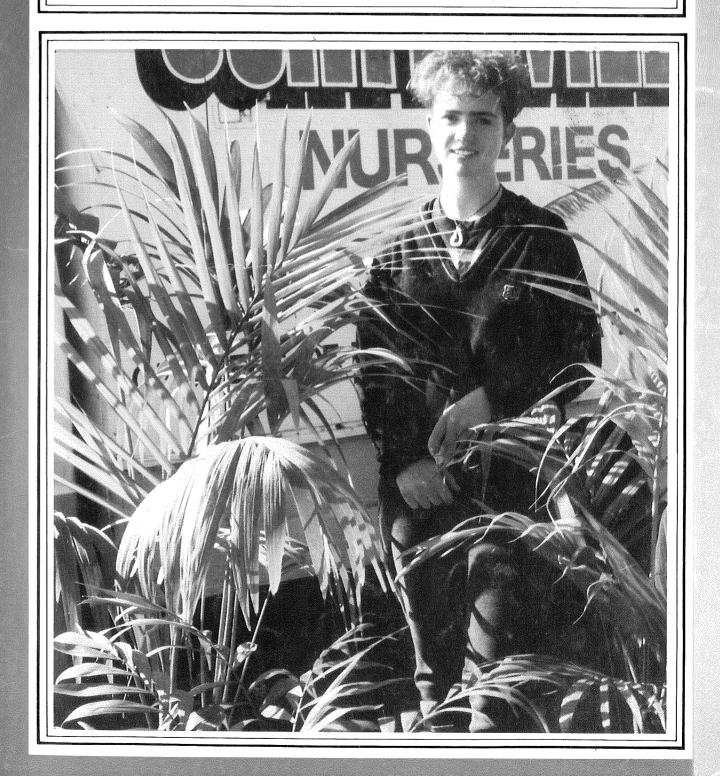
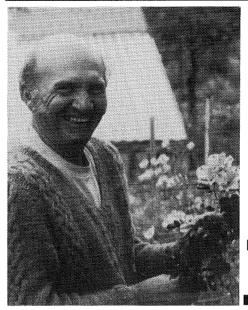
# HCOMMERCIAL COMMERCIAL CONTICULTURE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NEW ZEALAND NURSERYMEN'S ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 1991







# Terry Hatch talks plants

One of the most stunning perennials to become available in 1990 is Lavatera Barnslev, released by Jov Plants (Pukekohe) who imported it from the UK. Joy Plants' owner/hybridist, Terry Hatch, invited Bob Edwards to see the first of these plants in bloom. It was a dismal early December morning. From across the nursery yard Barnsley stood out like lighted candles -- but it turned out to be just one of many highlights to be discovered during a fascinating tour of this unusual nursery . . .

LAVATERA BARNSLEY was certainly the most strik- is slow to bulk up. It only ing flower in the Joy Plants Pukekohe nursery when I called, reports CH's Bob Edwards. Joy's Terry Hatch lucky to get a 50% strike. said the plants had started flowering three weeks earlier (mid November) and even though they were cut flowers. You can get three in planter bags were covered in bloom.

"Flowers start out almost white with a red throat and change colour over the next four days to a light pink," said Terry. "They last nearly ten days on the plant.

The plant does not seed, nor does the standard variety which is a deep pink and starts flowering one or two weeks earlier. Barnsley is a sport off Lavatera thuringiaca so there will be no seed unless I can hand pollinate it somehow. One or two of the plants in the batch have mutated (dwarfed). I will be assessing them too.'

Lavatera Barnsley was discovered in a cottage garden in the village of Barnsley in Gloucestershire and shown by Hopleys Plants (UK nursery and garden centre) at the Royal Horticultural Society's August 1986 show where it received an Award of Merit.

It is free flowering, grows 1.5m high and is hardy enough to be used throughout NZ although the stems are likely to be cut in severe winters in the South.

Barnsley is recommended for the back of perennial borders and is ideal for cottagetype gardens. It should flower for 5-6months, almost continuously and thrive in most types of soil. It prefers a sunny location protected from strong wind because of the tall and willowy stems. habit. They apparently colour. Walter Flemming is enough. Ligtu's have daintier tolerate salt spray so can be the hardest to propagate and flowers but they do not last as

used in seaside planting.

Hopley Plants says Barnsley is useful for flower arranging and lasts well in water. They recommend plants to be cut down in Autumn, or in Spring in severe climates.

# Alstroemeria

Terry has been hybridising Alstroemeria for cut flowers. "The only reason no one has done anything with them is that most varieties have been bred and patented by the Dutch for the glasshouse.

"I am hand pollinating Alstroemeria to try and increase the range of colours.
These hybrids are on a par with Dutch selections because the same species are being used. The colours are as large and not as heavy as the

species from South America, the wild in America about most of which are dwarfs. three years ago. I have sown

they are dwarf and I have to tell them they will grow a metre high in the garden.

"There are some good old varieties like Walter Fleming still grown. Sports are very crossing to get near it."

"Jases white eas this one was green. It only grows 30cm high so is not a big grower.

"I will try to get that white into the pinks but it will take four generations of back-

still grown. Sports are very crossing to get near it.
"The Japanese are wo of Walter Fleming with Older plants have an open lavender-pink background but they are not floriferous

roots at certain times of the year and even then you are

"Alstroemeria are excellent weeks out of them in the vase if they are picked in the bud

Many of the Dutch hybrids are sterile which is the reason there is not much seed around. It took me years to get a fertile clone but now I have it I am well on the way to producing lots of colours. There is a good market in the USA for seed.

"I have another two generations out from these. One lot has been planted out, the other is still at the seedling stage. There are more lavenders and paler colours coming through

A white Alstroemeria is top of the list in Terry's breeding

programme.
"I have a white A perrigrinum with delicate green flashings. The flower is open, good if not better, however.
"I recently raised a range of came from plants collected in came from plants collected in Gardeners want dwarf types
for the garden.

"Alstroemeria normally
grow too large as bagged
grow too large as bagged
"Alstroemeria normally grow too large as bagged been looking for. As soon and to be a looking for as soon as a looking for plants. I bag them then starve as it came up I could tell it was them for a year to get short plants so they take two years to produce. Customers think the produce of the plants of the produce of the plants of the produce of the plants. I bag them to get short different. Normal A per-rigrinum have pink stem bases whereas this one was

"The Japanese are working with white A Ligtu hybrids

well as those with A aurantiaca and A violacea blood.

"I brought in 20 species this year. They range from dwarfs that grow 8cm high to larger varieties like A spathulata with giant flowers and short stems. Some are alpine species which will make them difficult to grow unless we want to create hardier hybrids. It will be a lifetime before we get anywhere.'

# Chusquea cumingi

Chusquea is a South American bamboo rarely seen in world bamboo collections.

"I raised this 22 years ago from seed collected from the South American Andes. There were three seeds which all germinated. The label on the packet said it grew one foot high and look at it now." (Two clumps along Terry's front boundary are now 3m high with a 5m spread).

I planted it in the nursery rock garden after watching it remain only a foot high for many years at my Manurewa garden. All of a sudden away it went and I had to dig it out with a front end loader.

"It does not sucker (spread) and is really hard to propagate. I have tried 'nobbies', aerial layering and layering rhizomes but the best results were by layering the stems down under weed mat.

"Robert Hillier (UK nur-seryman) reckons it must be the only one in cultivation.

"Everyone wants a piece. It is difficult to dig out. I recommend they bring a spade and dig their own but they do not go away with much and almost everyone loses it.

"It probably comes from a very bleak climate. There has

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# Terry Hatch talks plants . . .

Continued from previous page

seeded. It is a Spring/Winter

**Editor's note**: The stems are solid which makes it different from other bamboos. An interesting reference to Chusquea (pronounced chuske-a or chew-sk-e-a) is in the Marshall Cavendish Encyclopedia of Gardening. It reads: 'A native of West Indies (Gramineae). An genus of bamboos, evergreen shrubs, small trees or climbers requiring greenhouse treatment in most parts of the British Isles.'

It lists two species: 'C abietifolia, a tropical climber of slender habit growing to the top of trees, flowers borne in racemes with conspicuous yellow anthers, Jamaica. C cumingi, an erect shrub up to 10 feet with slender pointed leaves. Chile.' That hardly sounds correct. Maybe they have their wires crossed.

Hilliers Manual is better: 'A rare genus of rare, mainly S American bamboos, distinguished from Arundinaria by the even more numerous, densely clustered branches, and from all cultivated hardy bamboos by their solid stems. Because of this latter characteristic Chusqueas are useful for cutting, as their leaves do not flag as easily as do those of the hollow stemmed bamboos.' It lists two species C breviglumis and C couleou. C couleou was awarded an RHS Award of Merit in 1974.

# Chatham Islands material

Terry Hatch went to the Chatham Islands with Graeme Platt in 1990 to collect seed and has seedling material well under way.

The Plangianthus sp. is quite interesting because it does not seem to have a juvenile form. Olearia traversii have germinated well and Chatham Island geranium (Geraniums traversii) are al-

ready flowering.
"The plagianthus were very

big trees (10m high) and have a bigger leaf than mainland species. There are stories of the Chatham Islanders not being able to get off the island in the early days. This amazes me as there were plenty of trees that could have been used for canoes. They may not have had the technology to make them.

"Botanists say there are two types of Chatham Island

few times the parent plant geranium. One is called variety elegans. I do not agree. On the islands there is every shade of pink imag-inable and you get different colours from seed. It appears that someone may have collected seed and one plant has turned out darker than the

rest.
"The flowers change colour (get paler) as the day goes on. There were different colours in the area we collected seed from and perhaps it is soil type that also makes the difference. They were growing in sandstone, limestone and scoria so they grow across the gamut of soils.

Geranium Ballerina is supposed to be a hybrid between G traversii x cinerium so it could be crossed with a number of species or hybrids.

"Seed of Euphorbia glauca came up fast and plants are 25cm high from the March-sown material. I think it needs a good, open, windy site and a limestone soil. It was growing near the Chatham Island Forget Me Nots which had seaweed and paua shells strewn all over them. This was one of the only plants that appeared not to be endangered."

# A peek at pecans

"Down in my valley (Pukekohe) I have planted a pecan grove with the idea that we may get more suitable varieties for our climate. The 40 trees have just started to flower and are 13 years

"Last year they produced female catkins only. This year I noticed males as well. It will be 4-5 years yet before we

know if any are worthwhile.
"Initially we sold 1000 trees locally and I hope people that bought them will bring the nuts back when they bear so we can see what they are like. The law of averages says we must get one or two worthwhile plants out of 1000.

"The trees are beautiful in their own right and have lovely Autumn colouring. They say they like damp soils but they certainly do not like

"In Australia I noticed a grower coppicing Pecans as hedges to about 2.5m high. Trees are grown in straight rows, cut to ground level every 2-3 years and the new dwarf ones at last. You do not

Pecans have very brittle branches and coppicing would keep them out of the wind. The trees were grafted. This was in northern NSW or Queensland, somewhere near the border.'

# Beth Chatto poppies

Terry has some unusual annual poppies which he got from UK author and plants-lady, Beth Chatto. "I think they are Papaver Rhoeas (the species Shirley poppies come from). I brought in seed and only one plant flowered last year. From that one pod I got pinks, grey and reds. Beth was adamant that we pull out all the reds to keep the strain pure pink and grey.

"Beth has obviously rouged out all the reds over a period of time to develop the strain. They are very unusual, almost lacy and called Mother

# Vireya rhodos

"Only occasionally do you see good rhododendrons in

"I think vireyas are one of the best things that's hap-pened for Auckland gardens. They flower all year round and come back quickly after flowering. I have planted some in crevices in macrocarpa stumps (not in soil) but in the rotting wood just as an experiment.

# Wallflower dabbling

"I also dabble in wallflowers. We could do a lot more with them, the shrubby types in particular. They are sterile, however, so only the odd seed pod develops. "Years ago I collected

Anigosanthus in Western Australia and set about hybridising them. Mine ended up with flower spikes up to 4m high. The colours were nice and were the best A flavida colour types I have seen. Once Merv Turner (Australian raiser) started breeding them I gave up."

# Agapanthus look promising

Terry's direction with agaanthus is aimed at dwarf, free flowering cut flower

types in a range of colours.
"I am well down the track with agapanthus breeding and am starting to see some leaders were covered in nuts. realise you are breeding

plants till you are half way there. You gather up a few varieties, save seed, start to think there may be something worth doing properly, then start crossing them in

"One of latest to flower is Ice Maiden. It is very pale blue, has lots of flowers per stem, has dwarf foliage, and fine stems good for picking.

"Some of the crosses have been with A inapertus, dwarf white, and others with Eau de Neil, which is called pink, but is not. From these we are getting the dwarf blood. Some have big long pedicels, others have very fine stems ideal for

picking.

"I was surprised at the standard of the hybrids that originated in the UK. We should get some of their dark blue dwarfs which can be raised from seed. They had big beds of them at Windsor Castle and they looked beautiful. Their strains are

very hardy.
"I have not had them long enough to determine if these new hybrids are flush flower-

"Some plants had only six flowers per head. I tossed them out and am now at the stage where I am getting a good flower head. These are -4 generations on.'

'A new deciduous species I got from Africa, Å campanulatus subspecies patens, has not flowered yet. It might add hardiness into the range

I am raising."
Patens has widely flared flowers which are borne in a dense, rather small head. It has narrower leaves than evergreen types and they are

greyish-green.

There is a double white (tall) which could be good too. While it has hose in hose rather than fully double flowers, the plant has potential as the head is big and evenly formed. The double blue does not open properly nor does it have stamens or stigma so it is of little use in a hybridisation programme."

# Revegetation material

Terry is also producing material for revegetation projects and has recently pricked out a large batch of Metrosideros and Pseudopanax ferox into rootrainers.

"Ferox grows in the north of

"Divaricating plants are starting to become more popular now . . . "

Portland (Nelson) and in the north of the North Island. I expect it is an endangered species but trees in cultivation are now seeding."

Terry prefers rootrainers for the planting project. Plants fit into banana boxes for transporting and are an integral part of the system he has developed. "We are into the third crop with root-rainers which gives them a but should do. life of 4-5 years.

This year he has produced 25,000 Metrosideros alone. Most are Firestone and Vibrance seedlings. (These Terry Hatch and Graeme Platt selections were detailed in Commercial Horticulture, December 1989). "Both are excellent clones and we hope to plant groves of them so we

get natural hybrids in future.
"As far as I know no-one has hybridised pohutukawa. Most of the forms are selections. We should also be planting and crossing these with the yellow variety to see if we can get a better yellow."

Terry has cutting-grown Firestone and Vibrance plants well under way and about a metre high in the nursery.

"You can pick out the clones easily because they have distinctive leaf shapes and colours. We have also found that big leaved pohutukawa have the largest flowers. The other interesting fact is that all the selections we have made so far have been from medium sized trees. The trees

have been old ones too.
"I initially thought the age of the tree was affecting flower size but there are big trees with big flowers to prove that flower size is genetic.

"Firestone and Vibrance are going to be good garden trees because they are medium size growers and not monsters.

"It is important that we get these selections growing and into botanic gardens as quickly as possible. Horticulturists need superior plants. Most of the seedlings this year have been Firestone whereas last year's crop was Vibrance. In 7-8 years fime we will be able to make selections from these as well as being able to cross

"About 90% of the seedlings will be from self pollinated seed. Most pohutukawa do not flower at the same time. tree you can grow millions

the South Island around We will be going down the Portland (Nelson) and in the West Coast this flowering season and hopefully making selections from different genetic material.

"It is amazing how you become trained to see the certain features you are looking for. You can whiz down the road and plants with these features stand out from all the

"We have been growing trees for so many years and automatically think that our criteria are the same as others but they aren't.

Last year we pulled out about 30 super plants from the batch we grew. They did not produce side shoots and these should be planted out for further selection.

Terry is working the Firestone and Vibrance cutting material hard to try and build up stock.

"We use most of the cutting material plants produce. Cuttings go into mist when they are half ripe but for only about 10 days. They then go outside into the shade otherwise they deteriorate.

"Pohutukawa seed has an incredible, sickly, sweet smell. I was surprised at the scent, it's overpowering for such a small seed. I cannot align the fragrance with anything but it resembles honey. It is a wistful scent in small quantities but a couple of handfuls can be really strong.

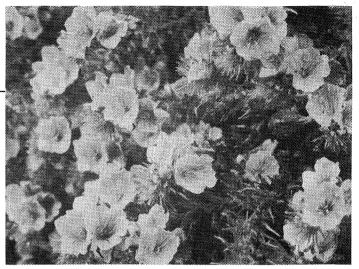
"I saw some magnificent standard (shape) pohutu-kawa in California recently. The trunks were about 2m high and the head about the same size. The trees were young and were probably seellings rather than selections.

### Metrosideros bartlettii

"On television the other day they were saying there were only seven Metrosideros bartlettii left in the wild.

"Bartletti is an upright grower, produces white flowers and looks like a giant Melaleuca with its papery bark. The trees are growing at North Cape and there are more in the area because they are growing epiphytically on puriri.

"Bartlettii is easy from cuttings and there is no reason for it to be endangered or in any Red Book. From a single



Echium Blue Border — the yuppie plant of 1990

has not been done before

"It is well into cultivation, however. A big block of 500 seedlings has already been planted and I know of another 300 seedlings that were planted last year."

Nestegis sepetala, coastal maire, is another subject another which Joy Plants are propagating, and one that is hardly ever grown. "It is almost impossible from cuttings so unless seed is collected it will never be cultivated," says Terry.

### Acanthus species

"Acanthus caroli alexandrii is a Turkish selection I got about 18 months ago. One year old plants are flowering which is amazing for an acanthus as they usually take years to flower. It has a finely cut leaf, no prickles and is free

flowering."
Another species, and an even better bloomer is Acanthus spinosa. As its name suggests it is a prickly blighter. A flowering plant on Joy Plants' drive boasts stunning, well spaced flowers on metre high stems but they too have sharp

# New Chionochloa?

"Graeme (Platt) and I collected a Chionochloa down the East Cape last year. The cows were eating the few plants that remained in the paddock so we were not able

to identify it on the spot.

"It could be a new species because the reverse of the blade is quite grey. On the other hand it may be a form C flavicans. It is producing

and it is disappointing that it beautiful clump of a Poa sp with seed heads that spilled over his hillside garden path.

"I will press a few seed heads when they develop and send them in for identifica-

# **Divaricating plants**

"Divaricating plants are starting to become more popular now. I grew hundreds of Muehlenbeckia astonii (another divaricating plant) a few years ago and no one wanted it."

Terry has an M astonii growing under trees in heavy shade. The plant, although young, has not bolted and is looking just as good as the Auckland Botanic Gardens specimen pictured in Commercial Horticulture, November 1990 issue.

Coprosma virescens could also be considered a likely garden prospect if divaricatng plants are coming into fashion. Terry was given the plant by Auckland native plant producer and author, Muriel Fisher.

"Virescens has been around for a long time," he said. Terry's plant is about two metres high, upright growing and gives the appearance of being slightly weeping. The branches and stems are gold, leaves are small and add to the plant's lacy look."

C virescens comes from 'lowland to lower montane forest and scrubland from near Masterton southwards' according to Flora of NZ, Vol 1 (Allen). It grows 2-5m tall and its 5-6mm, oblong berries are described as yellowish white. No flowering or berrying times are given.

a long flower stem."

Terry also has specimens from Tokomaru Bay and a "A property in St Heliers Bay Rd (Auckland) has a garden full of divaricating

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# **Terry Hatch**

Continued from previous page

shrubs. Some are 20 years old. There are pittosporums and all sorts of plants and you can see how they grow with

Arthropodium crosses

There are a number of Arthropodium cirratum (Renga

lilies) in the Hatch garden.
"I have been crossing a Hen
Island form (Hen & Chicken group) that I collected years ago with a Tasmanian species to try to get a pink variety.
"The Hen Island selection

has a mauve cast when the flower first opens and to try and enhance this I have been crossing it with the Tasmanian species, A mellifolium (Terry thinks), which has purple petals, but it has not formed seed ás yet.

There are forms of Arthropodium (cirratum) everywhere. They need to be collected and selections made after evaluation.

"There is also an opportunity to select A cirratum types that the slugs don't like.

"I have a robust form which

I think came from a Taihape garden and a very floriferous, late-flowered, narrowleaved, form from Raglan."

# Increasing Alonsoa colours

Another plant Terry has been working with is the Musk flower, Alonsoa.

"Alonsoa is such a common easy plant to grow. No-one to my knowledge is hand pol-linating them and I have all sorts of colours coming through.

"If you watch bees you will see they all go for the pinks, blues or reds at one time and do not seem to change flower colour during the day. The next day they might.

"So if the bees are working only one colour per day there is little cross pollination between the flowers and that is why we do not get colour mixes. There are some nice colours coming through since I began crossing them. Pinks with red eyes and dark salmons — all completely different to the common variety."

### Hostas

Among the gems of Terry's perennial collection are his Hostas. He has been working away on them for over 17 years and his collection is housed indoors in his green-

house, in soil. The colours are stunning and the plants are very robust.

'Ťhe vellows are massive. I have yet to see any as good as these overseas.

"One of the interesting factors is that H Frances Williams (green with an irregular yellow margin) burns in this light and needs more shade.

These do not burn.
"The parents are H fortunei and seiboldii Kabitan. The yellow foliage comes from Kabitan.

"Yellow-leaved forms are normally weak plants but these are very strong. They flower well (late) and seed throws a very high percentage of yellow seedlings. If the seed is not picked I get yellow seedlings coming up all over the place.
"The leaves cut well. The

petioles (stems) are strong and long, making them ideal for cut foliage. We displayed some leaves at a flower show recently and brought them home afterwards. They lasted five weeks in water.

"Most plants are only five years old. You would normally expect this sort of growth in 20 years, which demonstrates how strong they really are. The fortunei leaf-shape comes through strongly as does the sieboldii leaf rib-

"Another noticeable feature is the symmetry of the leaves. Each leaf is almost identical in the golds. There are fat as well as thin leaved hybrids too. Everyone keeps plaguing me for them so I have sold a number in the last few years."

Terry has all sorts in his collection as well as his own hybrids. A Japanese species has flower spikes up to eight feet tall. At the other end of the scale are thumb-sized hosta seedlings. In between are a range of sizes to fit almost every landscape need.

"I selected them with the idea of using them as pot plants or rock garden species. You never know what you will get when you start crossing plants. One of the more unusual progeny is one that produces leaves up its flower

# **Dwarf thalictrum**

"I brought in seed of Thalictrum kuisianum which has been in the country for years. This better flowered



Thalictrum kuisianum from Japan, under trial at Joy Plants. Could become a good potted flowering perennial

form came from Kew Gardens. Kuisianum normally flowers well only in cold climates but this one stands it warmer.

Kuisianum comes from Japan. It is stoloniferous and Terry's form looks like it could make a good potted flowering perennial.

"I import new varieties and trial them before I put them on the market. A lot of plants are poor and are thrown out. Sometimes I am 10 years too early. This happened with herbs. I grew them 25 years ago, long before the market was ready."

# **Phaedranthus** buccinatorius

Decorating a fence that screens the Hatchs' swimming pool from the nursery is the showy climber, Phaedran-thus, commonly called Mexican Blood Flower.

It is uncommon in Auckland gardens and even though Joy Plants catches the prevailing cold southerly winds, the plant is quite at home, growing strongly and in bloom.

The deep crimson, yellow-

throated blooms are eye catching. It is a tendril climber and its lush foliage gives it a sub-tropical look without the usual subtropical heavy growth. According to Palmers Manual it blooms throughout the year — a bonus in most landscapes.

# **Penstemon Sour Grapes**

"I grew, selfed and saved seed off a new Penstemon introduction called Sour Grapes (green and blue) when I was last in England. I hope one of the seedlings turns out a deeper than the original

"At this stage they have not bloomed and may be late Autumn flowerers. The plants show no sign of rust."

There are about six forms and leaf variations in the see-

They like cool soil to get them flowering therefore they are good garden subjects in the south. You only need one good plant to start a

strain going.

# Plectranthus dertendahlii

One of the most beautiful new foliage plants Terry has imported seed of lately is Plectranthus dertendahlii from South Africa. Three plants were growing in the shade of trees near Terry's

"As Plectranthus are good under hard, harsh conditions decided to see how others do. The supplier always has a large list of Plectranthus and even though I order them I rarely get seed. They must ave only small amounts.

"Seed was sown March 1990 so plants are less than a year old."

Dertendahlii has silver Veronica perfoliata edged green foliage. The plants Terry has raised are slightly different and he hopes one might prove worth naming. The underside of the leaves are a light red at this stage. So far they have proved pest free and look to have great potential as landscape

Colour pics of some of the plants covered in this

article are on the following two pages

The hostas I planted nearby have been ravaged by slugs but the plectranthus have not been touched. It has a lovely low habit of growth.

"Dertendahlii is definitely worth working on. I would like to improve the strain and select the best.

# Other unusual plants

Echium Blue Bedder is a lovely blue flowered annual that Terry says has been the 'yuppie' plant of the last two years. "It is an Echium vulgaris selection and seed sown in March/April will flower November and seed sown in December makes a good show in Autumn."

Terry has this growing in a raised scoria-filled bed in the front of his house. It is an Australian species with green-grey triangular foliage and pendulous, lacy, laven-der-blue racemes. The plant has been grown in NZ for over 30 years but is still uncommon. It grows about 60cm high and spreads over the ground. Its leaves catch the dew and rain on their margins which makes the leaves 'sparkle'. Well worth re-introducing.

# Artemesia ludoviciana Valerie Finnis

This is a silver leaved artemesia worth keeping an eye on. "It is named after a famous English gardener and has been in NZ for only a short period of time. The plant grows about the same height as Powis Castle and flops and hangs so it will be a good plant for planting at the edge of gardens and for wall decoration."



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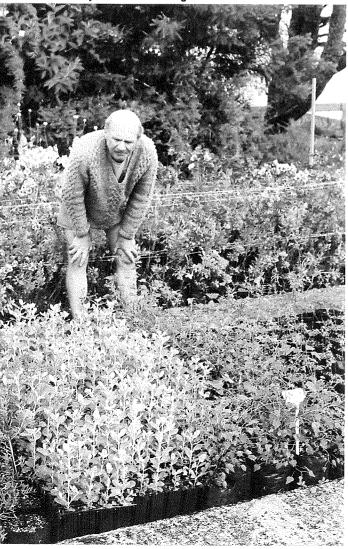
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elow: Terry Hatch surveys NZ native plants — Olearia traversii and agianthus — raised from seed collected from the Chatham Islands. ote alstroemeria hybrids in the background



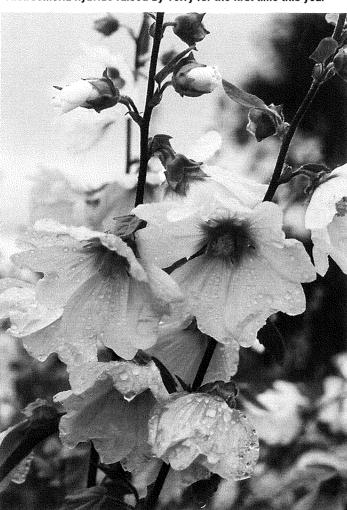
# Terry Hatch talks plants . . .

Left: Hostas at Joy Plants. The strong, yellow foliage variety (foreground) has excellent potential for the garden and the florist

Right: Silver-leaved Artemesia Valerie Finnis, only recently brought to NZ . Drooping habit will make it suitable for banks and edges

Below: The beautiful new perennial, Lavatera Barnsley, flowers November/December. Flowers start out almost white with a red throat then change colour to a light pink

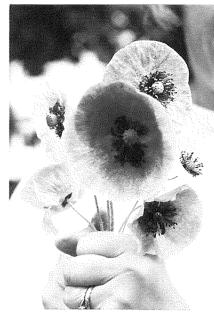
Below (bottom of page): A selection of yellow and deep red Alstroemeria hybrids raised by Terry for the first time this year







See previous pages for discussions of the plants shown here



Above: unusual pink poppies brought in from the UK's Beth Chatto

Above right: Colourful flax spikes — do they have potential as cut flowers for bold arrangements?

Left: New Plectranthus dertendahlii, a most beautiful plant from SOuth Africa Right: Acanthus spinosa — spectacular with its spikes but not the most friendly plant in the Hatch garden. A new species is under trial

