

Hydrangea

Costas Lymbouris

- I am looking for shrubs to replace roses in a sunny but “summer dry” area that is “water logged” in winter
  - So far I have bought an evergreen **Magnolia 'Stellar Ruby'**, flowers from March to September and is drought tolerant. H 3m x 2m
  - I want a hydrangea to place in front, upto 1.5m tall for late summer **red** flowers

I also want Hydrangea with variegated leaves to extend period of interest in the underplanting of my flowering cherries, so suitable for dappled shade

The search starts with selecting the right species!



**Magnolia 'Stellar Ruby'**

# Hydrangea Species

70+ species of Hydrangea

Garden cultivars are generally from these 6 species:

1. *Hydrangea anomala* (Climbing)
2. *Hydrangea arborescens* (Smooth)
3. *Hydrangea paniculata* (Panicle)
4. *Hydrangea quercifolia* (Oakleaf)
5. *Hydrangea serrata* (Mountain)
6. *Hydrangea macrophylla* (Bigleaf)

\*Hydrangea leaves are poisonous but deer still eat mine

# Choosing Varieties

- The planting location should have the optimum amount of sun or shade for the species to thrive and flower well:
  - Shade: up to 4 hours: plants benefit minimum of 2 hours sun
  - Part Sun: 4–6 hours most Hydrangea do well in dappled shade
  - Full Sun: 6+ hours

Shade to Part Sun: 4-6 hours	macrophylla (Bigleaf) serrata (Mountain) arborescens (Smooth)
Full Sun: 6+ hours	paniculata (Panicle) quercifolia (Oakleaf)

# Hydrangea anomala petiolaris

I don't have this species, mentioned for completeness

- Climbing hydrangea
- Large self-clinging, deciduous climber
- Height 15m, Width 10m
- Hardy down to -15C
- Best in dappled shade and moist soil
- Flowers June, July & August
- White Lacecap flower heads to 20cm in width, with small fertile flowers surrounded by larger sterile ones

# H. arborescens - Smooth Hydrangea

I don't have (needs moist soil), mentioned for completeness

## Incrediball

- North American shrub has a mix of tiny fertile florets and larger more showy sterile ones
- Flowers July – Aug – Sept
- Dappled sun to sun (but scorch) and likes rich moist soil – OK on clay
- Flowers on new wood
- Popular varieties
  - **Annabelle** H 1.5 x 1.8m , large 30cm sterile flowers; but has weak stems
  - **Incrediball** H 1.5 x 1.8m , hybrid of 'Annabelle', larger heads and stronger necks. More reliable white pompom
- Usually white varieties but some pink flowered varieties (not to do with soil type like macrophylla)

# H. arborescens - Smooth Hydrangea

- New 'Invincibelle Spirit II' by Proven Winners
- pink flowered varieties (not to do with soil type like macrophylla)
- Dappled sun to sun and likes rich moist soil – maybe better in a pot in my garden



# Proven Winners – Fertilizing 2mins

web link youtube for Natalie Carmollie of Proven Winners  
video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6cdqL06d8w>



# Hydrangea – Care & Feeding

- Benefit from mulch over roots in autumn or spring
- Will grow well and have flowers with little feeding if well “mulched” unless growing in sandy soil
- Feed with slow release fertiliser in early spring when buds swell and again in early summer to sustain late flowering
  - do not feed after early August
  - use a granular fertilizer formulated for woody plants, like a rose fertilizer
  - On my sandy soil, I use  $\frac{1}{4}$  –  $\frac{1}{2}$  strength liquid fertiliser once a week over the root ball
- Overfeeding produces plants with weak stems

# Fertilise and Soil Type

- Clay soil particles carry a negative charge, so they hold onto positively charged nutrient particles (ions) such as
  - potassium, calcium, magnesium
- This makes clay soils nutrient rich
- Sand particles do not carry a charge so being neutral, do not bind with nutrient particles (ions)
- This makes sandy soils nutrient poor
- Note: nitrogen does not bind easily to any type of soil particle

# H. panniculata - cone shaped flowers

- Originated in Asia – mountains of China / Japan where it grows in sparse forests and on mountain slopes
- Varieties 50cm to 3+m tall
- Will grow well on poor sandy soil
- A 3" (8 cm) layer of mulch over the roots is beneficial
- Best in full sun but tolerates part sun
- Blooms on new wood
  - Will take heavy pruning in autumn down to 3 buds from base or build a framework for a taller plant. Can also prune in early spring, cut the branches back by about one-third of new growth
- Use autumn/spring pruning's as cutting material, will make roots along the whole stem so can easily "layer"

# H. panniculata – sun lovers

- Many good varieties from small to giants 3m+
- Flower from June until November frosts
- ‘Limelight’ large 2–2.5m, ‘Little Lime’ smaller 1.2m
  - Florets open lime green, grading to white with age, creating a “two-tone” effect then pink with age
- Colour not affected by PH
- ‘PoleStar’ 50x50 cm
- Bobo popular 1 m x 1.5m
- ‘Vanilla Fraise’ 1.8x1.8m

Silver Dollar

Limelight

Pole star

Vanilla–Fraise

# Hydrangea panniculata 'Fire Light'



- Developed by Proven Winners
  - “low maintenance and easy to grow – the perfect plant for ‘black thumbs’ ”
- Height and spread 2m
- Also ‘Fire Light Tidbit’ 1m x 1m
- Full flowers on strong stems
- Blooms emerge creamy-white and age to vivid red in early summer
- Not currently in UK

# Laura from Garden Answer

youtube video – **Pruning & Fertilizing My Hydrangeas!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxNOIVxjGeg>

# Pruning - in Summary

- Most do not need regular pruning, other than to deadhead and cut back to control height and spread if desired.
  - Take out misplaced or diseased shoots
  - For macrophylla (big leaf mop heads and lacecaps) which flower on old wood, in spring remove ALL faded flowerheads and the pair of leaves below
  - Those flowering on “new wood” can be cut back to 20–30cm above base to a strong pair of buds to keep plant small, or
  - Can leave sturdy stems longer each year to build a strong framework for a taller plant by removing top third of stems



# **H. quercifolia** “Oakleaf hydrangea”





# **H. quercifolia**

North American mountain Hydrangea

- “Oakleaf hydrangea”
- H 2m x 2.5m
- Prefers sun but tolerates part shade
- Very hardy and tolerates dry sandy soils
- Will grow in clay soils but add lots of mulch
- Good autumn leaf colours
- Light or no pruning, only dead head, and remove diseased and weak stems

# H. quercifolia

- large, deeply lobed leaves turning red and purple in autumn. Flowers cream, large conical panicles with numerous large sterile florets



**Hydrangea quercifolia 'Snow Flake'**





# H. serrata - Lacecaps

- Mountain hydrangea – native to Japan and Korea
- Hardier than macrophylla
- Part sun to shade
- *Blooms on old and new wood*
- *Flowers June through September*
- in spring, cut back flowered stems to a pair of buds below each flower-head.
- Flowers are pink (alkaline) or blue (acid) soil



# NEW - *Hydrangea serrata* 'Euphoria Pink'

- variegated “tri-coloured foliage pinks, green and white with new shoots a delicate pink tint”
- Flowers June to September  
*on old and new wood*
- H 1 x 1m
- Sun but best in dappled shade  
(leaf scorch in mid-day sun)
- hardy down to -20C





*H. serrata* - Looking to grow as underplanting of  
my flowering cherries in dappled shade



# Hydrangea macrophylla - “Big leaf Hydrangea”

- Native to Japan
- Edge of woodland plant, dappled shade, does not like to “dry out”
- Flowers June to August on old wood
- Mopheads and lacecaps
  - flowers generally pink (alkaline) or blue (acid) soil
  - white is always white
- Use lacecaps for pollinators
- Cut back dead flowers and one leaf pair below that in spring
- *Flower buds only form in the top half of last years stem*



# *Hydrangea macrophylla*

## ‘Endless Summer’

- ‘Endless Summer’ varieties repeat flowering
  - flowers on old wood in May then on new growth in late summer
  - May to late October
- Hardy in Surrey
- Need some sun, morning sun works for me
- Developed for high disease resistance
- Grow best on moist well drained soil

# Kelly Lehman

An excellent introduction to understanding where on a hydrangea, flowering stems grow from. Also covers 'Endless Summer' varieties

Youtube video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGsz971LtQA>



# macrophylla 'Endless Summer' varieties

- 'The Bride'



- 'Twist-n-Shout' lacecap



- 'Summer Love'



- 'PopStar'





# Underplanted Flowering Cherry

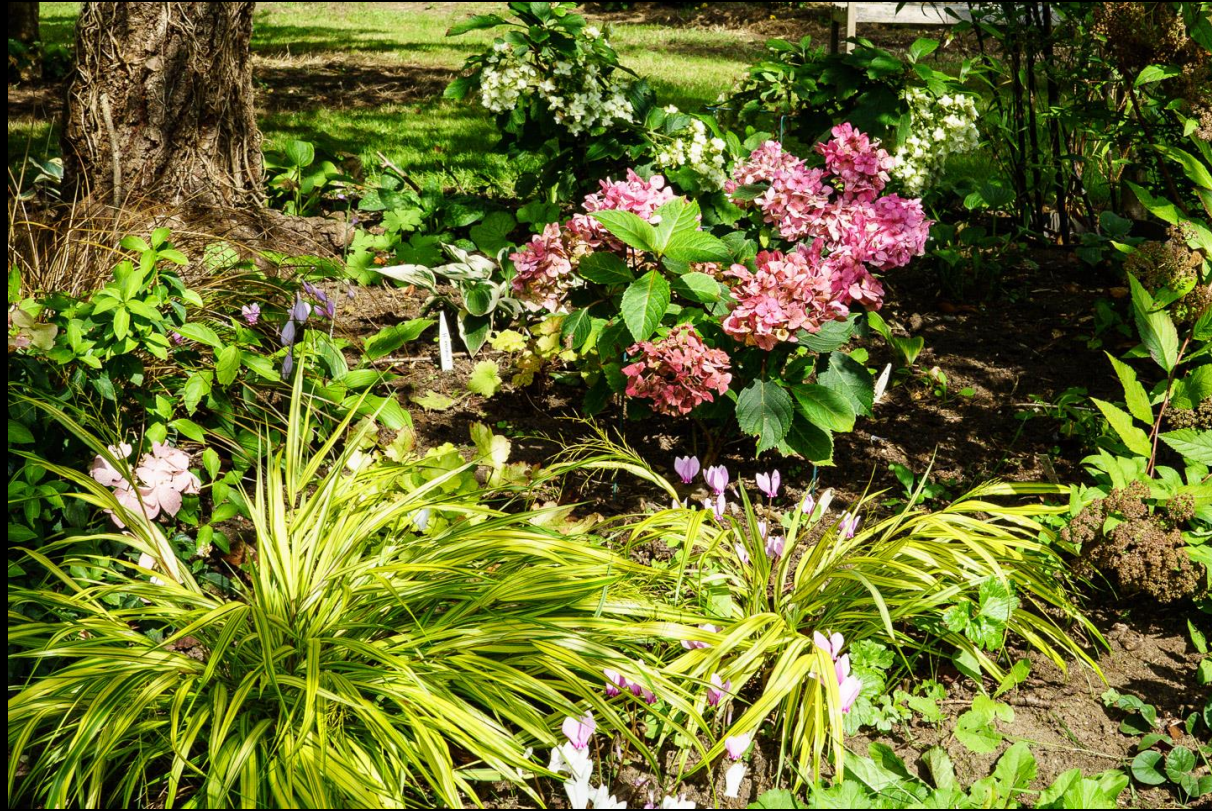


***'Endless Summer - BloomStar'***



# *Hydrangea macrophylla*

## ‘Endless Summer - BloomStar’



flowering in morning sun in July  
maybe alkaline soil here ?

- Will grow to H 1.2 x 1.5m
- Flowers May to October each bloom is 13 cm
- Stems red colour
- Previous years cutting planted autumn (2022) and already producing a mass of flowers
- Some stems weak and need supporting under the mass of flowers



# *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'French Bolero'



• Not my plant which “scorched”  
in mid-day sun but hoping for this in 2024

- hybrid *H. scandens* and *H. macrophylla*
- Flowers June to October
- Flowers are borne along the length of each stem
- Will grow to H 1.2 x 1.2m
- Will grow anywhere
  - Good on poor sandy soil
- Sun or semi shade
  - For me did not do well in sun, moved to morning sun with dappled shade



# *Hydrangea macrophylla* hybrid

## 'Runaway Bride - Snow White'

- H 1.2 x 1.2 m "One of the most floriferous and vigorous hydrangeas"
- Sun to partial shade (I find needs ½ day sun max, flowers can scorch)
- *macrophylla* keep moist
- May through September, lacecap white flowers flushed with pale pink
- can use as trailing plant
- flowers from the lateral buds along the entire length of each stem with more than 6 large blooms on every branch





# Underplanting using Hydrangea 'Runaway Bride - Snow White'





# *Hydrangea macrophylla* hybrid

## 'Runaway Bride - Snow White'

- H 1.2 x 1.2 m
- May through September, lacecap white flowers
- can use as (h)edging





# END - Questions

