

NATIONAL PLANT COLLECTION®

Hemerocallis with the RHS AGM

Paul Harris
Brookfield Plants
Ashford
Kent
TN25 4NX
01233 624934
paulharris34@btinternet.com
www.brookfieldplants.com



Hemerocallis 'Ruby Spider'

DESCRIPTION

Hemerocallis are long-lived herbaceous perennials. They have long strap-like leaves and lily-like flowers from June to August in every colour except true blue. While the individual flowers only last one day, plants will bloom over several weeks. Most of the plants in cultivation range from 45-90cm (18-36") in height and will spread gradually outwards. Plants can be grouped by flowering time from Extra Early to Very Late, with some remount types repeat-flowering in good conditions.

HISTORY

Hemerocallis originate in East Asia, Japan and China. *Hemerocallis fulva* and *H. lilioasphodelus* were described by Lobel, under the names of *Liriosephalus phoeniceus* and *Asphodelus luteus liliflorus* respectively, in 1570, so would have been in Europe at that time. Not until Linnaeus published his *Species Plantarum* in 1753 were they known as *Hemerocallis* (from the Greek for day and beauty). The plants hybridise readily and therefore a very large number

of different cultivars have been produced. The British Hosta & Hemerocallis Society stated in 2013 that there were over 75,000 registered. Much of the breeding work has been done in the United States, although the plants are very popular in the UK too. Those plants that prove to be consistent, reliable and excellent for ordinary garden use in trials run by the Royal Horticultural Society are given the Award of Garden Merit, and this National Collection showcases those plants.

CULTIVATION

They prefer a sunny situation, and their colours develop best in strong sunshine. Good fertile, well manured or mulched garden soil will produce more flowers, but they are not particularly fussy and will tolerate clay or sandy soils. Smaller cultivars are suitable for container growing.

Hemerocallis are completely hardy in the UK.

PROPAGATION

Plants are invigorated by dividing after several years, after flowering or during the winter. Many will produce fertile seeds but the resulting plants may not resemble their parents. Regular dead-heading will enhance the appearance of the display.

PEST AND DISEASE

Hemerocallis are generally untroubled by pests and diseases. Flower buds can be infected with Gall Midge, and this shows as swelling or distortion in the bud. Hem Gall Midge has only one generation per year and only affects early flowers. Affected buds should be picked off, enclosed in a sealed container and disposed of, not composted. Deadheading the plants can help reduce this pest over time.