rich autumnal berries? Whether used as a specimen or a hedge, the humble common hawthorn is versatile and reliable, and a welcome home for wildlife. **H** 4-8m. **S** 4-8m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers in spring; berries in autumn. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**95 ERIOBOTRYA JAPONICA** A small tree of strong architectural qualities for more sheltered gardens. The evergreen, bold leaves introduce a tropical feel, with new growth an attractive mid-green. Buy as a shrub and then lift the lower canopy gently as it grows to form a small multi-stemmed tree. In warmer years, they are followed by prodigious amounts of sharply flavoured fruits to eat, pickle or juice. AGM. **H** 4-8m. **S** 4-8m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Flowers autumn – winter; fruit spring. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

**96 GLEDITSIA TRIACANTHOS F. INERMIS** The thornless honey locust is an undemanding, graceful tree, well suited to the rigours of climate change, including pollution, dry weather, flash floods and coastal conditions. Deciduous pinnate leaves, green in summer and buttery in autumn, throw lovely dappling. The insignificant visual impact of the flowering racemes belies their high nectar value. **H** 12m+. **S** 8m+. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Yellow leaves in autumn; seed pods after flowering through winter. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

**97 HALESIA CAROLINA** The snowdrop tree, as its name suggests, displays a mass of small, white bells in summer. Martin Crawford of the Agroforestry Research Trust in Totnes, Devon, shared with us how the unripened fruits are edible, with a pea-like flavour, and thereafter we included it in the Kitchen Garden at RHS Garden Bridgewater. The winged fruit persists through autumn and winter, giving a good seasonal run. A graceful presence as a specimen tree. **H** 8-12m. **S** 4-8m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers spring. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

**98 MALUS X ROBUSTA 'RED SENTINEL'** It's hard to pick a favourite crab apple, but 'Red Sentinel' tops the bill for its pale-pink and white blossoms and its ruby-red berries – better than any shop-bought tree decoration – that last long into winter. It is a fantastic specimen tree for a small garden, or combined with others as a grove. Robust, pollution tolerant and wildlife friendly. AGM. **H** 4-8m. **S** 4-8m. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, clay, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** Flowers spring; fruits autumn into winter. **HR** RHS H6.

**99 NYSSA SYLVATICA** A distinguished, pyramidal tree whose branches droop elegantly at the ends. The glossy green leaves turn magnificently fiery in autumn: when set by water, the effect is arresting. I would love to see this characterful tree planted more frequently, especially in urban settings – it is slow growing but tough, able to grow in poor, heavy soils in both dry and wet conditions. **H** 12m+. **S** 8m+. **C** Well-drained clay, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** Leaves red and yellow in autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

**100 OSTRYA CARPINIFOLIA** In spring, the hop hornbeam produces creamy-white flowers that resemble hops, alongside yellow-green catkins. Will thrive in most conditions, but for best flowers and autumn colour it needs a sunny position and space to reach its full potential, so is best planted in a large garden. **H** 12-17m. **S** 9-12m. **C** Moist but well-drained, acidic, humus-rich, soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April. **HR** USDA 5a-9b. □

## Reader offer

Many of Charlotte's choices can be found at [crocus.co.uk](http://crocus.co.uk) where *Gardens Illustrated* readers can enjoy a 10 per cent discount on plants throughout January. See page 111 for details.



*Malus x robusta* 'Red Sentinel' tops the bill for its pale-pink and white blossoms and ruby-red berries that last long into winter

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91 FRANS BLOK / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 93 ANNE GILBERT / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 98 MAXIME DERODER; 99 JASON INGRAM; 100 FLORENCE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.