RHS Trial of *Kniphofia* 2007-2009

**Introduction to *Kniphofia***

Genus of evergreen or deciduous perennials with strap-like leaves and racemes of pendant, tubular or cylindrical flowers varying in colour from green through to yellow, orange and red. *Kniphofia* originate from mountainous and upland regions of southern and tropical Africa. Common names include Red Hot Poker and Torch Lily.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the trial were:

- To assess entries for the Award of Garden Merit.
- To demonstrate the range and use as garden plants.
- To compare established and new cultivars.
- To assess for border decoration.
- To produce a permanent record through herbarium specimens, photographs and written descriptions for the RHS Herbarium at Wisley.

**Judging**

The Floral Trials Subcommittee assessed entries in the trial for the Award of Garden Merit fortnightly between 10/7/07 to 23/10/07, 27/5/08 to 12/11/08 and 6/5/09 to 29/9/09, using the following criteria:

- Size
- Flower vigour
- Number of flowers
- Length of flowering season
- Flower quality

**Entries**

There were 127 entries in the Trial; four seed raised entries and the remainder submitted as plants by nurseries and individuals in the UK and the Netherlands.

**Cultivation**

The plot was rotivated and raked in preparation for planting in spring 2007. Entries were planted 60 cm apart. An application of SB Invigorator was made after planting to assist establishment. Dead and damaged foliage was removed each spring after frost.
Pest and Disease

The following pest and disease problems were noted on some plants during the trial:

- *Fusarium* stem rot
- *Pectobacterium carotovorum* (crown rot/decay) caused by very wet weather in 2007
- Ink spot (common in *Kniphofia*)
- *Pleospora sp.* fungal leaf pathogen which causes spotted foliage
- Slug damage

Other Findings

Spotting on leaves was contributed to physiological stress caused by rich soil on the trials field, *Kniphofia* are better cultivated on poorer soils.

The seed raised plants proved very variable in quality of performance and trueness to type. This was attributed to diverse parentage.

Plants Receiving AGMs During Trial

The following are the plants thought to fulfil the Award of Garden Merit criteria during the trial and to be worthy of receiving the award. The criteria which a plant needs to fulfil in order to receive the award are:

- excellent for ordinary garden use
- available from nurseries
- reasonably resistant to pests and diseases
- of good constitution
- essentially stable in form and colour
- reasonably easy to grow

Hardiness ratings are as follows:

- H3 – hardy outside in some regions; needs frost-free protection in winter
- H4 – hardy throughout the British Isles

Plants Awarded the Award of Garden Merit

*Kniphofia thomsonii var. thomsonii* ‘Stern’s Trip’ AGM (H3) 2009

The cultivar name 'Stern's Trip' was applied to this clone as a result of this trial to distinguish it from more recent introductions.

[Trial No. 21] votes 14-4
Flowers June to November
Height 1m; Spread 0.6m

Yellow-orange, few flowered inflorescence held over low, sparse foliage.

“Distinctive, back of border impact, floriferous plant.”

Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers
Kniphofia 'Barton Fever' AGM (H4) 2009
[Trial No. 29] votes 12-0
Flowers August to September
Height 1.2m; Spread 1.3m
Pale yellow, orange striped inflorescence held on upright stems over upright to arching foliage.
“Floriferous. Lovely flower with soft colour.”
Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Coral Flame' AGM (H4) 2009
[Trial No. 37] votes 13-1
Flowers June to late October
Height 0.9m; Spread 1.1m
Orange striped inflorescence on upright stem over upright to arching foliage.
“Floriferous, flowers look attractive amongst narrow-leaved foliage. Useful height for small gardens.”
Sender: Blooms of Bressingham

Kniphofia 'Fiery Fred' AGM (H4) 2009
[Trial No. 47] votes 13-0
Flowers mid-June to mid-October
Height 1.3m; Spread 1.2m
Orange florets with yellow underside held over thin, lightly arching foliage.
“Very floriferous, good flower shape, lovely colour and dark foliage.”
Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Incandesce' AGM (H4) 2009
[Trial No. 54] votes 10-1
Flowers August to October
Height 1.4m; Spread 1.1m
Orange florets with dark orange stripes and tips held over upright to arching foliage.
“Floriferous, spectacular, great colour and good foliage.”
Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers
**Kniphofia 'Innocence' AGM (H4) 2009**

[Trial No. 55] votes 11-0  
Flowers June to November  
Height 1.1m; Spread 1m

Red to yellow upright inflorescence held over upright to arching foliage.  
"Beautiful, unique inflorescence, entire spike open at once."

Sender: Blooms of Bressingham

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**Kniphofia ‘Jonathan’ AGM (H4) 2009**

[Trial No. 58] votes 11-0  
Flowers August to November  
Height 1.15m; Spread 1.1m

Yellow, green tipped inflorescence held over long, upright to arching foliage.  
"Vibrant red-orange flowers which stand out and keep their colour as they mature. Good contrast with glaucous foliage, an imposing plant."

Sender: Special Perennials

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**Kniphofia ‘Moonstone’ AGM (H4) 2009**

[Trial No. 62] votes 10-2  
Flowers June to November  
Height 1.2m; Spread 1m

Very pale yellow to white inflorescence held over low, arching foliage.  
"Very floriferous with robust flower spikes."

Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

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**Kniphofia ‘Penny Rockets’ AGM (H4) 2009**

[Trial No. 66] votes 15-0  
Flowers July to November  
Height 1m; Spread 0.8m

Orange, wavy inflorescence held over fine, arching foliage.  
"Slender, elegant inflorescence with clear flower colour. Dies well."

Sender: Blooms of Bressingham
**Kniphofia ‘Primrose Upward’ AGM (H4) 2009**
[Trial No. 60] votes 12-0
Flowers June to August
Height 1.15m; Spread 1.1m

Yellow, green tipped inflorescence held over long upright to arching foliage.
“Unique inflorescence, green buds open to very attractive pale yellow. Floriferous.”

Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

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**Kniphofia ‘Rich Echoes’ AGM (H4) 2009**
[Trial No. 68] votes 9-2
Flowers June to November
Height 1.2m; Spread 1.2m

Orange-yellow inflorescence on tall stems over low upright to spreading foliage.
“Flowers twice - spring and autumn, floriferous.”

Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

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**Kniphofia ‘Safra vogel’ AGM (H4) 2009**
[Trial No. 70] votes 9-3
Flowers mid-June to November
Height 0.8m; Spread 0.9m

White, pink flushed inflorescence held over low, arching foliage.
“Floriferous with pretty, delicate flowers of unique colour. Flowers held well clear of foliage.”

Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers

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**Kniphofia ‘Tawny King’ AGM (H4) 2009**
[Trial No. 75] votes 19-0
Flowers mid-June to November
Height 1.3m; Spread 1.2m

Red, orange to pale yellow inflorescence held over arching foliage.
“Spectacular plant with attractive dark stems. Floriferous.”

Sender: Orchard Dene Nursery
Kniphofia ‘Timothy’ AGM (H4) 2009  
[Trial No. 61 & 77] votes 12-0  
Flowers June to November  
Height 0.8m; Spread 0.5m  
Red to coral, striped inflorescence held over upright to arching foliage.  
“Lovely unusual colour, elegantly shaped inflorescence with attractive foliage.”  
Sender: Cotswold Garden Flowers, Trecanna Nursery

Kniphofia ‘Wrexham Buttercup’ AGM (H4) 2009  
[Trial No. 81] votes 14-1  
Flowers late July to mid-October  
Height 1.3m; Spread 1.3m  
Tall yellow inflorescence held over sprawling foliage.  
“Very floriferous. Vivid green stems with attractive bright yellow flowers.”  
Sender: Mr J. Marshall

Reconfirmed Awards of Garden Merit

Kniphofia northiae AGM (H4) 2006  
[Trial No. 90]  
Flowers July to August  
Height 0.9m; Spread 1m  
Orange florets with pale green stripes, borne over bromeliad-like foliage.  
Sender: Monksilver Nursery

Kniphofia rooperi AGM (H4) 2004  
[Trial No. 18] votes 12-0  
Flowers September to November  
Height 1.5m; Spread 1.6m  
Orange, yellow tipped inflorescence held over broad, high foliage.  
“Distinctive colour with clean foliage. Flowers over a short period but at a time when colour is valuable.”  
Sender: MacGregor’s Plants for Shade
**Kniphofia ‘Sunningdale Yellow’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 74] votes 11-0
Flowers August to November
Height 1.1m; Spread 0.9m

Yellow lined with green-yellow inflorescence held over upright, slightly spreading foliage.
“Very floriferous, early to flower, slender spikes and foliage.”

Sender: Hoo House Nursery

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**Kniphofia ‘Bee’s Sunset’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 31 & 91] votes 14-0
Height 1m; Spread 1.4m

Yellow, flushed orange, inflorescence held above upright to arching foliage.
“Amazing show of colour, very floriferous. Not perfect form but outstanding display nonetheless.”

Sender: Special Perennials and Madrona Nursery

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The following previously awarded Awards of Garden Merit were not reconfirmed and will be considered during the Sunset Review 2012.

**Kniphofia ‘Buttercup’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 34]
Sender: Special Perennials

**Kniphofia ‘Royal Standard’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 69]
Sender: Howard Nurseries

**Kniphofia ‘Samuel’s Sensation’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 71]
Sender: Blooms of Bressingham

**Kniphofia ‘Toffee Nosed’ AGM (H4) 1993**
[Trial No. 78]
Sender: Howard Nurseries
### Trial Index and Senders Details

**Kniphofia 2007 – 2009**

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Kniphofia northiae AGM(H4)2006 possible hybrid, not true to type Kniphofia northiae hybrid

Monksilver Nursery

Kniphofia 'Shining Sceptre' 'Bees' Sunset'
Madrona Nursery

Kniphofia 'Star of Baden Baden'
Madrona Nursery

Kniphofia 'Jane Henry'
Desirable Plants

Kniphofia 'Saturn'
Lester Elliott, Nat Coll Holder

Kniphofia Stark's hybrids
Lester Elliott, Nat Coll Holder

Kniphofia 'Yellow Cheer'
Lester Elliott, Nat Coll Holder

Kniphofia 'Yellowhammer' 'Wrexham Buttercup'
Lester Elliott, Nat Coll Holder

Kniphofia 'Firefly'
Bridgemere Nurseries Nurseries

Kniphofia 'Apricot Sky'
de Hessenhof

Kniphofia 'Bob's Late Yellow'
Bridgemere Nurseries Nurseries

Kniphofia 'Minister Verschuur'
Bridgemere Nurseries Nurseries

Kniphofia 'Spate Flamme'
de Hessenhof

Kniphofia 'Candlelight' name unknown
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia Orange seedling
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Hidcote Seedling'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'H G Mills'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Wisley Whiskers'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Red Admiral'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Tuckii' hybrid, name unknown
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Little Elf'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Victoria'
RHS Garden Wisley

Kniphofia 'Early Lemon Skyrocket'
Ferdinandushof Nursery

Kniphofia foliosa
Dr C Whitehouse

Kniphofia 'Dingaan'
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Drummore Apricot'
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Mount Etna'
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia sarmentosa
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Wol's Red Seedling'
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia seedling No4b
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia uvaria seedling 'Nobilis' AGM(H4)1993
Trevena Cross

Kniphofia unknown
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia 'Lord Roberts'
Cotswold Garden Flowers

Kniphofia caulescens from Hidcote
Hidcote Garden

Seed raised entries

Kniphofia uvaria 'Border Ballet'
CN Seeds

Kniphofia uvaria 'Flamenco'
Suttons Seeds

Kniphofia uvaria (Tritoma) New Hybrids mix
CN Seeds

Kniphofia ovaria 'Royal Castle Hybrids'
Chiltern Seeds

N.B Names that are struck through have been checked by RHS Botanists. Amendments in blue font were made in April 2012.

Sender Details

Beeches Nursery, Ashdon, Nr Saffron Walden, Essex CB10

Binny Plants, West Lodge, Binny Estate, Ecclesmachen Road, Nr Broxbourn, West Lothian EH52 6NL

Blooms Nurseries Ltd, Low Road, Bressingham, Norfolk IP22 2AB
Bridgemere Nurseries, Nr Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7QB
Cotswold Garden Flowers, Sands Lane, Badsey, Evesham, Worcs WR11 7EZ
Chiltern Seeds, Bortree Stile, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7RB
CN Seeds Limited, Denmark House, Pymoor, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 2EG
De Hessenhof, Hessenweg 41, 6718 TC EDE, The Netherlands
Desirable Plants, Pentamar, Crosspark, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5BQ
Elizabeth House Nursery, Weedon Lois, Towcester, Northants NN12 8PN
Mr L Elliott, National Collection Holder, Barton Manor, Whippingham, East Cowes, Isle of Wight PO32 6LB
Ferdinandushof Nursery, Rode Sluisweg 13, 4575 Overslag, The Netherlands.
Hidcote Garden, Hidcote Bartrim, Nr Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire GL55 6LR
Hoo House Nursery, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 7DA
Howard Nurseries Ltd, Wortham, Diss, Norfolk IP22 1PX
MacGregor’s Plants for Shade, Carters Clay Road, Lockerley, Romsey, Hants SO51 0GL
Madrona Nursery, Pluckley Road, Bethersden, Kent TN26 3DD
Monksilver Nursery, Oakington Rd, Cottenham, Cambridge, Cambs CB4 8TW
Orchard Dene Nurseries, Lower Assendon, Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 6AG
Perryhill Nurseries Ltd, Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4PJ
Plantenkwekerij Marcel de Wagt, Hoekweg 94 6591 XN, Gennep, The Netherlands
P W Plants, ‘Sunnyside’, Heath Road, Kenninghall, Norfolk NR16 2DS
Southview Nurseries, Chequers Lane, Eversley Cross, Hook, Hants RG27 0NT
Special Perennials, Yew Tree House, Hall Lane, Hankelow, Crewe, Cheshire CW3 0JB
Suttons Consumer Products Ltd, Woodview Road, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NG
Trecanna Nursery, Rose Farm, Latchley, Cornwall PL18 9AX
Trevena Cross Nurseries, Breage, Cornwall TR13 9PS
Waterperry Gardens Ltd, Waterperry, Nr Wheatley, Oxon OX33
Mr J Marshall, Mr P Stringer, Dr C Whitehouse c/o RHS Trials Office, Wisley

Further Reading

Source: Horticultural Trials and Relations,
RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB
E-mail: trials@rhs.org.uk

More information about RHS Trials and other colour illustrated reports can be found on the RHS Website: http://www.rhs.org.uk/trials