

Tubestock Trader

Trade Only



Ajuga reptans
'Black Mary'



Ajuga reptans
'Pink Elf'



Ajuga reptans 'Catkins Giant'

January 2022



Ajuga reptans
'Silver Carpet'



Ajuga tenorii
'Chocolate Chip'

Clive's Comments

January already and another year starts. Over the next few weeks we will have a range of 'New Year' celebrations. It doesn't matter which country or religion they come from, they are all about a new beginning, a sense of hope and anticipation and an opportunity to revisit what is important. They are also about celebration with lots of 'parties' and often gift giving. In the southern hemisphere they also line up with summer vacations and all the fun that comes with them.

As we age, the thrill of the 'New Year' diminishes and it becomes a time to think about the preceding 12 months and look at where we are going in the next. The past two years have really changed the way we look at the future. No-one in 2019 would have anticipated a world where the state governments took on an autocratic approach and declared where we could travel, who we could see and who could come into our homes, where and if we would work and even if/when we could leave our homes. These were things we only heard about in those strange countries run by nasty dictators.

We have been shaken to the core and many of us live in a heightened state of anxiety and fear. For some it is the fear of another Covid outbreak and it will affect our health and lives. Will our vaccinations be enough? Should we change our lifestyles? For others it is the fear of how it will hit the medical system and others it is the worry about being in lockdown again. The lockdown fear has its own issues as it alters our lives in different ways. The life of a primary school child is cold and stressful without their normal contact with their friends, and at the other end lockdowns scare the hell out of small business.

However, the Covid virus effected people, the shift in their confidence in the future is profound. If nothing else people are now worried about planning more than a few weeks ahead. The thought of investing money in any event more than six months away is plain scary. I suspect this unease will carry forward for years.

Talking to a business associate from another industry the subject of the state of business came up. We are both very busy and struggling with staff and material shortages. We were both at an economic point better than we could remember. Sales are great, cash flow is good and capital development was being planned. We started to look at the...

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Clive's Comments continued... normal parameters and how they were sitting. Labour is short, yet wages and inflation are steady. Businesses are closing but there is no sign of a recession and interest rates are crazy low. On one hand we can't get staff but on the other governments are funding more job creating projects.

We are living in a three layer economy with those employed by governments living easily and not only kept working through the last 20 months as the top layer. Then there were all those working in businesses that were classed as essential and kept working throughout. Finally there are those who had no employment and no to minimal subsidies who struggled hard and are still finding it hard. With the current demand for staff no-one should be unemployed unless they don't wish to work.

We have just come through a real negative period in modern history, the economy was in recession and unemployment was high. However the economy seems to be booming. Now that the lockdowns are over and the borders are opening there is a great sense of optimism. Sure some of that is due to it being Christmas/New Year but most is right through the community. My friend and I were struggling to get a hold on what is happening. How do we go forward into 2022? Do we plan for continued growth? Do we hesitate and slow down on spending? It seems too good to be true, which usually means it is.

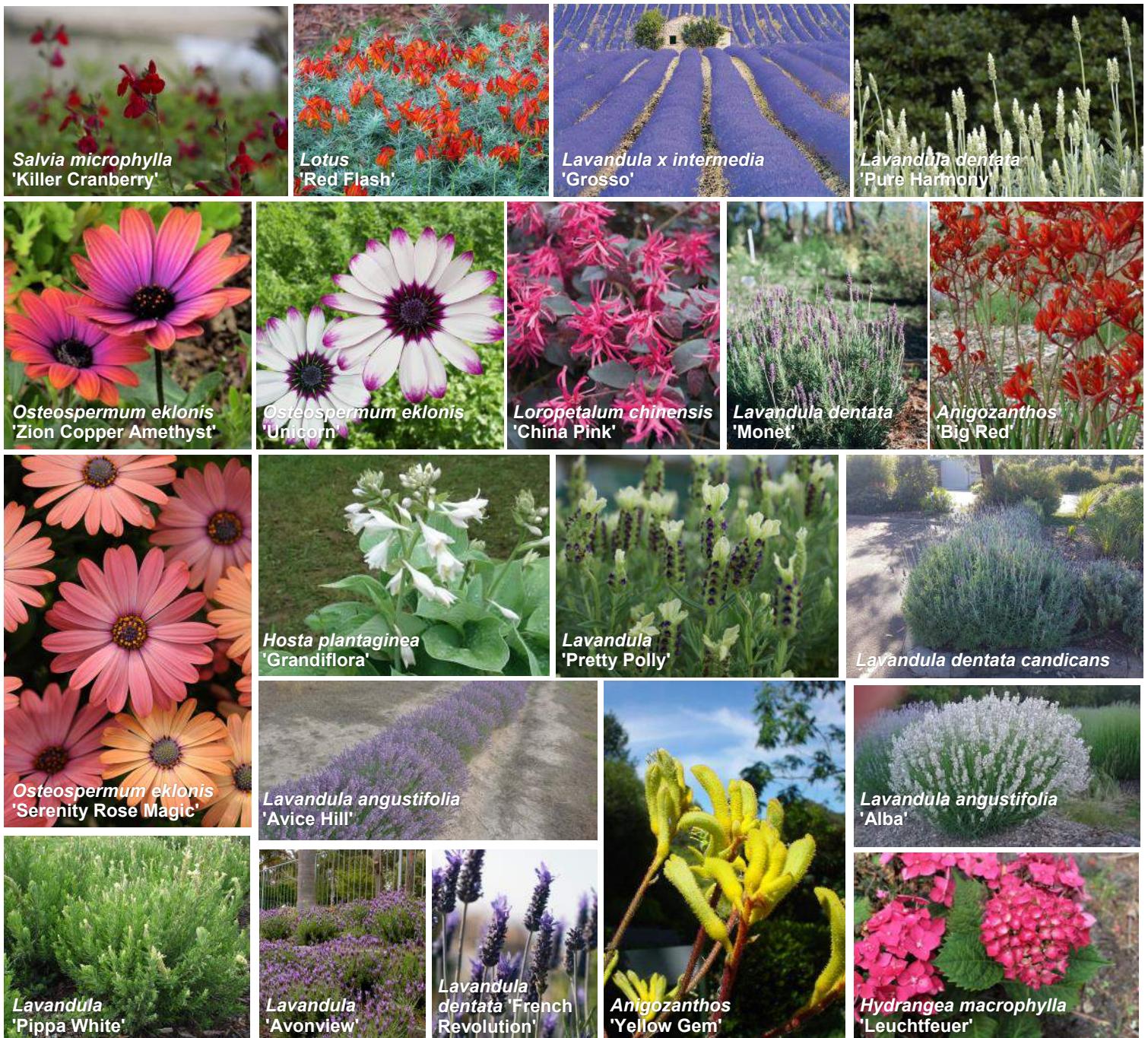
One way of succeeding in business is being aware of the past and using that to plan the future. Problem is we haven't had a past like this. So many things are just new. The pandemic is the cause but how it has changed the economy is confusing. There are so many theories about why we are doing well and each has its own warnings. The big cloud on the horizon is the level of Government debt – State, National and Foreign. The majority of governments around the world borrowed heavily to get through 2021-22. Fortunately, the interest rates are at record lows which means the government interest debts are not crippling.

The housing market is screaming along even though population growth has slowed – albeit temporarily, and this is feeding the economy. What will happen when interest rates start to rise? The market will slow but will it turn backwards? Due to the lack of travel and retail opportunity people have been saving like never before. This is now helping to feed the economy as well.

So how do we plan for 2022? Personally I feel we will continue to travel well in 2022 but there maybe a slow down in 2023 as everything returns to equilibrium. Best to a plan for busy autumn to spring and get lots of plants in the system. If you don't have them you can't sell them. So be prepared for good sales but keep a reign on commitments.

All of us here at Larkman Nurseries would like to thank you for your support during 2020-2021 and we look forward to working with all our customers to build a strong and profitable 2022-23.

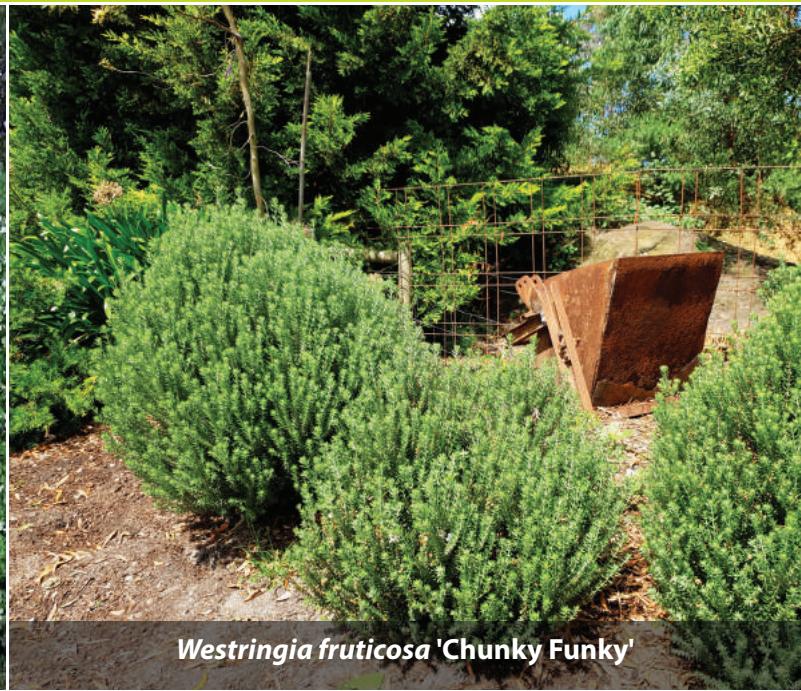
Clive Larkman



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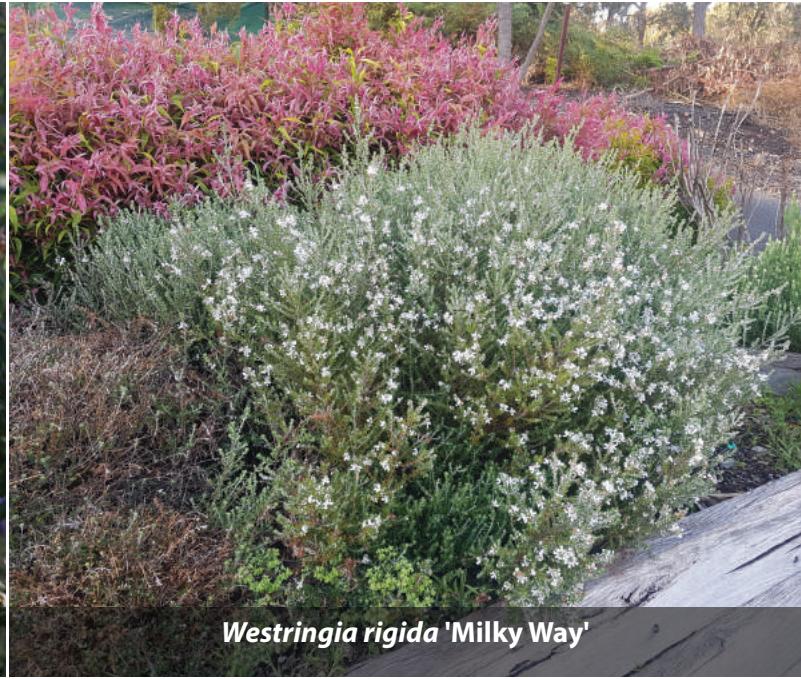
Westringia fruticosa



Westringia fruticosa 'Chunky Funky'



Westringia fruticosa 'Jervis Gem'



Westringia rigida 'Milky Way'



Euonymus japonicus 'Pierrolino'