Phlox

Final Trials Report

2011 – 2013

Trials Office
The Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB
RHS Trial of Phlox

Introduction to Phlox

Phlox are a large genus of 67 species of mostly perennials with a few annuals and shrubs found mostly in North America (apart from one in Siberia). This trial consists of those species classed as ‘border Phlox’, *P. paniculata* and *P. maculata* which are from riverside habitats and produce large corymbs of flowers in midsummer. They perform best if grown in fertile, moist soil in full sun or partial shade. Flowering can be prolonged by deadheading and plants should be cut to the ground in autumn. Taller varieties may need staking. Plants that have grown too big can be divided in autumn or spring and doing so every few years helps to maintain the plant’s vigour. Keep an eye out for pests and diseases including stem eelworm, powdery mildew, leafy gall and leaf spot.

Objectives

The objectives of the trial were:
- To judge for garden worthiness (Award of Garden Merit)
- To clarify nomenclature

Judging

The Floral Trials Assessment Forum assessed entries in the trial fortnightly during the flowering periods of 2011, 2012 and 2013 using the following criteria:
- Vigour
- Habit and foliage
- Flower quality
- Length of season

Entries

There were 135 entries in this trial, three plants of each, submitted as 2 litre plants by breeders, nurseries and individuals in the UK and Europe.

Cultivation

The plot was rotavated and raked in preparation for planting in October 2010. Entries were spaced 100cm from one another with 60cm between plants of the same cultivar. Plants were watered by drip irrigation when necessary.

In the second year, each plant per entry was been treated differently: the first plant had a ‘Chelsea chop’ (a third of the length of stems were cut in May), the middle plant was left to its own devices and the third was staked. The staked plant was the only one to be deadheaded.

In the third year all plants were treated the same, apart from those that required staking. In this case one plant per entry was staked.

Pest and Disease

The trial did have some problems in its first year, firstly with stem eelworm which caused deformities in some stems of some entries. Although eelworm is not treatable in *Phlox*, stems with symptoms were removed to try to stop any further spread. Any dead foliage was also removed from the ground around the plants as the nematode that causes damage can spread in water from dead material to neighbouring plants.
Plants also suffered from powdery mildew after a very wet spring with little air movement. This was sprayed for due to the number of plants infected and did calm down into the summer.

**Other Findings**

In the second year of trial, different pruning techniques were carried out to see whether they made a difference to the performance of plants. The ‘Chelsea chop’, where a third of the length of stems were cut in May was given to one plant per entry. This resulted in a plant which flowered much later than plants which had not been chopped, but gave the plant a strange shape which was not always pleasing as it looked unnatural. One plant per entry was deadheaded and it was found that doing this prolonged the flowering season by up to a fortnight as this encouraged plants to reflower. The need for staking was tested for each variety which found that it depended on the variety as to specific needs. Some were self-supporting, some had a gentle, pleasing flop which was taken away by staking and some grew horizontally if not staked. However, in the garden in a border environment plants have the support of neighbouring plants which may relinquish the need for staking.

**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
- reasonably resistant to pests and diseases
- of good constitution
- essentially stable in form and colour
- reasonably easy to grow

Hardiness ratings are as follows:

H7 – Hardy in the severest European continental climates including exposed upland locations in the UK. (Herbaceous and woody plants from continental climates)

**Plants Awarded AGM**

*Phlox paniculata* ‘Peacock White’ (Peacock Series)
AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 1]

Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m


Sent by Syngenta Seeds Ltd
Phlox paniculata ‘Danielle’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 2]

Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.7m; Spread: 0.6m

“Pleasing flower form. Classic head. Stand up to the weather. Lovely scent. Been in flower a long time.”

Sent by Hardy’s Cottage Garden Plants

Phlox paniculata [White Flame] = ‘Bartynine’ PBR AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 3]

Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.6m; Spread: 0.7m


Sent by The Plantsman’s Preference

Phlox paniculata ‘David’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 25]

Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.6m; Spread: 1.1m

“In experience, always been good. Readily available. Usually a fantastic performer.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

Phlox paniculata ‘Sweet Summer Favourite’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 26]

Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.5m; Spread: 0.5m

“Attractive in bud. Foliage good. Eye catching. Colour combination of flowers and foliage is marvellous. Consistent.”

Sent by Flowers by Design
**Phlox paniculata [Pink Eye Flame] = ‘Barthirtyfive’**
PBR AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 27]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.7m ; Spread: 0.7m


Sent by Hardy’s Cottage Garden Plants

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Velvet Flame’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 28]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m


Sent by Hardy’s Cottage Garden Plants

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Rosa Pastell’** AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial no. 29]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.7m ; Spread: 0.7m

“Dark stems. Easy to grow. Lovely scrolled buds. Pink eye.”

Sent by Beeches Nursery

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Eva Foerster’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 34]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.8m ; Spread: 1m


Sent by Binny Plants
**Phlox paniculata ‘Uspek’** AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 39 & 101]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.1m ; Spread: 1m

“Clean. Upright. Full of flower and a lot of bud.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden and The Plantsman’s Preference

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Nora Leigh’** AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 40]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1m

“Elegant plant. Fresh and clean. Long period of interest. Lot of vigour.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox maculata ‘Natascha’** AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 42]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 0.5m

“Has stood the test of time. Shiny dark foliage. The most stable of all the candy striped Phlox.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden
**Phlox paniculata ‘Miss Elie’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 51]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1.1m ; Spread: 1.2m
“Attractive foliage and buds. Flowers stand up to rain. Good side branching.”
Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Flamingo’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 52]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1.1m ; Spread: 1m
“Large florets. Good, clear pink. Nice branching flower heads. Good scent.”
Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Miss Pepper’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 58]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1m
“Nice big panicles. Stands up to weather very well. Dark calyces and stems.”
Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Eva Cullum’** AGM (H7) 2013
[Trial No. 62]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1.2 ; Spread: 0.8m
Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden
**Phlox paniculata ‘Monica Lynden-Bell’ AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 70]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1m


Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Visions’ AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 73]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1m


Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Peacock Cherry Red’ (Peacock Series) AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 80]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m

“Vivid colour. Scented.”

Sent by Syngenta Seeds Limited

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**Phlox paniculata ‘Peacock Neon Purple’ (Peacock Series) AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 81]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m


Sent by Syngenta Seeds Limited
**Phlox x arendsii** ‘Miss Mary’ (Spring Pearl Series)
AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 84 & 90]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1.2m  

“Very floriferous. Lot of colour.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata** ‘Peacock Lilac’ (Peacock Series)
AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 97]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m  

“Wonderful scent. Very pretty. Spreads well.”

Sent by Syngenta Seeds Limited

**Phlox paniculata** ‘Grenadine Dream’ PBR AGM (H7)
2013  
[Trial No. 98]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m  


Sent by Beeches Nursery

**Phlox paniculata** Purple Eye Flame = ‘Barthirtythree’ PBR AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 99]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.6m ; Spread: 0.6m  

“Very intense flower colour. Flowers weathered well.”

Sent by Hardy’s Cottage Garden Plants
**Phlox paniculata 'Becky Towe' PBR AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 117]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 0.8m  

“Great foliage. Has impact. Sits well in garden.”

Sent by Cotswold Garden Flowers

**Phlox paniculata ‘Franz Schubert’ AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 118]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.1m ; Spread: 1.5m  

“Beautifully shaped flowers. Vigorous. Lovely flower colour.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Königin der Nacht’ (Zauberflöte Series) AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 119]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1m  


Sent by Flowers by Design

**Phlox x arendsii ‘Luc’s Lilac’ AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 120]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1.2m  

“Neat habit. Stands out. Very healthy and even.”

Sent by Aulden Farm
**Phlox paniculata** ‘The King’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 123]

- Flowers: midsummer
- Height: 1.2m; Spread: 1.6m

“Good colour. Strong contrast between foliage and flower colour. Good impact.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox paniculata** ‘Grey Lady’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 125]

- Flowers: midsummer
- Height: 1.2m; Spread: 1m


Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox x arendsii** ‘Utopia’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 131]

- Flowers: midsummer
- Height: 1.5m; Spread: 1.4m


Sent by Beeches Nursery

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**Phlox paniculata** ‘David’s Lavender’ AGM (H7) 2013 [Trial No. 134]

- Flowers: midsummer
- Height: 1.6m; Spread: 1.3m


Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden
AGM Subject to Availability

*Phlox × arendsii* ‘Miss Jessica’ (Spring Pearl Series)  
AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 41 & 133]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1m


Sent by Aulden Farm and Alan Bloom’s Garden

*Phlox paniculata* ‘Cherry Pink’ AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 46]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.9m ; Spread: 1.1m

“Intense colour. Large blooms. Good foliage.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

*Phlox paniculata* ‘Victorian Lilac’ AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 49]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1.1m

“Flowers freely. Flowers over a long period. Really good foliage.”

Sent by Mr R Waite

*Phlox ‘Peal the Girl’* AGM (H7) 2013  
[Trial No. 74]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1m

“Masses of bloom. Open flowers. Stunning.”

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden
**Phlox paniculata 'Abendhimmel' AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 102]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1m ; Spread: 1m  


Sent by Flowers by Design

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**Reconfirmed AGMs**

**Phlox paniculata 'Alba Grandiflora' AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 20]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.2m ; Spread:  


Sent by Hoo House Nursery

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**Phlox paniculata 'Mother of Pearl' AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 21]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 0.75m ; Spread: 0.7m  

“Superb in border. Fantastic Plant.”  

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

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**Phlox paniculata 'White Admiral' AGM (H7) 2013**  
[Trial No. 23]

Flowers: midsummer  
Height: 1.3m ; Spread: 1.1m  

“Upright and open habit. Elegant and poised. Late flowering. Very green foliage.”  

Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden
**Phlox paniculata ‘Prince of Orange’ AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 77]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 0.9m ; Spread: 0.9m
“Astonishing colour. Spectacular for a long time.”
Sent by Alan Bloom's Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Starfire’ AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 94]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1.4m ; Spread: 1.5m
“Fabulous foliage. Dark stems contrast with flowers.”
Sent by Alan Bloom’s Garden

**Phlox paniculata ‘Prospero’ AGM (H7) 2013**
[Trial No. 124]
Flowers: midsummer
Height: 1.2m ; Spread: 1m
“One of earliest and flowers for a long time. Fantastic plant.”
Sent by Alan Bloom's Garden
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<td>Phlox paniculata 'Little Boy'</td>
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</table>
### Addresses of Senders:

- **Alan Bloom's Garden**, Low Road, Bressingham, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 2AD
- **Aulden Farm**, Aulden, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 0JT
- **Beeches Nursery**, Ashdon, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 2HB
- **Binny Plants**, Binny Estate, Ecclesmachan, West Lothian, EH52 6NL
- **Cally Gardens**, Gatehouse of Fleet, Castle Douglas, DG7 2DJ
- **Coton Manor Garden**, Coton, Nr Guilsborough, Northamptonshire, NN6 8RQ
- **Cotswold Garden Flowers**, Sands Lane, Badsey, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 7EZ
- **Flowers By Design**, 12 Roman Row, Whichford, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire, CV36 5PJ
- **Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants**, Priory Lane Nursery, Freefolk Priors, Whitchurch, RG28 7NJ
- **Hoo House Nursery**, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 7DA
- **Mr R. Waite, c/o RHS Trials Office**
- **Syngenta Seeds Ltd**, CPC4 Capital Park, Fulbourn, Cambridge, CB21 5XE
- **The Plantsman's Preference**, Church Road, South Lopham, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 2LW

### The Trials Assessment Forum

This trial was assessed by members of the Floral Trials Assessment Forum who included:

**Chairman:** Tony Lord  
**Vice Chairs:** Roy Cheek and Keith Sangster  
**Members:** Joseph Atkin, John Gibson  
Jaime Blake, Tony Hender  
Val Bourne, Philip Morrison  
Bob Brown, Graham Rice  
Marina Christopher, Chris Sanders  
David Creese, Terry Smale  
Ivan Dickings, Mike Smallwood  
Tim Fuller, Ray Waite  
Fergus Garrett, Victoria Wakefield  
**Co-opt:** Jennifer Harmer