



## *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Chantilly Lace'

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*Hydrangea paniculata*, paniced hydrangea, has forever been epitomized by the lead-weighted, hanging dog cultivar 'Grandiflora', commonly referred to as PeeGee Hydrangea. 'Tardiva' appeared and was enthusiastically embraced for the mix of showy sepals and fertile flowers, later flowering and more upright habit. I wondered (frequently wonder) whether seedlings of 'Tardiva' would yield an even later flowering form, perhaps September-October. The Royal Horticultural Society 1992 seed exchange listed 'Tardiva' and that is the reason this discussion of 'Chantilly Lace' is taking place.

Seeds sown in late winter of 1992 yielded ~30 seedlings, which were planted at the University's Horticulture farm on 4-13-94. All flowered in summer of 1995 with three tagged and propagated as possibilities.

With the plethora of cultivars like 'White Moth', 'Brussels Lace', 'Pink Diamond', 'Unique' and about seven or so others from the Belders in Belgium, I questioned my rationale. One of my fellow colleagues said the one you throw away may be the penultimate winner. So I persisted with three reasonable selections until 1997 when the Center for Applied Nursery Research opened its gates for growing and testing plants.

The three clones, numbers 1, 2 and 3, were transplanted into 3-gal and grown to flower in July-August of 1997. At that time, the Center was nursing over 1000 *Buddleia* seedlings and was quickly being filled with more Dirr plants. Kay Bowman, Center manager, and I discussed chucking the hydrangeas and the issue was settled until Kay ask me to reconsider the one hydrangea with bigger, darker green foliage, stouter, more upright stems and large white flowers. Kay won and suggested the name 'Chantilly Lace'. We propagated a few and grew them into 1998 and 1999. At the 2000 SNA meeting in Atlanta, the magic of a beautiful plant in full flower attracted the attention of those who visited the Center's booth.

Much subsequent interest and discussion prompted the Center's board to release this seedling as *H. paniculata* 'Chantilly Lace'.

## The Description Follows.

Habit: To date (4-year-old), tallest plant is 4-5 feet high, 3 feet wide, with strong ascending bran

Leaves: Opposite, sometimes whorled, simple, 32 to 6" long, 12 to 4" wide, elliptical to ovate, acui  
green I have observed on any cultivar of *H. paniculata*.

Stems: Stiff, stout, 3/16 to 1/4" diameter, medium dark brown with gray vertical streaks; older stems (2nd year) a

Flowers: Thirteen inflorescences on the plant described herein (in ground at the Center) averaged 9.46" high and 6.35" wide, the longest 13" by 8"; the smallest 7" by 7". Inflorescences on container grown plants (N=7) averaged 9.95" by 7.37". Typically vigorous, container-grown plants produce larger flowers than established in ground non-pruned plants. The largest was 14" by 11"; the smallest 7" by 7". The white, almost glistening white sepals, 3 to 4 together, averaged 1.43" by 1.42". This measurement was taken from the outside of the sepal to the outside of the sepal directly across. Sepals are entire, obovoid to rounded, and change to pink with age. The combination of showy sepals and fertile flowers produces a balanced inflorescence, neither too sparse nor heavy. Flowers initiated in mid June and were still effective in September (Dearing, GA).

The new cultivar is easy to root from soft and green wood cuttings using 1000 to 3000 ppm potassium salt of indolebutyric acid. A full 3-gallon can be produced from a liner transplanted in spring.