



Design Concept:

Lucy Lewis, Lecturer in Horticulture

Design and Construction:

T Level Horticulture and RHS Students

RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2026:

Stand GPD051

Join us on a journey of colour...

Sparsholt College is excited to be showcasing Washday Hues which has been created to explore the historical relationship between fabrics and plants. The garden aims to demonstrate the wide range of beautiful and vibrant colours that can be achieved when using natural plant-based dyes, including how to achieve these results at home.

The design plans to lead you through the steps involved in taking colour from plant to pigment, flower to fabric and garden to garment, sharing the knowledge and expertise our staff and students gained from working with ELKA, a weaving and natural dye studio based in Hampshire. From solar dyeing to mordants, our garden is designed to bring traditional dyeing techniques back to life.

The garden features many different plants which can be used to produce both fast dyes – those that are permanent and colour-fast, and fugitive dyes – pigments which fade over time but can be fun for beginners. Look for the symbols around the garden for inspiration.

Be bold with colour!

Our display includes a variety of plants, many of which can be used as natural dyes. Selected for their bold colours, all the plants can be grown in the UK climate. We hope our exciting and fiery colour palette inspires you to be creative with colour in your own garden as you journey around our exhibit and experience the whole dye cycle.

Our kitchen area features a sink where the dyeing process is actively taking place.

Dried plant samples for future dyes are displayed in the pantry, along with mordants and modifiers which can be used to create a wider array of colours

Our eye-catching washing machine symbolises the start of the process, washing and preparing fabrics and fibres



“It is like magic really; you can take a plant that looks one way and get an incredibly vivid colour from it”

Ellie Fisher, ELKA



A washing line displays finished items of clothing, demonstrating the spectrum of colours which can be achieved through natural dyeing

Symbols in our Garden

Pigments can be produced using different parts of plants including roots, flowers, leaves and berries. Look out for the symbols on our plant labels.



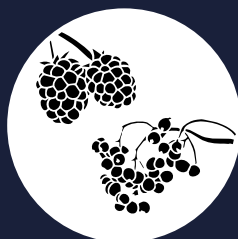
Roots



Leaves



Flower heads



Berries



Stems/barks

Our plant labels also use these symbols to show whether a plant produces a fast or fugitive dye.



Fast



Fugitive

Keep an eye out for our six Star Plants, chosen for their unique dye qualities and fascinating histories.

RHS Plant of the Year 2026 Entries



Pittosporum tobira X heterophyllum GREEN MOUND ('JULE1')

Exceptionally free-flowering and fragrant, this hardy, compact evergreen shrub is sun loving but happy in part shade and drought resistant. The size makes it perfect for small gardens - excellent in a border or large patio container, with the additional benefit of sweetly scented white flowers fading to yellow.



Anisodonteia capensis CARNIVAL LIGHTS® CANDY APPLE ('IB201-7')

Flowering from May to Christmas, it is perfect as a patio/bedding plant or a short lived shrub in mild areas. It has superb heat and drought tolerance making it ideal for the changing climate, with a unique dark red flower colour.



Petunia X hybrida 'Allegra Orchid Vein' F1

A unique upright *Petunia* which can grow up to 1.5m tall and can be used as a cut flower as well as a bedding plant. Large double orchid-like lilac flowers bloom for up to five months and it requires no deadheading. Striking, elegant and versatile, it can work well in containers, borders and floral arrangements.



Clematis X hybrida MOCHI ('Minamo-no-Yousei')

Clematis MOCHI offers unique spray-like blooms that change in form from single to double over an exceptional 120-plus day flowering season. Its compact habit makes it suitable for small gardens and containers in sun or partial shade.



Salvia X jamensis MALABAR® ('Mighty Pink')

A new *Salvia* with large (up to 2.5cm across) bright pink blooms with pale throats. With a long flowering period, it attracts bees and other pollinators and is a great addition to mixed borders or pots. Great drought and heat tolerance makes this an excellent low maintenance, climate resilient option.

SPARSHOLT

COLLEGE GROUP

Sparsholt College was established at the beginning of the 20th century and is recognised as one of the UK's leading land-based colleges.

Students on full-time courses such as the Ornamental Horticulture T Level, work with the grounds team to maintain the Horticulture Department, campus grounds and six hectares of sports pitches, as well as collaborating with learners on part-time RHS courses to design and construct our RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden.

You can find out more about this year's garden team, pictured above, on our website.



Sparsholt also delivers the Horticulture and Landscape Construction Operative, Greenkeeper, Sports Turf Operative and Advanced Sports Turf Technician Apprenticeship Standards and trains up to 120 apprentices a year. A team of five sector specialists supports employers in the horticulture and landscaping sectors to develop the gardening talent of the future.

In the next year, we are excited to be adding Viticulture to our apprenticeship offer.

For more information please call or visit:

 **01962 776441**  **sparsholt.ac.uk**



We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their generous support:

Hazel, Keith and George Smith, and:

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Please scan for
indicative plant list and
further information