

They soon cover the bare patches with new foliage, and this cultivar's growth habit is so upright that in comparison with its *Calluna* companions, its width seems hardly to have changed. Had I chosen another large *Calluna* cultivar for this crucial location, both working paths would have been blocked years ago.

This spring, no matter how many other chores are demanding my attention, once I've finished all the pruning that can be done with my trusty electrical assistant, I'm going to get down on my knees and cut off all the overgrown basal branches along all my garden paths. Where cultivars have sprawling growth, I'll reach underneath as far as I can to remove the lowest branches and hope that new upper growth will lean over and cover the cut stem ends. Because I expect nobody but me to use the working paths, I don't even need to worry about how the cut edges there look.

---

## **Bruckenthalia Hybrids**

In 1987, I made first trials crossing *Erica spiculifolia* (*Balkan heath*) with other *Erica* species. The Balkan heaths name then was *Bruckenthalia spiculifolia*. *Bruckenthalia* is still used here in the company and amongst colleagues.

That year I pollinated *Erica spiculifolia* with pollen from nine other species. Only the crosses with *Erica cinerea* (bell heather) and *Erica bergiana* (a Cape heath) resulted in seeds and young plants. The seedlings of *Erica cinerea* x *spiculifolia* unfortunately were killed by frost in the first winter. The seedlings of the hybrid with the Cape heath were more frost tolerant and survived. This was named *Erica* x *gaudificans*, and two clones were selected and named 'Edewecht Belle' and 'Edewecht Blush'.

In subsequent years I tried several more crosses. In 2004 I succeeded with pollen of *Erica vagans*, *E. sicula*, *E. terminalis* and *E. manipuliflora*. From all of these I obtained seeds. The seedlings of *Erica spiculifolia* x *vagans* all died. The others were propagated so I was able to compare them and test them for suitability of production and garden use.

Two clones of the hybrid *Erica spiculifolia* x *manipuliflora* received cultivar names.

'Lisette' (reg. no. E.2012:03. Heathers 10: 84). When registered the flowers were described as lilac-pink (H11) and 'Pamela' (reg. no. E.2012:01. Heathers 10: 83). When registered the flowers were described as heliotrope (H12).

In Germany both cultivars are significantly more valuable for the garden than those of *E. x gaudiflora*. The flowers are slightly larger. The flowering time starts early June and lasts into late autumn. As pot-plants, they need sufficient water and fertilizer, and the faded flowers need to be removed. As a side note, *Erica spiculifolia* will flower a second time, if faded flowers are removed.

Both 'Lisette' and 'Pamela' are produced in larger quantities in Germany and sold as flowering pot plants. I hope you will try these varieties in your garden.



*Above 'Pamela'*



*Above 'Lisette'*



*Kurt Kramer, Edeweicht/ Germany*

The Heather Society

Newsletter

Summer 2017

