



*Gunnare manicata*  
enjoying a moist soil

### Further reading

**The Damp Garden**

*Beth Chatto*  
ISBN 0-75281-643-8

**What Plant Where**

*Roy Lancaster*  
ISBN 0-7513-0210-4

**Tough Plants for Tough Places**

*Gary Vergine*  
& *Michael Jefferson-Brown*  
ISBN 0-7153-1021-6

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# Moisture Lovers

## Moisture Lovers

**Haskins Ferndown**

Longham, Ferndown  
Dorset BH22 9DJ  
Tel: 01202 591919

**Haskins West End**

Mansbridge Road, Gaters Hill  
West End, Southampton SO18 3HW  
Tel: 023 8047 2324

**Haskins Roundstone**

Roundstone Bypass, Angmering  
West Sussex BN16 4BD  
Tel: 01903 777666

**Haskins Snowhill**

Snowhill Lane, Copthorne  
West Sussex RH10 3EY  
Tel: 01342 712545



*Astilbe hybrid*



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# Moisture-loving plants...

## Moisture-loving plants

"Healthy soil is essential for healthy plant growth".

If the soil you are faced with in your garden does not appear to be ideal, don't lose heart - there are many possibilities for success.

## Waterlogging

On poorly drained soil, an accumulation of water may lead to waterlogging. Most plants are able to cope with infrequent heavy downpours, but prolonged saturation can cause the roots of some plants to die through asphyxiation. The exception to this are those plants specially adapted to boggy conditions, such as aquatic marginals - Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudoacorus*) or Day Lilies (*Hemerocallis*) - and the willows (*Salix*). On a permanently wet site, most plants will struggle to establish or fail completely, unless they are chosen with care or a lasting improvement is made to the drainage of the soil.

## Other solutions

Low-lying areas are especially prone to becoming water-logged during heavy rain. Tackle the problem head-on by either digging a pond (if this is practical) to retain moisture throughout the year or import additional topsoil and construct a raised bed to provide a free-draining root run for your treasured plants.

Clay soils tend to drain more slowly than others, due to their fine silt-like particle structure. They become compacted easily, worsening the problem and causing puddling on the surface, before baking hard during the summer. Even the heaviest clay soils can be improved permanently, by digging in LARGE QUANTITIES of grit and bulky organic matter (horse manure, farmyard manure, garden compost) or even Multi Purpose Potting Compost. This must be incorporated to a depth of at least two "spits" (spade depths) to provide a healthy environment for root growth and enable plants to flourish.

## Top Tips:

Gardening on clay has one chief principle; work with the soil at all times to improve its structure. If the structure is improved - rewards will follow; strong, lush, sustained growth from a constant reservoir of food and moisture.

Avoid walking on clay soils whenever possible to retain an "open" structure, allowing water to penetrate easily.

Always work from planks or pathways if the ground is very wet.

## Testing for drainage

A simple test to see if your soil is prone to waterlogging requires digging a hole 30-60cm (12"-24") deep and filling it with water. If the water remains for several hours (or even days) this indicates that drainage may be a problem at some point in the future. It's best to improve drainage thoroughly now, before planting.

## Installing drains

Permanent land drains are traditionally an effective method of dealing with compacted, poorly drained soil. Lay a herringbone pattern of underground pipes (either perforated plastic or cylindrical tiles) flowing towards a gravel-filled pit.

Dig trenches spanning the area approx. 60cm (24") deep and draining into a gravel-filled soak away. Set the pipes into gravel, butting them end to end. Top off with more gravel, coarse sand and then upturned turves, before replacing the topsoil.

## Note:

"Moisture-loving" plants require consistently moist soil throughout the year to thrive. Those tolerant of water-logged soil can cope with wet roots for a short time, with-out undue harm. They are especially useful for low lying areas of the garden that can become particularly wet during the winter or in areas of high water table.

In addition to the following list of moisture-lovers, there are a huge selection of aquatic, marginal or pond plants available that thrive in a variety of waterside positions. Pick up a copy of our leaflet "Creating a Bog Garden" for a full list of suitable plants, plus details of how to build a purpose-made bog garden.

| Latin Name:   | Common Name:            | Type:                | Tolerant of Occasional Waterlogging / Requires Consistent Moisture: |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|---|
| <i>Acorus gramineus</i> var. 'Ogon'                   | Japanese Rush           | Grass-like Perennial | Consistent  |
| <i>Alnus</i> - all                                    | Alder                   | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>Amelanchier</i> - all                              | Snowy Mespilus          | Shrub/Tree           | Both  |
| <i>Anemone rivularis</i>                              | Anemone                 | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Aruncus dioicus</i> 'Kneiffii'                     | Goat's Beard            | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Arundinaria</i> - all                              | -                       | Bamboo               | Both  |
| <i>Arundo donax</i> 'Variegata'                       | Giant Reed              | Grass-like           | Both  |
| <i>Astilbe</i> - all                                  | -                       | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Astilboides tabularis</i> (syn. <i>Rodgersia</i> ) | -                       | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Betula nigra</i>                                   | Birch                   | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>B. pendula</i> ,                                   |                         | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>B. pubescens</i>                                   |                         | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>Carex elata</i> 'Aureum'                           | Sedge                   | Grass                | Both  |
| <i>C. pendula</i>                                     |                         | Grass                | Both  |
| <i>C. riparia</i>                                     |                         | Grass                | Both  |
| <i>Cimicifuga</i> - any                               | Bugbane                 | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Clethra</i> - all                                  | Summer Sweet            | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Cornus alba</i> - all                              | Dogwood                 | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Crataegus laevigata</i>                            | May                     | Tree                 | Occasional  |
| syn. <i>C. oxyacantha</i>                             |                         |                      |   |
| <i>Damiera peltata</i>                                | -                       | Perennial            | Both  |
| (syn. <i>Peltiphyllum peltatum</i> )                  |                         |                      |   |
| <i>Eupatorium purpureum</i>                           | Joe Pye Weed            | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Euphorbia palustris</i>                            | Spurge                  | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Filipendula</i> - any                              | Meadowsweet             | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Gautheria shallon</i>                              | Shallon                 | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Gomphostigma virgatum</i>                          | -                       | Perennial            | Occasional  |
| <i>Gunnera manicata</i>                               | -                       | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Hemerocallis</i> - all                             | Day Lily                | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>                           | Sea Buckthorn           | Shrub/Tree           | Both  |
| <i>Hosta</i> - all                                    | Plantain Lily           | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Houttuynia 'Chamaeleon'</i>                        | -                       | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Ilex verticillata</i>                              | Holly                   | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Iris ensata</i> (syn. <i>I. Kaempferi</i> )        | Japanese Iris           | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>I. laevigata</i>                                   | Water Iris              | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>I. pseudoacorus</i>                                | Yellow Flag             | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>I. sibirica</i>                                    | Siberian Iris           | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>I. versicolor</i>                                  | Blue Flag               | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Juncus effusus</i> 'Spiralis'                      | Corkscrew Rush          | Grass-like           | Both  |
| <i>Liatris spicata</i>                                | Gayfeather              | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Ligularia dentata</i> 'Desdemona'                  | Golden Groundsel        | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>L. przewalskii</i>                                 | -                       | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>                             | Cardinal Flower         | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>L. siphilitica</i>                                 | Blue Cardinal Flower    | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>                              | Loosestrife             | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Mespilus germanica</i>                             | Medlar                  | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>                   | Dawn Redwood            | Conifer              | Both  |
| <i>Neillia thibetica</i>                              | -                       | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>                           | Ribbon Grass            | Grass                | Both  |
| <i>Phyllostachys</i> - all                            | -                       | Bamboo               | Both  |
| <i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i> - all                  | Ninebark                | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Picea sitchensis</i>                               | Sitka Spruce            | Conifer              | Both  |
| <i>Populus</i> - all                                  | Poplar / Aspen          | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>Primula</i> - many                                 | Primula                 | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Prunus spinosa</i>                                 | Blackthorn / Sloe       | Shrub/Tree           | Both  |
| <i>Rheum</i> - most                                   | Ornamental Rhubarb      | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Rodgersia</i> - most                               | -                       | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Salix</i> - all                                    | Willow                  | Shrub/Tree           | Both  |
| <i>Sambucus</i> - all                                 | Elder                   | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Sasa</i> - all                                     | -                       | Bamboo               | Both  |
| <i>Scrophularia auriculata</i> 'Variegata'            | Figwort                 | Perennial            | Both  |
| <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>                               | Rowan                   | Tree                 | Both  |
| <i>Spirea</i> - many                                  | -                       | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Symphoricarpos</i>                                 | Snowberry               | Shrub                | Both  |
| <i>Taxodium ascendens</i>                             | Swamp Cypress           | Conifer              | Both  |
| <i>T. distichum</i>                                   |                         | Conifer              | Both  |
| <i>Trollius</i> - all                                 | Globeflower             | Perennial            | Consistent  |
| <i>Vaccinium</i> - all                                | Blueberry, Cranberry... | Shrub                | Consistent  |
| <i>Viburnum opulus</i>                                | Guelder Rose            | Shrub                | Both  |

**NB:** Availability of some varieties may be limited, due to scarcity of supply. If unavailable from our normal suppliers, we shall refer customers to an alternative source.