

Lavant Horticultural Society

Notes from talk by Monica Lucas on 13th September 2017

(these notes are by no means complete and are intended just as an aide-memoire)

Monica gave her 3 main reasons for growing asters:

- go on flowering to end October
- good for free-draining soils
- good for cut flowers

She has sourced many of her own asters from a fairly distant nursery:

Old Court Nurseries, Colwall, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6QE

http://www.autumnasters.co.uk/aster_amellus.htm

Aster amellus

Unlike many other Michaelmas daisies, Aster amellus does not get powdery mildew.

It was introduced here long ago, being recorded in Holborn Physic garden at end of the 16th century.

Aster amellus does not get very tall

'Gründer': one of the tallest varieties at 2½ ft (80 cm)

'Moerheim Gem': purple-blue flowers Aug-Oct, 20 in. tall (50 cm)

'Brilliant': good reliable, pink flowers. Height 20 in. (50 cm).

'Violet Queen': strong violet colour; 1 ft (30 cm) tall.

'Nocturne': deep violet-purple flowers on dark stems; Height 22 in. (55 cm).

'King George': still one of the best - reliable; 1½-2 ft (45-60 cm) tall.

Aster novae-angliae [*now reclassified as **Symphotrichum novae-angliae***]

'September Ruby': tall, up to 5 ft (1.5 m)

'Andenken an Alma Pötschke': bright cerise pink – 4 ft (1.2 m)

Aster lateriflorus [*Symphotrichum lateriflorus*] 'Horizontalis alba'

small, narrow leaves, tiny white-rayed flowers with reddish centres.in wide-spreading sprays.

Aster ericoides [*Symphotrichum ericoides*] 'Snow Flurry' - prostrate ground cover with rigid branches of small dark green leaves and sprays of tiny white, yellow-centred flowers. Height 6-8 in (15-20 cm).

Aster divaricatus [*Eurybia divaricatus*]: White starry flowers with yellow centre on thin black stems.

Unlike most asters, Aster divaricatus likes shade. Height 2 ft (60 cm), spreading habit.

Aster x Frikartii 'Mönch': 2½ ft (80 cm)

Asters in general

Asters can be grown with other late flowering herbaceous perennials to hide the asters' bare lower stems, to complement their colour, e.g. Anemone 'Honorine Jobert', Anthemis marshalliana with 'Violet Queen', or to contrast with it, e.g. Khiphafia 'Brimstone' (flowers from late August to frost or Helianthus 'Lemon Queen' (perennial sunflower)

Snowdrops or winter aconites can be used to give interest before the asters come into growth.

Asters should be split every 3-4 years, otherwise they will lose vigour – this should be done end March - April; it must never be done in autumn/winter. Also, never cut back asters for winter.

Any errors above must be attributed to website @lavanthortsoc.org.uk and not to Monica Lucas.