



Hydrangeas are oh-so grand-
 They peer through wrought -iron gates
 And pose in rows on terraces
 Of millionaires' estates.
 So elegant and stylish,
 Collected, calm and cool--
 But they're really common snow-balls
 That have been to boarding school.

L. Young Correthers...The Little Book of Garden Scandal.

Greetings from GardensOyVey

For the next few weeks I will be writing about Hydrangeas as they are in bloom at the Nursery and I will try to sort out for you all the different species.

This weekend the Hydrangea serrata are showing first signs of bloom. They will be in full bloom May 15 to Early June.

I discovered *Hydrangea serrata* with the help of my Friends, Greg Touliatos and John Griffin. I expressed my dissatisfaction with the *Big Blue Mopheads* and *Lacecaps (Hydrangea macrophylla)* that we all think of when we hear the word Hydrangea. For me, here in zone 7 they had lost their blooms when Lovely Late Delicious Too Warm Winter Days...turned to Miserable Late Spring Dissappointing Frost. Killing the *macrophylla* blooms.

Greg had told John about '*Blue Billow*' *Hydrangea serrata*. I bought it, planted it, and watched it bloom every year side by side with my sorry *Hydrangea macrophylla*. So I have abandoned the use of *Hydrangea macrophylla* after 20 YEARS! of frequent dissatisfaction. (Hey I don't give up easily!) (Although this PERFECT Spring will make a fool out of me with the *macrophylla*.)

Since then I have collected every available *Hydrangea serrata*.

I have found them to be a curious and delightful addition to the Shade Garden. (I can't help myself.)

Hydrangea serrata are Japanese Mountain *Hydrangea* and perhaps this is why they do not wake up too early to be fooled by late frost.

They come often as *Lacecaps*, or as *Halos of Stars* floating among the foliage. I only know of two varieties that are *Mopheads*, '*Little Geisha*' and '*Preziosa*'.

'*Preziosa*' has the large foliage of *Hydrangea macrophylla* as does '*Veitchii*' and '*Greyswood*'.

I suspect there are *Macrophylla* in their woodpile!!! However '*Veitchii*' and '*Preziosa*' never failed to bloom for me.

These Beauties also range in size from 2' to 5'. The smallest at 2 ft. is '*Shirofuji*', next come '*Little Geisha*' and '*Kurenai*' at 3 ft. Followed by '*Blue Billow*' and '*Tiara*' 3-4 ft. up to 5 ft. with other varieties.

For photos and details [click here](#).

The Bloom Schedule for Hydrangeas here in S.W. Tennessee is *serrata* first, along with *macrophylla*, INCLUDING some and followed by, *Oak Leaf Hydrangea* and *Hydrangea arborescens*, (Annabelle and her cousins). Lastly come the *Panicle Hydrangea*: *Limelight*, *Pee Gee*, *Chantilly Lace* ect. By including a few of all of these species you can extend bloom time from Mid May thru July.

These all can be viewed and described on our [website](#). NOTE!!! TO OUR ONLINE CLIENTS!!

Only *H. serrata* and *H. macrophylla* will ship well all summer. *Oak Leaf Hydrangea* and *Hydrangea arborescens* and the the *Panicle Hydrangeas* will only ship Fall, Winter and Early Spring.

Of all of these the *Oakleaf*, *Arborescens* and *Panicle* are the Most Drouth Tolerant. Native populations can be viewed throughout the Hot Dry Southeast enduring years of Drouth like *Steel Magnolias*.

The *Serrata* and *Macrophylla* could perhaps be as Drouth Tolerant. In the Early 1980's when I moved to Memphis there were many of these living near abandoned rural homes and in depressed urban neighborhoods with nairy a drop of water.

It is my own experience that when we water we make plants more dependent on water. The *Serrata* and *Macrophylla* do wilt in the heat of the afternoon, picking up again after the sun moves towards evening.

SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! Water the first few years. Water to make yourself feel better. Wait to Water till you have noticed them in the morning light, as this reflects their true need for water.

One more note on Watering. Memphis is a Rain Forest in the Winter and a Desert in the Summer. Whenever possible, plant the majority of your Landscape in November/December to minimize the necessity for water.

Next Week I will describe the *Oakleaf* and *Arborescens Hydrangea* for your Reading Pleasure.

Also Blooming Now! '*Snow Queen*' and '*Ellen Huff*' *Oak Leaf Hydrangea*, *Moser's Hypericum*, *Deutzia 'Summer Star's'*, '*Little Henry*' *Itea*, '*Veilchenblau*' *Thornless Rose* and the *Louisiana Iris*. The Perennials are Poised to Pop! For the next Three Weeks!

For [Hours](#) and [Directions](#) go to our [main web site](#)

We look forward to your visit. Diane and Wolfgang [GardensOyVey](#)

