

# We love June

**What is there not to love** about your sleek flanks and perfect complexion? Oh June. How can anybody resist your scents, carried upon warm breezes, or the soft touch of your perfect flowers. The early morning dew glistens upon your emerald lawns and the fading rose petals fall silently at your softly treading feet. That may be more than enough hyperbole for most people but if any month deserves such puffery then it has to be glorious June.

Words by **James Alexander-Sinclair**

#### **STAR OF THE MONTH LUPINS**

Say 'lupin' to a child and they will probably think of Remus Lupin (professor and werewolf) from *Harry Potter*, rather than short-lived, many-coloured perennials. A pity, as these are prettier and less likely to howl at the moon. ● **Care** Sow seed in spring and watch for slugs ● **Height x Spread** 90cm x 70cm



1 *Helianthemum 'Henfield Brilliant'*



2 *Geranium renardii*

## Putting on a good front

**Every border has a front** and on that front (as the song might have gone if Old MacDonald had been more arable), it needs some low-growing plants – ee-i-ee-i-oh. They lead the eye into the intoxicating heartlands of the deeper border. Repetition is good: in most of the great gardens there are groups of the same plant dotted along the edging in order to give rhythm to the planting. Another option is to plant a low hedge (lavender, see below, is a good option in some cases). This is much more formal but – as a comfort to the lawn enthusiasts out there – stops other plants flopping onto the grass.



3 *Erigeron karvinskianus*



4 *Euphorbia cyparissias*



5 *Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'*

- 1 *Helianthemum 'Henfield Brilliant'***  
A semi-evergreen shrub, it has small grey-green leaves and a distinct twigginess. ● **Care** Clip after flowering. Best in full sun on not too fertile soil. Root cuttings in early summer ● **Height x Spread** 30cm x 30cm
- 2 *Geranium renardii***  
Very pretty flowers but, more importantly, really fine greyish, crinkled leaves which, obviously, last longer. ● **Care** Divide clumps in spring ● **H x S** 30cm x 30cm
- 3 *Erigeron karvinskianus***  
A scurry of tiny daisies as numerous as commuters on the tube. ● **Care** Prefers lots of sun and a poorer, well-drained soil. Self seeds in paving cracks and wall crevices. Cut back in autumn ● **H x S** 20cm x 3m
- 4 *Euphorbia cyparissias***  
A word of warning, gentle reader: this plant, though excellent in every other way, has a tendency to spread itself about a bit. ● **H x S** 30cm x 20cm
- 5 *Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'***  
There are many varieties of lavender, but this flowers well over a long period of time. ● **Care** Take semi-ripe cuttings in summer. Clip lightly after flowering and harder when frosts have passed ● **H x S** 60cm x 75cm



1 *Campanula persicifolia* 'Bennett's Blue'



2 *C. glomerata* 'Caroline'



3 *C. punctata* 'Cherry Bells'



4 *C. isophylla* 'Alba'



5 *C. poscharskyana*

## Bells to ring in the summer

**As *Campanula* means** little bell, it is pretty obvious why this plant got its name. It is an international family covering annuals, alpines and perennials. They come in pinks, whites and a range of blues. I don't think I am speaking out of turn when I say that there is a bellflower for every situation. Even swamps.

**1 *Campanula persicifolia* 'Bennett's Blue'**

Needs staking. Responds well to the Chelsea Chop.

● **Care** Watch out for rust. Sow seed under glass in spring ● **Height x Spread** 90cm x 30cm

**2 *C. glomerata* 'Caroline'**

A variety with tightly clustered flowers. Colours can vary. ● **Care** Divide in spring or autumn or take basal cuttings in very early summer ● **H x S** 60cm x 10cm

**3 *C. punctata* 'Cherry Bells'**

Long, resonant bells. ● **Care** Needs good soil. A little shade keeps the colour better. Cut back after flowering for a second flush ● **H x S** 30cm x 40cm

**4 *C. isophylla* 'Alba'**

Trailing perennial. Very long flowering – can go on for 10 weeks, so perfect for hanging baskets. ● **Care** Tender in all but the warmest areas ● **H x S** 20cm x 30cm

**5 *C. poscharskyana***

Hell to spell but lovely to grow. ● **Care** Best in a rock garden or wall with free drainage. Can spread very vigorously when happy ● **H x S** 20cm x 30cm

PHOTOS: GAP PHOTOS/JONATHAN BUCKLEY, MARG COUSENS, NEIL HOLMES, ALAMY/NIALL MCDERMID, FLORAPIX



1 *Halesia carolina*



2 *Laburnum watereri* 'Vossii'

## Flowers with fortitude

**This low, fluffy stuff** is all very well but we also need robust chaps to maintain the backbone of the month. Beefy shrubs, but who are unafraid to show their feminine side by providing us with glorious flowers.

### 1 *Halesia carolina*

The good news is the snowdrop tree is pretty and you can eat the fruit. The bad news is you need acid soil for it to flourish. ● **Height x Spread** 8m x 10m

### 2 *Laburnum watereri* 'Vossii'

The best variety, with extravagant flowers that are a good 60cm long. ● **Care** Graft in late winter or bud in summer. Needs sun ● **H x S** 8m x 8m

### 3 *Cercis canadensis*

Often flowers before the foliage emerges. Leaves turn fantastic colours in autumn. ● **Care** Needs good, deep fertile soil ● **H x S** 10m x 10m

### 4 *Catalpa bignonioides*

The Indian bean tree. ● **Care** If you cut it back hard you get big, tropical leaves. If you let it grow naturally, these beautiful flowers ● **H x S** 15m x 15m

### 5 *Syringa vulgaris* 'Congo'

Older lilacs are too big for most gardens, this one has two-tone flowers and is compact. ● **Care** Take cuttings after flowering ● **H x S** 2.5m x 2m



3 *Cercis canadensis*



4 *Catalpa bignonioides*



5 *Syringa vulgaris* 'Congo'

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