# Wisteria sinensis 'Prolific' AGM

the original *W. sinensis* introduced to the UK in 1816 from the garden of Conseequa in Canton, China. When it first flowered History: this fine cultivar was named in 1968 but was in fact Flowering time: early to mid-April; with all wisteria time of flowering is influenced by local conditions. names. Most plants sold as *W. sinensis* will be this cultivar. This and other wisterias shown here have an RHS hardiness in England it caused a sensation and was soon distributed Wisteria in cultivation and has received many different around the world; it is perhaps the most well-knowr rating of H6 (–20 to –15°c/–4 to 5°F)

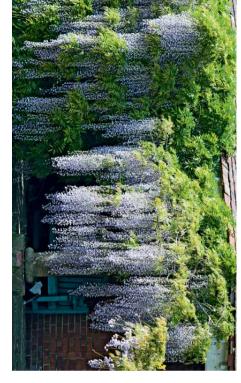
Flower characteristics: flowers have a pale mauvish blue upper (standard) petal with a yellow eye; other petals are Flower raceme length: 22-27 cm (8½-10½in darker. Flowers have a strong, sweet scent

# Choosing from the best

but gardeners usually only have room for one or two. the following selections prove among the most reliable On the launch of a new RHS monograph of these plants, Wisteria are perhaps the most spectacular of climbers,

Author: Chris Lane, Vice Chairman of the RHS Woody Plant Committee





## t. multijuga 'Kyushaku' AGM Wisteria floribunda

or loggia festooned with the long pale mauve racemes of this selection, taking in kyushaku is nine shaku. A pergola, archway arose in the early part of the Edo period in Japan, but as far as can be ascertained History: this cultivar is of unknown origin the scent and the hum of bees, can be a (1603–1868), possibly before. The name 'Kyushaku' refers to the length of the remarkable experience. length in Japan (approximately 25cm/10in) raceme, a shaku being a measurement of

white, flushed mauve upper (standard) Flower characteristics: each flower has Flowering time: mid-April to late May. Raceme length: 85-110cm (33½-43in) and inner (keel) petals are mauvish violet petals with a small yellow eye; side (wing)



### f. rosea 'Hon-beni' AGM Wisteria floribunda

the early Meiji period (1868–1912), and was known by the Nakayama in cultivation in Japan, certainly from History: this fine selection (syn. family of Wisteria raisers. 'Hon-beni' W. floribunda 'Rosea') has long been

for pergolas, archways or growing as a standard. Young foliage is bronzy green turning yellow in autumn. Flower characteristics: flowers has the pinkest flowers and is superb Flowering time: mid- to late May.

heavily flushed with pink, and a small yellow eye. The wing and keel petals Raceme length: 35-47cm pink; overall, a good pink selection are white, flushed with mauvish each have a white standard petal

(14-18½in)

May 2019 | The Garden 49

≈

rhs.org.uk

#### Wisteria brachybotrys 'Okayama' AGM

History: origin uncertain, but presumably collected from Okayama Prefecture in southwest Honshu. Cultivated since the Meiji period (1868– 1912) in Japan and in Europe soon after. It is vigorous and repays careful pruning; train on a wall, as a standard or into a suitable tree. It combines short but broad, dark mauvish purple racemes with dark bronze emerging foliage. Flowering time: early to mid-April.

Flower characteristics: each flower has a mauve standard, with a white centre and small pale yellow eye. Wing and keel petals are dark mauvish purple. Flowers have wonderful scent. Raceme length: 22–28cm (8½–11in).



#### *Wisteria floribund*a f. alba 'Shiro-noda' AGM

**History:** this superb cultivar most likely originated from the area of Noda, north of Tokyo, during the Meiji period (1868–1912) or earlier. With its long racemes it is ideally suited to cultivation on pergolas and arches.

Flowering time: mid- to late May.

Flower characteristics: scented; white standard with pale yellow eye. Wing and keel petals are white with a faint mauve tip to the keel.

Raceme length: 36–50cm (14–20in).

#### Resources

Plants are listed in *RHS Plant Finder 2019*, and at **rhs.org.uk/findaplant** 

In *The Garden* podcast May 2019, Chris Young chats with RHS Garden Wisley Curator Matthew Pottage about growing wisteria and new ideas for pruning: **rhs.org.uk/thegardenpodcast** 



#### Wisteria

The complete guide by James Compton and Chris Lane, Royal Horticultural Society, May 2019, 304pp, RRP £40, ISBN 9781907057885 RHS offer price £37

The third in the acclaimed series of RHS Horticultural Monographs, this book reveals the horticulture, botany and history of one of the most spectacular garden plants.

All five species and nearly 100 cultivars are illustrated and described. Information is given on the history of these plants in cultivation, with detailed advice on cultivation and garden use.

Offer price available from RHS mail order until 31 August; 01483 211320; **rhsshop.co.uk** 

