

Virtual Hortlandia 2020

Sebright Gardens Nursery

www.sebrightgardens.com

This week Joanne Fuller talked with Kirk Hansen at Sebright Gardens Nursery and edited the conversation for this article.

Kirk, how did Sebright Gardens get started?

In 1981, Mid-America Nursery was an iris grower based in Oklahoma City. Their customers suggested that they start growing hostas. In 1998, they gave up on trying to grow iris in Oklahoma and moved to Oregon. I purchased a part stake in the business in 2004, changed the name and over the years we branched out from growing only hostas to grow a wide range of shade loving plants.

What is the Sebright Gardens philosophy?

Our goal is to let people enjoy themselves and leave with a positive experience. We want our customers to be successful growing our plants. We want people to be happy with their plants for the long term not just the minute they buy them. Some plants are so fussy and difficult for most gardeners to grow that they may look great when you buy them but you are not going to be happy when they struggle to grow in your garden. At Sebright, we sell plants that are vigorous, well rooted and easy for most gardeners to grow. If a plant is challenging to grow, we make that very clear on the label.

Can customers visit your nursery right now and what is that like?

Yes, we're able to have customers visit and shop safely. We are open daily from 10 am to 5pm and we are asking our customers to follow guidelines and recommendations from the Oregon Health Authority and the CDC. We are taking all of the precaution protocols very seriously. We have a lot of open air shopping as well as a large hoop house where customers can easily maintain social distancing. Customers have been very respectful of each other's distancing. Customers handle their own plants through the whole purchasing process.

Our 4 acres of display gardens are open to visitors with plenty of space for people to enjoy a few hours in the country. The gardens feature a large collection of plants so visitors can see our plants growing together in garden beds and a woodland setting.

Kirk, I went shopping at Sebright recently. I arrived as you opened and felt very comfortable shopping. The gardens and plants were beautiful and I got a lot of great shade plants including Carex 'Banana Boat' which I love.

Thanks, always nice to hear that people enjoy their visit and feel safe.

What are some of your favorite plants?

That depends on the day. I can't really decide which hostas are my favorite, I like hostas that are good doers. I like ferns. Wallich's Wood Fern (*Dryopteris wallichiana*) is one of my favorites.

It is tough, evergreen and several feet tall. The one in our display garden is particularly nice. I like Lady Ferns (*Athyrium filix-femina*). They look delicate with their light foliage but they are tough and good growers. All the wood ferns (*Dryopteris*) are great. I also like the Narrow Tassel Fern (*Polystichum retrosopaleaceum*) with its chartreuse foliage and it is evergreen.

What plants look good right now in the nursery?

Pulmonarias are blooming and as they leaf out their variegation is beginning to show up. The hostas in our hoop house are leafing out enough to see their colors and leaf patterns which will just keep getting better every day. The ferns are looking good coming up in the sales area and the garden. We have lots of stock available.

If customers want to mail order how does that work?

Our complete catalogue is on the website. If you visit www.sebright.com it's easy to mail order from us. You can also visit the web site and order for pick-up at the garden.

How long have you been a vendor at Hortlandia?

We have been a vendor at Hortlandia since 2005 or 2006. We love the plant diversity at the sale. Thomas usually represents us at Hortlandia and he is always happy to meet so many of our customers.