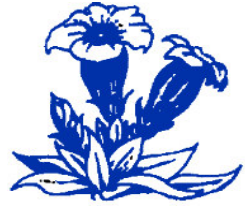




# THE ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY CENTRAL SUSSEX GROUP



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2006

Mr. DAVID HOARE  
SAXIFRAGES

David's interest in alpinines dates from his joining the East and Mid-Kent Groups in 1981, an AGS visit to the Swiss Alps, meeting Geoff Rollinson and a pep talk from Ferrier Charlton. This eventually led to the show bench and a Bronze Medal in 1993, a Silver in 1994; a Gold in 2000. and a Gold Bar in 2006. The secret of success is seeing what is being shown and more importantly noting what is not there – in the early 90s Saxifrages were out of fashion and so Saxifrages it was to become. In any event Dionysias could not be grown at 500ft. in Hawkinge but Saxifrages were OK. He now gardens at much lower altitude in Lyminge. It can be too warm in winter, but the past year was a fabulous one with consistent temperature from November to March enabling the exhibiting of 15 plants at the Kent Show.

We looked first at the Saxifrage cultivation year. In September/October any green net shading is removed from the two 8 x 6ft. and the 12 x 9ft. greenhouses. All glass on one side is taken out above the bench and there are louvres at the end. Occasional use is made of two fans. Watering of clay pots is in a 6" sand plunge which is kept moist all winter. If it becomes hot, a drop of water is given around the top of the pots. From December on the pots are given a ¼" or ½" turn, especially for the big show plants. A good watering is given around Christmas when the buds are forming. In January just a little fertiliser is given (tomato or Phostrogen). With large pans, some watering may be necessary at the centre of the plant. The biggest problem is under-watering. Ensure that show pans are given a wire wool wash and top dressed with coarse grit (a black flea grit from Faversham is used by David).

Flowers are taken off with fingers or scissors before re-potting (do not bare root) begins at the end of April, although plants can be left for two years before this becomes necessary. Fibre glass gauze covers the drainage holes with coarse grit at the bottom of the pot followed by 3 parts J12, 1 of compacted bark or perlite and 4 of coarse grit giving 50% drainage, top dressed with ½" to ¾" of grit ensuring that it is below the cushion using an old kitchen knife and then back in the plunge. Compost is not re-used. Cuttings taken with scissors are taken from edge rosettes at the same time and dibbed into sharp sand – these need spraying 2 to 3 times a day in summer and transferred to 2½" plastic pots – propagation is as worth while addiction! Yellow strips are used for white and greenfly and moth balls for vine weevils spread around the pots a yard apart. Slugs and snails love grit and climbing, so pellets are used especially in spring.

The shade loving *S. fortunei* resent pots and is grown in the garden - shown were 'Mount Nachi' (186/272) and Ray Drew's 'Kokata.' (278/432). In a scree there are silvers including *S. 'Reginald Farrer'*, *Hosta ventricosa*, *Erinus* and *Veronica*. Towards the house an area is planted with 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s Saxifrages, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> Primulas and on a shingle covered concrete base, troughs with mainly silvers. *S. 'Tumbling Waters'* (276/193 - wrongly numbered 275) is grown in a long chimney pot enabling its long, arching inflorescence to be best displayed. A new bed in half moon shape is home to more silvers set between Kent sandstone. There is a Acer grown from seed and the 5ft. inflorescence of *Saxifraga callosa*, *S. cotyledon* and the true form of *S. 'Southside Seedling'* (197/246), pale yellow flowered *S. 'Esther'* (*cochlearia x paniculata*) produced in 1926, and *S. x canis-dalmatica* with pink

spotted petals (you need go back to 1946 so see their only appearance in the Bulletin!), *S* 'Reginald Farrer' again which produces lots of seed. A photo of *S. longifolia* (294/342) in the Pyrenees was seen in an unusual habitat – a dried up river bed.

Ray Fairburn introduced the Allendale Porphyryion hybrids in 1996. In his greenhouse near Hexham, stock plants are all grown in plastic on a sand plunge and seedlings are grown on as separate bench (labelling is so important) with plastic bags shading the glass. We were shown pale pink 'Allendale Argonaut' (*'cinerea x lilacina'*); 'A. Bravo' with five species in its make up; pale pink 'A. Ballet' (*diapensioides x media*); light pink 'A. Bounty' (*diapensioides x goringana* 'Nancye'); light-yellow



'Allendale Billows'



'Allendale Grace'



*S. pubescens* 'Snowcap'

'A. Beauty' (*cinerea x aretioides*); light yellow 'A. Bonny' (*aretioides x georgei*); 'A. Billows' a short, white flowered McBeath (1379 x *S. alpigena x aretioides*) x *media*; yellow 'A. Goblin' (*poluniniana x kotschyi*) and 'A. Grace' purple with darker veins from *S. columnaris x lilacina*. Among the many Czech enthusiasts, Karel Lang (295/61) from near Prague is producing some excellent new hybrids in clay pots on neat benches with two shelves above, roof vents open to the vertical. His frames are on concrete walling. *S. 'Excellent'* is a red flowered *S. lilacina x lowndesii*, 'Louis Armstrong' contains five species, 'Frederic Chopin' is rose-lilac flowered, Sepp 22 x 'Winifred', Charles Chaplin' (*poluniniana x 'Nancye'*), strong, easy growing, very good flowering, and *S. pubescens* 'Snowcap' (296/215 – a 2003 Farrer, 300/199) are white. 'Maria Callas' (*S. aretioides x lilacina x media*) with deep red flowers was introduced by Malcolm McGregor in 1997 and David Winter's 'Peach Melba' is quick growing with many extremely pale peach blossoms, overlapped petals producing a completely circular flower on very short deep purple-pink stems. Three pans of Allendales – 'Bravo', 'Ballet', and 'Cumulus' (254/413, 415, 270/397) were shown at a recent Kent Show. 1996 saw the appearance of Dowker and Walkey's 'Tysoe' with creamy-yellow flowers above flat cushions. *S x anglica* 'Winifred' (*S. aretioides x lilacina x media*) is an outstanding hybrid with dark carmine-pink flowers which only just sit above the small cushions, while 'Red Poll' has some *S. poluniniana* added in. A particular favourite is Brian Burrow's 1987 'Lismore Gem' (*S. georgei x*



*Saxifraga* 'Tysoe'



*Saxifraga* 'Lismore Gem'

'Winifred' (303/85) and 'Peter Burrow' is *S. poluniniana x 'Winifred'* forming a dark green cushion of limy edged rosettes, covered in spring with very short stemmed relatively large bluish pink flowers. This is quite a vigorous easy to please plant which was named by the raiser for his son. Short-stemmed 'Penelope' (*S x boydilacina*) has large flowers of a shade of apricot darkening to purplish in the throat, but is a bit blowsy. The pale pink 'Harbinger' from Robert Rolfe, *burseriana*

'Gloria' x *lowndesi*, 'Maria' had pink reflexed petals and 'Judith Shackleton' has pink buds opening snowy white (*S. polunianaa* x *burseriana*). Among the older Sundermann hybrids are 'Edgar Irmscher' and 'Edith'. 'Gothenburg' (287/53) is a splendid plant with very short stemmed sulphur-yellow flowers carried on a flattish dome immediately above the rosettes. Not flowering until April, Winton Harding's 'Anne Baddell' (*S.x georgei*) carries pink flowers. A recent introduction is white flowered 'Coolock Gem' which gained Geoff Rollinson a Farrer at the East Lancashire show in March this year.

Turning to some of the species, *S. pedemontana* 'Fulmar' is a mossy (cf. 246/417) with upturned white flowers with a tinge of green. White flowered *S. cebennensis minor* (227/38) as its name implies is a dwarf form of the species. A Kabschia, *S. poluniniana* (214/313) with apple-blossom flowers hails from the Himalaya, but David is unable to grow it any longer. *S. exarata* ssp. *adenophora* (291/64) is a mossy from Turkey. Not often seen, *S. spruneri* (156/123, 277/285) is the only member of the Porophyllum with distinctly hairy foliage and carries its yellowish-white flowers on a tiny rounded cushion.



The talk ended with David's Farrer awarded large white flowered 'Tenerife' (*S. poluniana* x *wendelboi*) at this year's Kent Show. Plenty of enthusiasm and dedication has made David a top grower – why not have a go yourselves?

*Saxifraga 'Tenerife' – David's Farrer*

For European species see Adrian Young in 285/313

For more on cultivation see John Morris in 267/23

The Saxifrage Society – Publications include Saxifrages from scratch, lists of species, list of hybrids and cultivars and the Saxifrage Magazine (available without being a member). Home Membership £10.00 Cash or sterling cheque Membership Secretary, cheques made out to The Saxifrage Society. Mark Childerhouse, The Gardens, Vicarage Lane, Grasby, Barnetby, North Lincolnshire DN38 6AU Payment by credit cards not accepted.

Lydford Alpine Nursery - Speciality Saxifraga. 2 Southern Cottages, Lydford, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 4BL Telephone: (01822) 820398 Can also be found on web and listed in the RHS Web Plant Finder

[www.hythe-alpines.co.uk](http://www.hythe-alpines.co.uk)

<http://www.saxifraga.org> Excellent site with much useful information and various lists

<http://www.alpigena-saxifrages.nl> Excellent Dutch site with concise descriptions, cultivation hints and lots of pictures

RM

## CHAIRMAN'S NEWS NOVEMBER 2006

It has been necessary to change the speaker for our next meeting on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> of November. The advertised speaker has now twice let us down badly, this time he has gone and booked another lectures for the same evening. However, Chris Norton from Lightwater in Surrey has agreed to give us a lecture on the flora observed during his travels in the State of Wyoming, USA.

Wyoming is a big state with a tiny population, and contains some premier terrain for Alpine Plants. It includes Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Teton's in the northwest, and outliers of the Middle Rockies like the Bighorn Mountains in the northeast, home to endemics like *Eritrichium nanum*, *Petrophytum caespitosum*, and *Kelseya uniflora*. The Medicine Bow Mountains in the southeast includes the Snowy Mountains. In between these ranges is a vast expanse of high desert and dry steppe type country.

Chris is a Vice President of the Alpine Garden Society, and in earlier years was a keen competitor at National AGS Shows. Latterly has spent time travelling and photographing alpinists, animal, birds and butterflies in the wild. He has lectured to us twice before, on Growing and Showing, and three years ago on the Flora of the Pontiac Alps in Turkey. He is a good lecturer, an excellent photographer and has some superb slides.

Your Committee met on the 30th of October. We have suggestions to place before you at the AGM in December regarding Officers and Committee for next year. I stand down having completed my 3 year term as Chairman – Jean Griffin has agreed to stand for election as Chairman, Bob Charman is standing down as Treasurer and David Brown has agreed to stand for election as Treasurer. I am willing, if necessary, to stand for election as Secretary. Being able to fill those three key posts ensures we have an organisation that will enable the continuation of the Group.

At the next meeting Edith will be listing those who will be attending the December Christmas Social and receiving offers of food; and or raffle prizes for the Christmas draw. If you can't attend the November meeting, but will be attending the December meeting please give Edith a call on 01273-890201. In that way we hope to ensure we have sufficient food and drink to make it a happy occasion.

Keith Moorhouse.