

Plant Heritage

National Council for the Conservation of Plants & Gardens



SUFFOLK GROUP JOURNAL

Spring 2012



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Front and back photo of Stipa Barbata by Sarah Cook

Cover design by Sally Geeve, www.sallygeeve.com.

Thanks to Nicola Hobbs for layout.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

MAGGIE THORPE

Our Autumn Plant Fair at Helmingham was another splendid occasion, the end result of which enabled us to send yet more funds to National Office who was overcome with excitement by our 2011 contribution of £10,000.

Other Groups are asking how we manage such a large amount and I tell them that it is all as a result of you, our members, playing such a large part in volunteering to help at the Fairs and especial thanks go to those who grow such high quality plants for our stand. We now have a large group of members who have taken stock plants to grow in their own gardens and from which they bring propagated material for us to sell. We raised £2,075 on plants at our two Fairs and another £1,000 at our Stowupland meetings and other events during the summer months. Thank you to all of you for such an amazing result.

We intend to repeat the Helmingham Propagation Gazebo held in the autumn, some members of the public remaining throughout all the sessions! I know they found it restful to sit there throughout but there were lots of interesting questions, with most people saying how much easier it was to watch than to read in a book.

Our Annual General Meeting and Party was held at Barton Grange by kind invitation of Nick Cook and Matthew Hicks. They made us most welcome in their beautiful home where unlike last year we were blessed with a beautiful sunny day. Lunch was delicious and thank you members for the scrumptious puddings. Would that I could have eaten more!

Dorothy Cartwright, our Collections Co-ordinator gave a short report on





Above: Members at work on the fiendish plant quiz devised by Maggie Thorpe for the Annual General Meeting;

Photo on previous page: Pauline Byford encouraging members to recruit more people to join the Suffolk Group.

the help we have been able to give our Collection holders during 2011. We now own two sets of RHS Colour Charts and plant labels are to be purchased and distributed.

Robert Grimsey (Aesculus Collection Holder) thanked our Group and reported that the Brother Bursary he won had enabled him to properly identify all his trees with long lasting labels together with numbers forming a wonderful record should the labels disappear.

I announced that I intend to retire as Chairman at the end of 2012 having completed over 10 years in that office. Widget Finn would like to step down from running the Plant Fair and Pauline Byford would like to give up being Membership Secretary. All three of us would like those taking over these positions to shadow us during the year so that the changeover will be as smooth as possible.

I do hope you had a lovely Christmas and I wish you all a Prosperous and Happy New Year.

PLANT COLLECTIONS CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

DOROTHY CARTWRIGHT

In August the Collection Holders Meeting was held at Robert Grimsey's house and Collection Holders had a very interesting tour of his *Aesculus* Collection before the meeting started.

Mercy Morris – Plant Conservation Officer – came from HQ and gave an informative presentation including information about the 2015 Review of National Plant Collections.

The first National Collections were recognised back in the 1980s and the requirements for people applying to have a National Collection have changed several times over the years since then. Therefore it has been decided that the time has come to review all the National Collections to ensure that they all meet the latest requirements. Collection Holders are being told about the review now so they have time to work with their local co-ordinator to resolve any problems before the 2015 Reviews start.

At the meeting Collection Holders agreed that it would be helpful to have a RHS Colour Chart available for them to use to help in checking plant identifications.

Plant labels were discussed and it was agreed that engraved labels like the ones used by Plant Heritage at shows which last around 25 years would be good for Collections. These labels need to be ordered in large numbers so Collection Holders need to work together. I agreed to talk to the Committee about the colour charts and labels and at the next committee meeting it was agreed to help with charts and labels.

Robert Grimsey reported that his *Aesculus* Collection has filled up the space he has available and he would be interested to know if anyone has any spare land which might suit *Aesculus*.

Sarah Cook and Jim Marshall are working on a new project with the Suffolk Punch Trust making a Garden of Suffolk Plants. They would appreciate help in drawing up a list of plants with Suffolk names or connections and finding out where these plants can be acquired.

Also in August, I visited the Hibiscus Collection which is now at John Woods Nurseries in Pettistree. It is settling into its new home having been moved from Woodbridge following the changes within Notcutts.

The Plant Fair held in September at Helmingham went well and lots of people showed interest in the National Collections held in Suffolk. Collection Holders sold lots of plants and answered lots of questions.

In November I went to the Gardening Conference held at Trinity Park which was very interesting and the Suffolk Plant Heritage AGM held at Barton Grange which was great fun – especially Maggie Thorpe’s plant quiz. The following week I went to Plant Heritage HQ at Loseley Park for a workshop on Taxonomy with Susan Andrews which was very informative and then later in the week I visited Rupert Eley and his Euonymus Collection.

SUFFOLK’S NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

AESCULUS	Framlingham	Robert Grimsey, 01728 685203
BUXUS	Bury St. Edmunds	National Trust Ickworth Park, 01284 735819
CAMPANULA	Bury St. Edmunds	Sue Wooster, 07879 644958
DIANTHUS (Malmaison)	Ipswich	Jim Marshall, 01473 822400
EQUISETUM	Stowmarket	Anthony Pigott, 01449 766104
ERYSIMUM	Walpole	Dr.Simon Weeks, 01986 784348
EUONYMUS	East Bergholt	Rupert Eley, 01206 299224
HIBISCUS	Pettistree	John Woods Nurseries 01728 745100
HOSTA	Stowmarket	Mickfield Hostas. 01449 711576
IRIS (Sir Cedric Morris introductions)	Ipswich	Sarah Cook, 01473 822400
SYRINGA	Stowmarket	Norman's Farm, 01449 781081

Volunteers Wanted

If you have some time to spare why not spend it in a lovely garden?
The Walled Garden at Langham Hall houses the National Collection
of Alpine Campanulas. Sue Wooster would love some help in the
garden there. To find out more contact Sue: Tel: 07879 644958
or e-mail: campanulas@btinternet.com

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

PAULINE BYFORD

Despite the continuing financial climate we have had 20 new members since this time last year. Our membership is now 267, a few down from two years ago but slowly rising.

I often visit or even pass beautiful gardens and have taken to stopping and talking to the owners if they can be seen. There are many good gardeners who have not heard of Plant Heritage nor of our plant sales at Helmingham, or even know where Helmingham is. I have been thinking about what we can do to reach these people.

- * If you know of a garden which opens to the public (apart from those in the NGS Yellow Book Scheme which Sue Burton already mails) ask them to have some of our leaflets on the table or even hand them out.
- * Talk to owners of gardens. They do appreciate interest and praise.
- * Invite a potential new member to an event and introduce them to me or our chairman Maggie Thorpe
- * If they say they cannot remember the names of flowers then point out that many of us can't either!
- * If you see a garden, but no owner is around, pop a membership form through their door.
- * If you think of or have tried something else please let me know. I usually have a pile of membership forms to hand out.

Once more please send me your current e-mail address if you don't get an e-mail from me in the week this journal comes out. We are keen to keep members updated on events and news, and emailing is a cheap and easy way of keeping in touch!

NATIONAL COUNCIL REPORT

ANNE TWEDDLE

The year-end figures for 2011 from National Office expect to show a small deficit, similar in size to the small surplus of last year. Expenses are in check, and the reason for the deficit is there were no unexpected donations or legacies received in the last financial year.

In this last year we, the Suffolk Group, have given £10,510 to National Office. This money comes from funds we raise, mostly at plant sales. The amount is agreed by the committee. National Office use this money for various activities and for supporting their core costs.

Suffolk Group has done very well on the membership front too. A vast array of figures have been produced by the membership group and we are recorded as follows

- * The Suffolk Group is the second largest group
- * Our recruitment was up by 50% on the previous year
- * We have moved into 3rd place (from 19th) on total numbers of new members
- * We came 1st for the number of new members recruited within the group
- * We were one of only four groups reaching the new members target set for 2011

At 2012 Chelsea PH will be exhibiting in the floral marquee, where the theme is 'Conserving the Gene Pool.' Chelsea PH will be focusing on Sir Harry Veitch who was the first man knighted for his services to horticulture and involved in plant hunting. It is 100 years since his knighthood.

Thank you for all your help and hard work thus ensuring Suffolk have been able to make a considerable contribution to the work of Plant Heritage.

**SUFFOLK PLANT HERITAGE
CELEBRITY LECTURE**

**PLANTING IN THE
ENGLISH GARDEN**

BY URSULA BUCHAN

**WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ANDREW LAWSON**

**SUNDAY 15 APRIL 2012
AT TRINITY PARK, IPSWICH, IP3 8UH
2.30PM**

TICKETS: (PRICE INCLUDES TEA)

PLANT HERITAGE MEMBERS £12 NON-MEMBERS £15

**INFO AND TICKETS FROM ANNABEL THOROGOOD TEL:
07801 431427 OR EMAIL: ANNABEL.THOROGOOD@GMAIL.COM**



Top: Weavers House, Boxford, from where Maggie Thorpe sells plants to raise funds for the Suffolk Group.



Above: Smallwood Farmhouse, near Bury St Edmunds, to which Widget Finn has invited members on 3 July and which also opens for the NGS on 10 June (see pages 11 and 12).

PLANT HERITAGE SUFFOLK GROUP EVENTS 2012

JANUARY

- Saturday 28 Talk 'My Desert Island Vegetables' by Pauline Pears
2.30 pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4AL *

Pauline is a writer, trainer and broadcaster. She has been editor at *Organic Gardening* for many years.

FEBRUARY

- Saturday 25 Talk 'Women Gardeners' by Dr. Catherine Horwood
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4AL *

Catherine is the author of many books, the latest being 'Gardening Women - their stories from 1600 to the present day'. She is a member of Plant Heritage and lives in Clare.

MARCH

- Saturday 31 Talk 'Climbers, in particular Roses and Clematis'
by Kathy Brown.
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4AL *

Kathy and her husband manage a four and a half acre garden in Bedfordshire which has 18 different areas of interest. It is open to the public.

APRIL

- Sunday 15 CELEBRITY LECTURE
'Planting in the English Garden' by Ursula Buchan,
photos by Andrew Lawson
2.30pm Trinity Park, Ipswich IP3 8HU
Members £12, Guests £15. Tickets available from Annabel Thorogood 07801 431427 or at meetings.

MAY

- Sunday 27 Plant Fair, Helmingham Hall.
Members please volunteer to help

JUNE

- Wednesday 13 Private visit to Ickworth Park Walled Garden by kind invitation of Sean Reid (National Trust, Buxus National Collection Holder). 2.30pm. £3. Tel 01787346 if you wish to attend

JULY

- Tuesday 3 Guided Walk through Bradfield Woods, National Nature Reserve, led by the Warden, Pete Fordham followed by light refreshments in the garden of member Widget Finn at Smallwood Farmhouse IP30 0AJ. 6l30pm.
Ring 01449 736358 for directions. £5. Booking essential.
01787 211346.
- Saturday 21 Study Day 'Ferns' by Anthony Pigott.
11am-3.30pm Kersey's Farm, Mendlesham, Stowmarket, IP14 5RB.
Booking essential 01787 211346 £10 inc lunch

SEPTEMBER

- Sunday 16 Plant Fair, Helmingham Hall
Members please volunteer to help

NOVEMBER

- Saturday 3 Talk 'Conserving Old Varieties of Fruit Trees' by Graeme Proctor of Crown Nurseries
2.30pm Stowupland Village Hall IP14 4AL *

*Lectures marked * are free to members, with £3 entrance for non-members*

MEMBERS' GARDENS OPEN IN 2012

THE PRIORY, STOKE-BY-NAYLAND CO6 4RL

Victoria and Henry Engleheart

9 acre garden with views over Constable countryside. Lakes and water garden, mixed borders and ornamental greenhouse

Sunday 20 May for the NGS

Sunday 17 June for The Red Cross

2-5pm entry £4 Plant stall. Home made teas

THE LABURNUMS, ST. JAMES

South Elmham, Halesworth IP19 OHN

Jane Bastow 01986 782413

The 17th year of opening, with recent large changes to the one-acre

garden. Plant stall, cake stall and raffle, all day BBQ, teas and coffees,
The Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble

Saturday 12 May for Help the Heroes and local charities
10am-5pm Entry £2 adults, 50p children includes tea and biscuit

ROSEMARY, EAST BERGHOLT CO7 6TH
Natalie Finch (01206 298241)

Romantic garden with many flowering trees and shrubs, old roses, two bog
beds, unusual trees.

Easter Sunday 8 April Part of village opening 2-5pm

SMALLWOOD FARMHOUSE, Nr. BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE,
Bury St. Edmunds IP30 OAJ
Widget and Tim Finn (01449 736358)

A combination of traditional, contemporary and quirky. Three acres
including old shrub roses and clematis, herb garden, potager, an ancient
meadow with cowslips and cowparsley, two ponds and modern gravel
garden with grasses, fennel and sweet peas.

Saturday 10 June for the NGS 11-5pm Entry £4 (group opening with
Smallwood House). Other times by arrangement

GABLE HOUSE, HALESWORTH ROAD, REDISHAM, BECCLES
NR34 8NE
John & Brenda Foster

Sunday 19 February 11 - 4p.m for The National Gardens Scheme.
Snowdrop Day. Soup lunches and Home made teas. Plants for sale.

Sunday 3 June 11 - 5p.m for The National Gardens Scheme.
Salad lunches and Home made teas. Plants for sale

Sunday 2 September 11 - 5p.m John's Bulb Sale.
Salad lunches and home made teas. Free admission.

RAINBOW FARM, HALESWORTH ROAD, REDISHAM, BECCLES,
NR34 8NE
Anne & Michael Broadhurst

An extensive collection of snowdrops will be open by appointment during
the snowdrop season. To arrange a visit contact Tel. 01502 575404,
e-mail: broadhurst320@btinternet.com
Plants available for sale (list will be available by e-mail or post).

***LUCY REDMAN SCHOOL OF GARDEN DESIGN, RUSHBROOK**
Bury St. Edmunds IP30 OER
Lucy Redman and Dominic Watts (01284 386 250) www.lucyredman.co.uk

A plantswoman's garden with impressive colour-coordinated borders, unusual shrubs, roses, grasses. Sedum roofed pavilion, decorative vegetable garden

Every Friday from 6 April till end of September
10am-5pm, entrance £2.50 (children free)

***FULLERS MILL, WEST STOW IP28 6HD**
Bernard Tickner

Light dappled woodland and a plantsman's paradise of rare and unusual shrubs, perennials and marginals. Euphorbias and lilies are a particular feature

April to end of September Every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday 2-5pm
October Wednesday and Friday 2-5pm
Entrance £3.50 + 50p. voluntary contribution to the garden
01359 250287 www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk.

***BELLFLOWER NURSERY**
Sue Wooster 07879644958 www.bellflowernursery.co.uk

National Collection of Alpine campanulas
and

LANGHAM HERBS
Phil 07772 457063 www.langhamherbs.co.uk

Both at The Walled Garden at Langham Hall, Langham IP31 3EE
Open on Fridays April to end of September
10am-5pm Entrance £2.50 (children free).

***WYKEN VINEYARDS**

Gardens open every day 2-5pm (except Saturdays)
www.wykenvineyards.co.uk 01359 250287 Entrance £3.50.

** Part of the Gardeners' Friday Trail, open every Friday from April till the end of September*

PLANT FAIRS AT HELMINGHAM

WIDGET FINN

We introduced two exciting new attractions at our autumn 2011 plant fair – free bags of bulbs and the Propagating Gazebo. Both these innovations reinforce the message of what Plant Heritage is all about - the conservation of cultivated plants.

The free plant offer has become a popular tradition at our spring plant fairs, and last autumn we gave away 750 bags of bulbs supplied by Rose Cottage Plants, a regular exhibitor at the plant fairs. The nursery's owners Anne and Jack Barnard kindly part-sponsored the bulb offer. A big thank you to committee member Stan Turner who 'bagged up' the bulbs – fifteen to a bag. Work out the sums!

The bulb was *Iris* 'Alida', a lovely miniature iris which was introduced fairly recently and is still not widely available. If you came early enough to get a bag (or helped at the fair, in which case you will have received one automatically) let us know whether 'Alida' was successful for you.

The Propagation Gazebo was also a new attraction, and created interest and a lively audience. Plant Heritage experts demonstrated how to take root and leaf cuttings, the art of grafting, twin-scaling and peat-free propagation in a series of half-hour workshops.

At the spring fair 2012 the Propagation Gazebo will be promoted to a marquee – or part of one! Plant Heritage has been offered the free loan of a large marquee on the Helmingham site, used for a wedding the previous day. There will be room for our Membership Table and National Collection displays, plant stall and the propagation workshops. Look out for signs on-site giving information about the propagation programme, or ask at the Membership Table.

Help wanted at Helmingham!

Sunday 27 May

Volunteers are needed for the Spring Plant Fair - at the members' gazebo, free plant table, questionnaire stand and as 'ambassadors' for Plant Heritage helping on the site.

If you can spare an hour or so please contact Pauline Byford 01284 762628, pabyford@btinternet.com. Helpers get free entry!



Free bulb collection point at the Autumn Plant Fair

FREE PLANT FOR THE SPRING FAIR

Hardy Spray Chrysanthemums: ‘Spartan Linnet’ and ‘Spartan Display’

Hardy Chrysanthemums (often classed as Korean and Rubellum

Chrysanthemums have become increasingly scarce since the 1960s, when they were popular garden plants. Now they seem set for a comeback. Fortunately many of the old cultivars are still grown by the National Collection Holder Judy Barker, but very few are widely available in nurseries and garden centres.

To raise awareness and popularity of this valuable group of plants the Suffolk Group of Plant Heritage is giving away two of the ‘Spartan’ cultivars. Originally bred by Woolmans they are now rarely found for sale. We have chosen a deep orange-gold cultivar, ‘Spartan Linnet’ and the red ‘Spartan Display’, either of which will add vibrant colour to the garden in autumn (see colour photos on centre pages).

By giving them away at our Spring Plant Sale we hope that the recipients will re-discover this lovely group of plants, be encouraged to search out and grow other rare hardy chrysanthemum cultivars, and contribute to their continuing conservation.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

WIDGET FINN

Where indeed? We were underwhelmed by the response to our appeal in the last Journal for updates on the free plants at our spring plant fairs over the past eleven years. Have they all vanished without trace? They were in danger of doing anyway, which is why we selected them to be given away to visitors at the fairs. People claim, perhaps rightly, that plants become rare because they need lots of TLC.

.... which they are obviously getting from Plant Heritage members John and Brenda Foster, who report that the *Armeria euscadiensis* (free plant in 2000) is in excellent condition, as is *Fuschia* 'Lady Bacon' (2004), *Iris* 'Benton' (2010) and *Dianthus* 'Whatfield Gem'. The Fosters, however, announce the sad demise of *Primula* 'Barnhaven Blue' (2005) and *Erysimum* 'My Old Mum' (2007).

Ivan Dickings also had success with the *Armeria* and says 'it was planted in a sunny position but is now in the shade of a large *Deutzia* planted in my heavy clay soil, which is not good for an *Armeria* but it has survived!' Veronica Munson's *Armeria* has made a nice clump in a very sunny spot but hasn't seeded around.

Good to hear that Dorothy Cartwright's *Erysimum* 'My Old Mum' is still growing well. So come on, everyone else – what happened to YOUR free plant?

UPDATE ON THE ENGLEHEART DAFFODILS

ANNE TWEDDLE

You may remember reading this in a previous newsletter *We have purchased and been gifted five of these distinctive white cultivars and plan to make them available to members as a collection. The number of bulbs available will be limited to somewhere between 20/30 collections, one collection per member. The collections should be available from*

2011/2012. A collection will cost £6 to members.

We successfully twin-scaled the bulbs in summer 2010 and were delighted to find we had potentially many more bulbs than we expected.

All the bulbs were checked in autumn 2011 and those large enough for sale were potted on as individual bulbs. The smaller bulbs were potted up for another year to grow on. A number of members placed orders, for which thank you. Your bulbs will be available for collection at meetings, talks or events. If anyone wishes to collect from me, that is also possible. We have sufficient bulbs to meet orders and a few over which can be sold at events in the spring, so be sure to look out for those.

Just to remind you of the cultivars

N. 'Albatross' 3W-YYO pre 1891

Clean white perianth segments becoming propeller-shaped with age. Shallow pleated corona, clear lemon-yellow with well defined narrow orange trim. With age, yellow darkens and orange less sharp.

N. 'Seagull' 3W-Y pre 1893

Milky-white perianth segments becoming propeller-shaped with age. Corona rather small and shallow; closely, regularly and shallowly ribbed: lemon-yellow with narrow reddish orange trim on opening which soon disappears.

N. 'Mitylene' 2W-Y pre 1923

Corona widely expanded at maturity. Milk-white, broadly ovate perianths. Corona deeply and quite closely pleated; creamy buffy, soft apricot on opening, fading to buffy cream

N. 'Evangeline' 3W-Y pre 1908

This is perhaps the most luminous yellow small cup. Perianth remains more rounded and corona less expanded.

N. 'White Lady' 3W-Y pre 1898

Perianth segments milk-white, spreading; margins waved but never becoming propeller-shaped. Corona very variable; always deeply pleated, strong citron-yellow at first, and scented; sometimes with overlapping ruffles and fading to cream.

Prices are £6 per collection being one of each cultivar. Bulbs can also be bought individually and prices are:

N. 'White Lady'. £1

N. 'Evangeline' £3

N. 'Mitylene'	£1.50
N. 'Seagull'	£1
N. 'Albatross'	£1.50

So far it's an interesting project. We spent £31 on 16 bulbs, and were generously gifted some bulbs. Our twin scaling has realized to date 247 bulbs from which we could raise around £400 for the group. There are just under 70 bulbs now large enough for selling and the balance will be available in the future.

Twin scaling projects are not only fun to do but a good way of making rare bulbs available to members and the public.

Should you like to help with these projects, we would be delighted to teach you. The twin scaling is done sometime during July. Let us know if you're interested and we will keep you posted.

Anne Tweddle anne.tweddle@onetel.net or Maggie Thorpe on smece@aol.com

HYACINTH COLLECTION

2012 OPEN DAYS

Saturday 31 March/

Sunday 1 April

11 am – 5 pm

Waterbeach, nr Cambridge

Admission £2.00

The world's largest collection of
hyacinths - over 180 varieties

Use A 14 and A 10. Turn off into
Waterbeach, then follow Hyacinth arrows
and signposts "Bottisham Lock"

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Alan.shipp@virgin.net



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We know your garden is part of your home, so our home insurance covers items you may have in your garden for up to £2500, even if they normally belong inside. We also cover trees, plants and shrubs for up to £2000. That may seem on the generous side, but when you come to make a claim we prefer not to disappoint.

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Autumn Plant Fair at Helmingham

Photos by Peter Kendall & Widget Finn





Above: *Ercilla volubilis* (see page 23);

Left: New growth on streptocarpus leaf cuttings three months after Maggie Thorpe demonstrated the technique at Helmingham. Her root cuttings of *Papaver orientalis* also show strong new growth and will be sold at the Spring Fair.



Rosa 'Mme Isaac Pereire' and *Clematis 'Blue Angel'* (see page 26).

Top left: Mickfield Hostas;
Top centre The Plant Propagation Gazebo;;
Far left: Plants for sale in aid of Suffolk Group;





The free plants which will be given away at the Suffolk Plant Heritage Spring Fair: Hardy Chrsanthemums left Spartan Display and above Spartan Linnet.

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'Fruit Tree Pruning' Wednesday 22nd February 2012

'Graft Your Own Tree' Thursday 23rd February 2012

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ERCILLA VOLUBILIS

IVAN DICKINGS

“What can I grow in a shady position which flowers in winter?” How many times have we been asked that question and the reply is usually *Garrya elliptica* which will fit the bill admirably. But, it can get very large and the catkins hang on well into the summer making it look very tatty and the foliage is dull. And if you were unlucky enough to purchase a female clone you will end up with a plant full of miserable little catkins.

A much better alternative is *Ercilla volubilis* which I have grown for many years in a shady position which produces masses of stalkless racemes of petal-less flowers in late winter and early spring which are pleasantly scented. (“What is he talking about, no stalks and petals?!”).

Some authorities state that it is slightly tender but my plant has never been affected by the cold. This year it did produce seed which I have sown, so look out for young plants at future Plant Heritage plant fairs at Helmingham. The usual method of propagation is by nodal or internodal cuttings taken at anytime of the year.

The plant is self-clinging to a certain degree and wayward shoots can easily be trimmed back to keep the plant within its confines. Another asset of *Ercilla* is that its very leathery wavy edged leathery foliage is not overpowering, each leaf measuring 35mm long and 20mm wide and pleasant mid to light green.

Ercilla is a member of the *Phytolaccaceae* family and the only other hardy member of this family is the Indian Pokeweed which I first came in contact with when I joined Notcutts during the 1950s. It was known then as the Red Ink Plant because of the dark red juice produced from the fruits which are in spikes at the top of each flowering stem which collapse at the first frost. *Ercilla* was introduced from Chile by Thomas Bridges, Victorian botanist 1807-1865, in 1840 and latterly by Harold Comber AM in 1975.

A photograph of Ercilla is included on page 21.

BED AND BREAKFAST FOR GARDEN LOVERS

Suffolk Group member Lucy Redman is offering B&B for garden lovers at her thatched cottage near Bury St. Edmunds. Includes eggs from free ranging hens for breakfast, and a tour of her garden. Details from 01284 386250 or email lucyredman.co.uk

SOME SUSSEX GARDENS

ROSIE ANSELL

In 2011 we spent the hottest week of the year (the last week of September) in Sussex and visited a variety of gardens.

We started at Wakehurst Place, which we had never visited before, and spent several hours walking through some of its 488 acres, including viewing the walled garden and admiring an amazing display of cyclamen. We also took in the Millennium Seed Bank Exhibition.

At Nymans the long borders were still full of colour, the dahlias being particularly striking. Since our last visit they have demolished the viewing platform and are revamping the whole heather area, so next time it will be different again.

Parham Park was also new to us but the four acre walled garden was still full of colour and well laid out with vegetable areas, beds of hot cannas, and long herbaceous borders, some sheltered against the ancient high walls. There is also an orchard and a herb garden growing herbs from the time that the Elizabethan house was built. The garden is run on organic principles and designed for a long season. The many buckets of flowers cut from the gardens every week add to the atmosphere of the house, which was also a delight to visit; the whole is strongly recommended.

Perhaps the most interesting garden of our visit was at Arundel Castle. The current Duke and Duchess of Norfolk have refurbished a number of rooms in the Castle and, once that project was complete, turned their attention to the gardens. The town of Arundel is nestled right alongside the castle walls and, while the castle is above the town to the east overlooking the river, the walls of the gardens bound the town to the north. The gardens cover over 30 acres and include a large area for vegetables and fruit where the Victorian peach house and vinery is complemented by a modern greenhouse. There are also herbaceous borders and a cutting garden and the whole is run on organic principles. However the latest addition, opened by Prince Charles in 2008, is the Collector Earl's Garden and is something quite different.

The 14th Earl of Arundel was a contemporary of Charles I and, like him, a collector. The garden designers Isabel and Julian Bannerman chose to base their design on details from portraits of the Earl's wife showing the garden at Arundel House, overlooking the Thames in London. It is intended to be an evocation of a Jacobean garden and is very formally laid out with pools,



The Collector Earl's Garden at Arundel Castle.

fountains, a canal, a cascade and a domed pergola. There are also pavilions and gateways based on original designs by Inigo Jones. The crowning centrepiece is a rockwork mountain supporting a version of Oberon's Palace, also originally designed by Inigo Jones for a court masque in 1611. The interior is shell lined with a stalagmite fountain on which a gilded coronet dances. All the woodwork is in green oak and topped by acorns.

The gardens and grounds at Arundel can be enjoyed for a relatively modest fee (compared to entrance to the castle itself!). Earlier in the year the rose garden will be worth a look and there is Arundel's own white garden outside the entrance to the Fitzalan Chapel which is entered from the Castle grounds.

The garden may not be to everyone's taste as the planting is secondary to the formal layout, consisting mainly of trees and shrubs, including catalpas and palm trees and other tropical plants. These are able to remain in the ground in the winter as the garden faces south and is very sheltered. The designers say that 'it aims to stand alone, to be pleasing, timeless and memorable.' It certainly stays in our memory, and not just for the baking sunshine on the day of our visit.

CLEMATIS AND OTHER CLIMBERS

KATHY BROWN

What joy; from early July to the middle of October we have enjoyed a Clematis Bonanza here at Stevington.

Our 'late flowering' clematis (all Group 3 category) mostly include *C. viticella* from Europe, a few *C. texensis* from southern USA and lots of golden *C. orientalis* from eastern Asia; plus some scrambling non clinging types, a few herbaceous ones and several species. We have over a hundred in total and most of them perform brilliantly each year. Many of them use earlier flowering wisterias or rambling and climbing roses for support, extending the season of interest with their myriad of delicate blooms.

Wisterias have a lightish colour leaf, against which many clematis show up extremely well. I am thinking in our garden of dusky amethyst *C. v. 'Mary Rose'* with its double flowers or *C. v. 'Royal Velours'* with its purple-red flowers. The pink bells of *C. 'Alionushka'* and the more lilac tones of *C. 'Pamiat Serdtsa'*, both non clinging scramblers, are also excellent for growing through the lower foliage of wisterias or indeed over a medium shrub.

Roses make good companions for the viticellas and like wisterias offer an excellent climbing frame. Many roses will still be in flower at the end of June/early July just at the time when the Group 3 clematis begin to flower. So for a brief period there might be a glorious overlap then leaving the clematis to fully take over the show. *C. 'Madame Julia Correvon'* with its rich red flowers looks striking with pinky apricot *Rosa 'Leontine Gervais'*, a tall Rambler whose pliable stems are tinged with red or with *Rosa 'Constance Spry'* with its full pretty pink blooms. Slightly more restrained pale blue *C. 'Blue Angel'* has a happy relationship with *Rosa 'Mme Isaac Periere'* which we have trained as a short climber (see colour photo on page 21).

But beware; vigorous clematis might well smother the rose so take care with your combination. Lovely pale blue *C. 'Emilia Plater'* proved much too prolific for the weaker climbing rose which was once its companion and *C. texensis 'Duchess of Albany'* has been almost too vigorous for the super shrub *Rosa 'de Resht'*. My tip is to make sure the rose, wisteria or shrub is well established before introducing the clematis!

Here are some thoughts on how to treat late flowering clematis during the winter months. It's late November and I have just come inside after a full

day working in the garden cutting down herbaceous borders and tidying the walls and pergolas. Among the jobs was the task of cutting down the late flowering clematis. I generally reduce the growth down to around 75cm at this time of year, but will snip it down even further once the worst of the winter has passed in late February. It is a satisfying job and at a stroke removes the untidy tangled look which has been staring me in the face for the last few weeks.

But I don't manage to cut all the Group 3 clematis down before Christmas (we have over 100!). Those that still remain intact for now will be completed in late February or early March. These (together with those pruned in late autumn) will all go down to around 15- 45cm to a promising set of viable buds in the leaf joints. At pruning time, each plant will receive a sprinkling of bone meal and a really generous helping of garden compost which will help to prevent the roots drying out during the following flowering season.

It doesn't much matter whether you prune late autumn or late February/early March. But it is important to do it before new growth starts in the spring. This method ensures you will get a tower of growth, and a tower of blooms, hundreds of them. If you don't bother all your flowers will be at the top of the plant, way above head level. Growth will be far more spindly and the results will be disappointing. By hard pruning and mulching you will get wonderful results.

Should you feed as well? Yes, these plants put on tremendous growth each year and will produce hundreds of flowers over many weeks. A proprietary clematis feed such as that produced by Priorswood will be hugely beneficial or simply use Tomorite.

Don't forget all these Clematis make good cutting material. Perfect for a little posy on the kitchen table.

Garden Open Days 2012

Sunday April 22, 12-6pm: spring clematis, bulbs etc
for NGS

Every Tuesday from end May to mid September 1-5pm

TO DISCUSS SPECIAL GROUP OUTINGS,
FUTURE LECTURES AND GARDEN DESIGN, CONTACT
Kathy Brown, The Manor House, Church Rd., Stevington, Bedford
MK43 7QBT: 01234 822064
E: info@kathybrownsgarden.com
W: www.kathybrownsgarden.com

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FOREST GARDENING

LINDA DRAPER

Imagine a beautiful open woodland where every plant has a purpose – edibles, attracting beneficial predators and pollinating insects, plants and trees to increase the fertility of the soil, plants producing wood, fibres, herbs and dyes – this sustainable landscape is forest gardening.

Pioneered by Robert Hart in the sixties, this is now being promoted by Martin Crawford who has set up a two-acre forest garden in Dartington, Devon. Ideally a forest garden includes all the layers of the natural equivalent planted in a woodland setting – the root layer, ground cover, perennial herb layer, fruiting shrubs, trees, the canopy and high canopy or vertical layer (with an increasing role of tree cover and leaf litter to improve nutrient cycling and drought resistance). Mulching is essential. Although time and planning is needed to set it up, eventually the forest garden will be easy to maintain with no more digging, watering or spraying against pest and disease.

Taller trees on the north side of the wood minimise shading and maximise light penetration. There are many fruiting trees you can plant but it is important to include species that fix nitrogen in the soil (alders, particularly Italian alder and autumn olive *Eleagnus umbellata*) and shrubs such as broom and tree lupins. The aim is to create wide grassy paths swathed in herby green plants (e.g. sweet cicely, mints and herbs whose essential oils are antibacterial and anti fungal and protect green plants at the lower level). Included in this layer must be the deep rooted dynamic accumulators which pull nutrients to the topsoil to benefit neighbouring plants - coltsfoot (*Petasites*), comfrets (*Symphytum*), liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza*) and sorrel (*Rumex*).

At the next level as well as the productive shrubs ones we know (*Chaenomeles*, currants and chokeberries) there are many beautiful and unusual ornamental edibles, for example the lovely snowbell tree (*Halesia carolina*) with fabulous flowers and four-winged fruits, or the sechuan pepper (*Zanthoxylum schinifolium*) whose pinkish red fruits can be dried and ground to make pepper.

Productive climbers scrambling through trees complete the idyllic woodland scene and of course there are hops. A lovely idea of Martin Crawford's is planting hardy kiwi (*Actinidia*) at the base of a lime tree (*Tilia*) both to be cut back at the same time, (the new leaves of lime trees

are very good for salads and should be pollarded every five or six years).

Using a large number of species thus giving greater diversity will help create a long- term biologically sustainable system for growing food and other products for a household

I've just scratched the surface here as there isn't enough room to mention all the possibilities but if you want to create something beautiful, more sustainable and doesn't involve loads of heavy digging every year you can get further information on www.agroforestry.co.uk.

HARDY BORDER CHRYSANTHEMUMS

SARAH COOK

Question: Korean and Rubellum Chrysanthemum – what's the difference?

Answer: Very little

For years I have wondered what is the difference between the two most common classes of hardy border chrysanthemums, and was very pleased to discover the answer when we went, last October, to a 'Hardy Chrysanthemum' Open Day at the RHS Wisley garden. A very interesting and detailed paper was given by Dr Barry Machin about these chrysanthemums, which I hope will be published in full by the RHS.

This paper explained that the first chrysanthemum (a Chinese cultivated variety called 'Old Purple') arrived in Europe in 1789. It was late flowering and needed glasshouse protection to flower. Over the next century other types arrived in Europe and breeders gradually extended the flowering season so that by the 1850's cultivars had been bred which would flower before the first hard frost and survive the average European winter. Old Purple and these other chrysanthemums were named *C. morifolium* by a French botanist.

To cut a long story short, in the 1920s and 1930s two different breeders, one in America called Alex Cummings, and the other, the great English nurseryman and breeder Amos Perry were both making crosses to obtain early flowering hardy cultivars. Alex Cummings, was making crosses between what were then thought to be *C. coreanum* and the old



Above: *Stipa barbata* photographed by Sarah Cook in her garden. Right: Sarah in her Stipa hat at Goodwood.



STIPA BARBATA:

SARAH COOK

Why isn't this lovely grass more widely grown? I have been growing the beautiful hardy perennial grass *Stipa barbata* (the silver feather grass) since starting work at Sissinghurst in 1984. Every year we sowed and grew on a few seedlings, which were rapidly snapped up as small non-flowering plants by sharp eyed visitors. We had to collect the seed as soon as it was ripe, as much was lost to acquisitive visitors.

Stipa barbata is a native of Spain, but is totally hardy in this county where it flowers from June to early August. It has graceful flower stems topped with magnificent long slender plumes with delicate hairs which catch the light. There is even added interest from the seeds which have a cunning mechanism which twists them into the ground

‘*morifolium*’ types and after backcrossing and intercrossing his best seedlings he introduced a range of seedlings he called Korean hybrids.

Amos Perry was using a species at first thought to be *C. erubescens*, this was then considered to be new species, and called *C. rubellum* (allied to *C. zawadskii* var *sibericum*, but taller, coarser growth and larger flowered – so was thought to be a new species). This he crossed (and backcrossed) with *C. morifolium* to produce a new strain of hardy early flowering chrysanthemums which he named Rubellums.

It has since been discovered that *C. zawadskii* and its varieties are very widely distributed along latitude 50N from E. Europe, all the way through to China and Japan. and that *C. rubellum* is in fact a variety of *C. zawadskii*. It is also believed that Cummings was not using the species *C. coreanum*, but was using *C. sibericum*, correctly called *C. zawadskii* var *sibericum*. The latitude at which this species and its varieties are found would explain why the plants are so hardy.

If you have managed to follow all this it would seem therefore that both Cummings in America and Perry in England were crossing *C. morifolium* hybrids with *C. zawadski* and its subspecies – ie, both making very similar crosses. It is therefore no wonder Koreans and Rubellums are often so similar.

Moreover it also appears that the early florists’ chrysanthemum *C. morifolium*, (which was being used by Cumming and Perry in their breeding program) was developed from crosses between *C. indicum* and *C. zawadskii* v. *latifolium*. So both the Rubellums and The Koreans have a preponderance of the hardy *C. zawadskii* in its genes. It’s no surprise that all these plants on trial at Wisley survived last winter.

PLANT HERITAGE NEWS

FOR AN UPDATE ON WHAT’S HAPPENING AT
NATIONAL OFFICE VISIT THE CURRENT ISSUE OF
NEWSLINES ON THE WEBSITE
WWW.PLANTHERITAGE.COM

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE SUFFOLK
GROUP’S ACTIVITIES VISIT
WWW.SUFFOLK.PLANTHERITAGE.COM

I am now growing plants in my own garden, where it is also much admired, and have given seed and seedlings to Plant Heritage to sell at Plant Fairs and at our talks.

Now please will someone tell me why no-one wants to buy plants (very reasonably priced) of this glorious addition to any garden? Could it be that you were horrified by my *Stipa barbata* hat/fascinator which I wore to glorious Goodwood? (Why were the hat and I not featured on Channel 4 racing?)

Or is it just that if the plant is not in flower, even with a description and adjacent seed head to help you imagine it, it just does not look interesting enough.....or have you all got a specimen already?

Anyway we are going to give it one more try this year. You can reserve a seedling from me at sarah@malmaisons.plus.com (or from Anne Tweddle if she has not already thrown away her unwanted stock). Buy now while stocks last and while grasses are still in fashion!

We're delighted that the distinguished garden writer Ursula Buchan will be the speaker at our celebrity lecture on Sunday April 15th with a talk on Planting in the English Garden (for further details see the advertisement on page 8). Ursula was recently named Garden Columnist of the Year at the Garden Media Guild Awards for her regular column in The Spectator. She has been a journalist for twenty-five years, and has written fourteen books including The English Garden.

‘BACK TO THE GARDEN’ BY URSULA BUCHAN

(pub. Frances Lincoln, 2009)

BOOK REVIEW BY SUE BURTON

From the dizzy heights of winning the rose-bowl at the local flower show to a cautionary contemplation of forgetting to top up the tetanus injections, by way of book reviews, a discussion of soft fruit, the future of the potato, and the delights of Michaelmas daisies, and many more topics, this is an anthology to dip into and savour at any time of year.

Ursula Buchan has written for several publications and these pieces are drawn from articles in the *The Spectator*, ‘Borderlines’ in *The Daily*

Telegraph, *Slightly Foxed* and *Hortus*. She writes with elegance and lucidity, and her knowledge of matters horticultural is encyclopaedic. The book is an ideal gift to oneself or to gardening friends.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

SIR HARRY VEITCH AT CHELSEA

Plant Heritage will be doing a six metre by five metre exhibit at the Great Pavilion at Chelsea Flower Show on the horticulturist and nurseryman Sir Harry Veitch VMH. Plant Heritage normally exhibits in the educational section of the Great Pavilion but we have been given a good central position this year.

Harry Veitch was also famous for putting the ‘Chelsea’ into Chelsea Flower Show. Before that the International Horticultural Exhibition was held in the Inner Temple. In 2013 the RHS will be celebrating a hundred years of the Chelsea Flower Show and Plant Heritage is part of the build-up to this great celebration for the RHS. So far we are hugely grateful to Brother UK for their financial support of £5,000 and two other smaller grants. The exhibit is seeking funds of upwards of £6,000.

CHARITY OF THE YEAR

Plant Heritage has been chosen as H&T Proctor’s Charity of the Year 2012 as part of its bicentenary. Proctor is a family run business producing specialist fertilisers for horticultural wholesalers as well as garden and allotment societies.

For every allotment or gardening group who request an information pack Proctors will make a £2 donation to Plant Heritage. So please encourage all relevant gardening organisations that you belong to/know to make an enquiry.

WAITROSE LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT (the little green counters)

Each Waitrose branch supports three local charities every month with an award of £1,000. So far four Plant Heritage groups have been successful with this scheme – Suffolk (£500) Surrey (£160) with Caterham and Esher due to feature in the New Year. Pick up a Waitrose form from your local branch and nominate Plant Heritage.

(Note from Maggie Thorpe – the Sudbury Waitrose branch chose Suffolk Plant Heritage with generous results, but Bury St. Edmunds and Newmarket branches could also be approached. Please contact me if you would like help with wording to use in the form. Tel. 0787 211346 or email smece@aol.com)

HAMPTON COURT PALACE FLOWER SHOW 2012 – as yet all details for the Plant Heritage marquee are undecided, including Collection Holders, theme and the size of marquee. All this is still to be discussed with the RHS.

MANY THANKS - to the Suffolk Group for their support of the Chelsea Flower Show cloakroom rota in liason with Maggie Thorpe.

ANNUAL RAFFLE - this raised just under £4,300. Prizes included £350 cash, two night farmstay for two, one day NGS garden day tour for two including lunch, garden vouchers from Squires Garden Centres and David Austin Roses, Bosch electric rotary lawnmower and labelling equipment from Brother.

AN ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR NATIONAL PLANT COLLECTION HOLDERS

Nicola Gammon, founder of the award-winning website Shoot (www.shootgardening.co.uk), is collaborating with National Plant Collection holders to offer her website members the widest possible range of plants to purchase for their gardens. In Spring 2012 Shoot will launch a new marketplace which will allow approved sellers to sell plants, products and services to Shoot's 40,000 and growing registered members.

“Encouraging plant diversity and supporting specialists are both part of Shoot's core mission” comments Nicola Gammon. “The new marketplace we are launching in 2012 supports both these aims and we hope very much that many more National Plant Collection holders will get involved with us to promote their specialist plants to our growing gardening community.”

The first collaboration for Shoot and National Plant Collection holders has been with Carrie Thomas of Swansea-based nursery Touchwood Plants (the holder of two National Collections of Aquilegia). Carrie has worked with Shoot to add new Aquilegia cultivars to the 12,000+ plant database already listed on Shoot, which she will then also sell in the new Shoot

marketplace.

Carrie explains “I usually sell via my own website and eBay, but the Shoot marketplace is very different as it will promote plants for sale to a large, established community of gardeners. I'm excited by the opportunity, and in awe of the scope and scale of Shoot.”

Touchwood Plants and the other plant specialists who participate in the marketplace are also promoted in the new Shoot blog (blog.shootgardening.co.uk). Interested plant nurseries don't need to be currently trading online to get involved.

To get find out more contact Nicola Gammon at nicola@shootgardening.co.uk. For more information about Carrie's aquilegias contact www.touchwoodplants.co.uk



Carrie Thomas

NATIONAL GARDENING WEEK 16-22 APRIL 2012

The RHS is pulling out all the stops to ensure that the first ever National Gardening week 16-22 April is action-packed to get the nation growing. Schools, communities, gardeners, organisations and the garden trade are invited to support the week.

Each day of the week will have a special focus. Monday is SOS day, when anyone in the UK can ask RHS experts for help with thorny gardening problems. Tuesday is themed Gardens of the Nation, when everyone in the UK can send their best pictures of their garden for the RHS Lindley Library archives to provide a historical record of gardens today.

Other themes will be gardening as a career, compost day, getting kids gardening and at the weekends there will be fun and activities for gardeners of all ages at the four RHS gardens.

For more details visit www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/National-gardening-week

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these new members who have joined the Suffolk Group since our last Journal. Please introduce yourself to committee members when you come to our events. Contact Pauline Byford 01284 762628 pabyford@btinternet.com to see whether there are other members nearby to share a lift to our talks and visits.

Mrs Elizabeth Brierley, Bradfield St. George, Bury St. Edmunds.

Ms Helen Chen, Bures, Sudbury.

Dr Clews, Holbrook, Ipswich.

Miss Danby, Felixstowe.

Miss Zuleika Dobson, Stowmarket.

Mrs Ann Hilditch, Cavendish.

Mr and Mrs Humphries, Wetherden.

Mr J Kirby and Mr J Barrett, Edwardstone, Sudbury.

Mr and Mrs Linnell. Leiston.

Mr and Mrs Madge, Holbrook, Ipswich.

Miss Mellor, Ashfield cum Thorpe, Stowmarket.

Mr Norman Milldown, Buxhall, Stowmarket.

Mrs Mary Ruth, Colchester.

Mr and Mrs Smith, Pettaugh, Stowmarket.

Mrs Barbara Summers, Walsham Le Willows, Bury St Edmunds.

Mrs Margaret Wyllie, Alderton.

VISIT THE PLANT DOCTORS AT THE SPRING PLANT FAIR

DO YOU HAVE SOME PLANT PROBLEMS OR PROBLEM PLANTS?
THEN BRING THEM ALONG TO THE PLANT HERITAGE PLANT FAIR AT
HELMINGHAM HALL ON 27 MAY WHEN OUR TEAM OF EXPERT PLANT
DOCTORS WILL BE THERE TO HELP.

PROMOTING THE PLANT FAIRS

SUE BURTON

A big thank-you to all who have helped distribute leaflets and posters for the Plant Fairs at Helmingham. It makes so much difference to spread the word around as much of the county (and beyond) as we can manage, and the record numbers at the Fairs reflect the effort we put into this. If anyone would like a little bundle of leaflets to be dispersed in your area to promote the Spring Plant Fair on 27 May, do please get in touch. Phone 01787 247258, email susanburton77@gmail.com

ADVERTISING IN THE JOURNAL

Anyone who is interested in advertising in The Suffolk Group Journal, should please get in touch with Ann Somerville on 01284 728622 or email annatalder@tiscali.co.uk

SUFFOLK PLANT HERITAGE NEEDS YOU!

Several of our existing committee members are retiring at the 2012 Annual General Meeting.

The Suffolk Group is considered to be one of the most successful Plant Heritage groups – we need your skills to help maintain its reputation! In particular we need volunteers for the following roles

- Events co-ordinator
- Membership officer
- Treasurer

The only essential requirement is a computer

Don't wait to be asked! If you would like to know more about what each role involves, contact Maggie Thorpe for a chat on 0787 211346 or email smece@aol.com

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www.suffolkplantheritage.com

