



## Trial of *Ceanothus* Evergreen, May flowering 2004-2007 An Invited RHS Woody Plant Trial

### Objectives:

- To identify the best and most distinctive cultivars and recommend the AGM
- To establish correct nomenclature and obtain a permanent record through herbarium specimens, photographs and written descriptions
- To produce a report outlining AGMs, findings, cultivation etc.
- To establish the situation that would best suit the habit of each taxon

### Judging criteria:

Hardiness; freedom and length of flowering; response to pruning

### Cultivation:

Cuttings were taken by senders in 2002/3, they were trimmed over to restrict growth in Spring 2003 in order to assist establishment. In June they were potted on into 3litre pots containing peat-free medium, an open-textured bark and manure mix with slow release fertilizer, ensuring that all plants were being raised in like medium. Roots were teased out before potting on and plants were trimmed back once again. Pots were watered with Revive which contains natural soil micro-organisms, encouraging soil fertility and healthy root growth, healthy roots being less vulnerable to 'Damping Off' and other diseases.

Two plants each of entries 1-50 were planted in May 2004. Seven late entries 56-58, 61-63 and 66 were planted in October 2005.

One plant of each entry was cut back in June 2006 where encroaching on its neighbour, ensuring that growth of the other was not compromised.

### Findings:



Many entries were badly damaged or died as a result of severe winter conditions of 2006-2007 or inherent vulnerability and the trial was terminated. A retrial is planned for the future.

*Ceanothus* are generally short lived shrubs but can persist in a favoured position, even outgrowing their allotted space.



*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* var. *repens*



*Ceanothus* 'Concha'

They have a tendency to decline significantly after 5 years, not responding to pruning and should be replaced. Pruning did not have dramatic effects, resulting in slightly later flowering and some reduction in the amount of flower.

58 entries were submitted for trial by gardens, nurserymen and individual gardeners in the UK and the USA.

***Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* 'Mystery Blue'** AGM subject to availability.



Submitted by both Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council as *Ceanothus* aff. 'Southmead' and Mrs N Simpson as *Ceanothus* unknown. Plants are currently under large scale propagation and are planned to be available in 2009 from The Plant Centre, RHS Wisley; the AGM will applied at that time.

**Description:** An airy, upright to spreading bush, 240 x 300cm. Foliage dark green, 147A, three veined, shiny and glabrous, margins lightly inrolled, shallowly toothed with small dark glandular tips (pale on young leaves). Green stem with raised striate ridges, with a few appressed hairs and brown warty growths in places. Flower 4mm, blue, slightly greyer than 95C, filaments blue but anthers not apparent, honey scented. Flowering from 24.4.07 to 25.5.07.

**Comments:** *A stunning, hardy plant. Wonderful colour, excellent foliage.*

**The following, previously awarded AGMs were reconfirmed:**

***Ceanothus* 'Cascade'** AGM(H3)1993 reconfirmed 26.10.2007



Submitted to trial by RHS Garden Wisley, widely available, see *RHS Plantfinder*.

**Description:** A thick, upright/arched rounded bush, 150 x 200cm. Foliage 137A with impressed veins, shiny and thinly covered with short appressed hairs, margin lightly inrolled, almost entire or irregularly toothed with dark pointed tips, reverse thinly hairy, mostly on veins. Green stem has a slight red flush on upper surface and sparse fine hairs. Flower 4mm, 97A, filaments blue, anthers yellow 12B. Almond scented. Flowering from 24.4.07 to 25.5.07.

**Comments:** *Reliable, vigorous, attractive weeping habit, looks good grown on a wall.*



***Ceanothus* 'Puget Blue'** AGM(H4)1993 reconfirmed 26.10.2007



Submitted by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and submitted by and available from Liss Forest Nurseries Ltd, Greatham, Liss, Petersfield, Hants GU33 6EX.

**Description:** A dense evergreen shrub to 3 x 2.5m, very rigidly branched. Small, elliptic oblong leaves, finely denticulate, pubescent, glandular tipped, 1cm x 0.6cm wide, darker than Green 137A. Flowers violet blue, 96B, prominent lemon yellow stamens. Very free flowering from 10.4.07 – 24.5.07 and again in September. No frost damage. Initially from Washington Arboretum in the early 1960s.

**Comments:** *Perfect foliage, very tough and very floriferous; the best in the trial.*

***Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* 'Skylark'** AGM(H3)2002 reconfirmed 26.10.2007



Submitted by RHS Garden Wisley, widely available.

**Description:** A dense bushy mound with much branched wiry branches, 2 x 1.5m wide. Medium, broadly ovate to oblong elliptic leaves, 3 x 2cm, bright olive green, darker than 137A, three prominent longitudinal main veins, glossy and glabrous. Flowering profusely in terminal and lateral panicles, violet blue 96C, prominent lemon yellow stamens. Parentage *Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* var. *thyrsiflorus* x *Ceanothus velutinus*. It was named by M Nevin Smith following introduction by Mitsch Nursery, Oregon. Flowering from 18.5.07 – 27.6.07 and again in September. No frost damage.

**Comments:** *Very distinctive, excellent dense habit and short internodes; a valuable late flowerer when all others have finished; untouched by frost, the hardiest of all.*

The following AGMs were not reconfirmed during trial and will be considered at the Sunset Review in 2012:

*Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* var. *repens* AGM (H3)1993

*Ceanothus* 'Concha' AGM (H3)2002

*Ceanothus* 'Italian Skies' AGM (H3)1993

*Ceanothus* 'Blue Mound' AGM (H3)1993

**Hardiness ratings:**

**H3** hardy outside in some regions or particular situations or which, while usually grown outside in summer, needs frost-free protection in winter

**H4** hardy throughout the British Isles

### Ceanothus Index 2004-2007

No	Plant Name	Sender
58	<i>Ceanothus arboreus</i> 'Cliff Schmidt'	Knoll Gardens
57	<i>Ceanothus arboreus</i> 'Powder Blue'	Knoll Gardens
63	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Autumnal Blue' AGM (H3) '93	Mr N Bell
5	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Blue Jeans'	RHS Wisley
28	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Blue Mound' AGM (H3) '93, not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	RHS Wisley
6	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Blue Sapphire'	Liss Forest Nursery Ltd
27	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Cascade' <b>AGM (H3) '93 reconfirmed 2007</b> sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Blue Cushion'	RHS Wisley
42	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Cascade' <b>AGM (H3) '93 reconfirmed 2007</b>	RHS Wisley
10	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Centennial'	Dudley Met. BC
15	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Concha' not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012 sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Julia Phelps' AGM (H3) '02	RHS Wisley
16	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Concha' AGM (H3) '02 not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	RHS Wisley
17	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Concha' not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012 sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Blue Diamond' AGM (H3) '02 '93	Dudley Met. BC
62	<i>Ceanothus cuneatus</i> 'Nipomo Mesa'	Mr N Bell
33	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Cynthia Postan'	RHS Wisley
41	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Delight'	Dudley Met. BC
34	<i>Ceanothus</i> unidentified sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Edinburgh'	Dudley Met. BC
35	<i>Ceanothus</i> unidentified sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Edinburgh'	Knoll Gardens
18	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Edward Stevens'	Dudley Met. BC
32	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Eleanor Taylor'	RHS Wisley
46	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Gentian Plume'	Dudley Met. BC
2	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i>	Dudley Met. BC
3	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> 'Anchor Bay'	RHS Wisley
4	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> 'Emily Brown'	RHS Wisley
66	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> 'Emily Brown'	Mr N Bell
49	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> 'Heart's Desire'	RHS ex Plant Centre
61	<i>Ceanothus gloriosus</i> 'Heart's Desire'	Mr N Bell
36	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i>	Dudley Met. BC
24	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i> 'Santa Ana'	RHS Wisley
12	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> 'Hurricane Point'	RHS Wisley
11	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> 'Yankee Point'	RHS Wisley
48	<i>Ceanothus griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> 'Yankee Point'	Mr J Hillier
13	<i>Ceanothus impressus</i>	RHS Wisley
14	<i>Ceanothus impressus</i> sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Dark Star' AGM (H3) '02	RHS Wisley
20	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Italian Skies' AGM (H3) '93 not reconfirmed,	RHS Wisley

	to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	
21	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Italian Skies' AGM (H3) '93 not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	Lime Cross Nursery
22	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Italian Skies' AGM (H3) '93 not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012 sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Southmead'	Triscombe Nurseries
50	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Italian Skies' AGM (H3) '93 not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	Perryhill Nurseries
19	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Joan Mirov'	Liss Forest Nursery Ltd
29	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Joyce Coulter'	Dudley Met. BC
39	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Kurt Zadnik'	Dudley Met. BC
40	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Kurt Zadnik' Sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Kurt Zadnik' No. 2	Dudley Met. BC
47	<i>Ceanothus</i> large-leaved	Ms P Keeley
1	<i>Ceanothus maritimus</i> 'Frosty Dawn'	Dudley Met. BC
26	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Pin Cushion'	RHS Wisley
37	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Puget Blue' sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Percy Picton' <b>AGM (H4) '93 reconfirmed 2007</b>	Dudley Met. BC
38	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Puget Blue' <b>AGM (H4) '93, reconfirmed 2007</b>	Liss Forest Nursery
9	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Puget Blue' x <i>C. thyrsiflorus</i> var. <i>repens</i>	RHS Wisley
45	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Sierra Blue'	Dudley Met. BC
43	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	Dudley Met. BC
7	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> var. <i>repens</i> 'Ken Taylor'	RHS Wisley
23	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> 'Mystery Blue' <b>AGM(H3-4) '07</b> sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> aff. 'Southmead'	Dudley Met. BC
56	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> 'Mystery Blue' sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> "Niki Simpson" <b>AGM(H3-4)2007</b>	Mr J Hillier ex Mrs N Simpson
44	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> pale-flowered	Dudley Met. BC
30	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> 'Skylark' <b>AGM (H3) '02 reconfirmed 2007</b>	RHS Wisley
31	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> 'Skylark' <b>AGM (H3) '02 reconfirmed 2007</b> sent as <i>Ceanothus</i> 'Victoria'	RHS Wisley
8	<i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i> var. <i>repens</i> AGM (H3) '93 not reconfirmed, to be considered at the AGM Sunset Review in 2012	RHS Wisley
25	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Tilden Park'	RHS Wisley

### **Senders to trial**

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (NCCPG Collection Holder), Planning & Leisure Services,  
Stevens Park, Wollescote Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, W. Midlands DY9 7JG  
Knoll Gardens, Hampreston, Stapehill, Nr Wimborne, Dorset BH21 7ND  
Lime Cross Nursery, Herstmonceux, Hailsham East, Sussex BN27 4RS  
Liss Forest Nursery Ltd, Petersfield Road, Greatham, Liss, Hampshire GU33 6HA  
Perryhill Nurseries Ltd, Edenbridge Road, Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4JP  
Triscombe Nurseries, West Bagborough, Nr Taunton, Somerset TA4 3HG  
c/o Trials Office – Mr N Bell, Mr J Hillier, Mrs P Keeley, Mrs N Simpson.

Further information can be obtained from  
The Trials Office, The Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB  
Tel No. 01483479797 e-mail: trials@rhs.org.uk

**More information about RHS Trials and other illustrated final reports in colour can be found  
on the RHS Website at [www.rhs.org.uk/plants/plant\\_trials.asp](http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/plant_trials.asp)**