

*The  
Irish Garden Plant Society*





## *The Irish Garden Plant Society*



Front cover and above: *Galanthus ex Longraigue*  
Both photographs are courtesy of Paddy Tobin

*Galanthus ex Longraigue* was spotted in the garden of Dr. and Mrs. Gibbons in Longraigue House, Co. Wexford, by Alan Briggs a friend of their son who was visiting in 2002. To date it has been grown simply as *Galanthus ex Longraigue* but will shortly be renamed as *Galanthus* 'Longraigue'.



## *In this issue*

2	Editorial
3	A note from the Chair
4	Details of the Annual General Meeting, North Donegal 16-17 May 2015
6	Recollections of a dear gardening friend – Aleen Herdman MBE
8	So..... What's new? by Rae Mc Intyre
12	Worth a read by Paddy Tobin
14	Irish Heritage Plants, plants with an Irish connection by Stephen Butler
19	Forty shades of green by John Joe Costin
27	The seed distribution scheme 2015 by Stephen Butler
28	Regional reports
37	Details of upcoming lectures
39	Snippets
41	Ivy Alert by Margaret Casey
42	IGPS contact details



## *Editorial*

In this issue of the newsletter Stephen Butler has included the third list (M-Z) of Irish heritage plants. This is an important reference sheet for IGPS members, who it is hoped have a particular interest in our plant heritage. Through a familiarity with these plants we can ensure their survival by seeking them out, growing them and propagating them for circulation, particularly good garden worthy plants. Stephen highlights how scarce some plants now are and many that are no longer available. The work of snowdrop enthusiasts including our Chairman Paddy Tobin in building Irish snowdrop collections by searching out both the plants and their history shows how successfully this can be done and how interesting and enjoyable it can be.

The regional committees include details of lectures and garden visits for the coming months. Events last year were well attended and the broad range of topics for this year will no doubt ensure an enthusiastic response. The AGM, always a well-planned and enjoyable event, will be held in Co. Donegal. If it is a county you have not yet visited this is a great opportunity to see some of its best gardens. The booking form will be posted out in early February and it is important if you wish to stay at the Clanree Hotel Letterkenny to book by Friday March 13<sup>th</sup> to avail of the special rate negotiated by the organising committee.

Best wishes for a good gardening year.

Mary

The copy date for material for the May Newsletter is March 27th.

Please send to: [igpseditor@gmail.com](mailto:igpseditor@gmail.com)

or Mary Rowe, 29 Bantry Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9



## *A Word from the Chair*

A Happy New Year to all our members and best wishes for an enjoyable gardening year ahead. While it might be the time to remind and encourage members to renew their membership for the coming year I feel I would prefer to emphasise how thankful I am to all our members. There has been a significant recovery in membership numbers over the last few years and I feel a great depth of gratitude to those members who are long-term faithful members and to those who are relatively new to the society. You are the backbone and the strength of the society; it is wonderful to have you with us; I sincerely hope you are enjoying your membership of the society and I hope you will be with us for many years to come.

Although it is early in the year plans and arrangements have already been made for our annual general meeting which will be in Co. Donegal this year. You will find details in the newsletter and the booking form will be enclosed with your reminder to renew membership shortly. While there is an interesting selection of gardens to visit – the social aspect of the weekend is always of great importance – the planned visit to Glenveagh will certainly be the highlight for me and especially so as we will be given a guided tour by Head Gardener Seán Ó Gaoithín. This is one of our most outstanding gardens and the opportunity to visit is one not to be missed. I hope to see many of you there.

Now – an invitation to you to make a contribution to the society. We have added a blog to the IGPS website in the last while and I would love to have short articles from members which I could post there. It could be a short description of your garden, a garden you visited, your love of gardening, a book review, a special plant etc. etc., obviously on a gardening theme. A few photographs are a great help and make any article more attractive and interesting. Drop me a line at: [pmtobin@eircom.net](mailto:pmtobin@eircom.net)

Of course, there are many other areas where you would be most welcome to participate in society activities – join your local committee, help at meetings and garden visits. Shortly, we will need a new secretary for the national committee. Interested?

Best wishes for 2015

Paddy



## *Annual General Meeting, North Donegal 16-17 May 2015*

### **Venue**

The AGM will take place over the weekend of 16-17<sup>th</sup> May and will be based at the Clanree Hotel, telephone +353 (0) 74 91 24369 in Letterkenny, Co Donegal. The hotel has lots of parking, has upgraded its bedrooms during 2014, and has a swimming pool and fitness suite. A specially reduced rate for bed and breakfast has been negotiated with the hotel: €56 for one night or €106 for two nights per person sharing but you must mention the IGPS and book no later than Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March to secure it.

No trip to North Donegal would be complete without visiting its two major gardens: Glenveagh and Oakfield. We will start at Glenveagh where the Office of Public Works is very kindly allowing us to use the beautiful Castle drawing room for the meeting on Saturday morning and where the garden tours will be led by the Head Gardener Seán Ó Gaoithín and a colleague. While the garden at Glenveagh was started over 100 years ago, the development of Oakfield Park is much more recent. It includes a superb walled garden, a lake with a nymphaeum and an extensive area of meadows and woodland which can be enjoyed from the narrow gauge railway. By way of contrast, the visits will also include two private gardens: one walled and a snapshot back in time, the other created in the past 20 years and full of exciting planting. There will also be an opportunity to buy plants.

The cost of the weekend is €85: this includes tea and coffee in Glenveagh before the meeting, entry to four gardens, use of a coach on Saturday, a three course dinner plus coffee on Saturday night at the Clanree Hotel, a light lunch on Sunday, and a cup of tea at the final garden before heading for home. Brilliant value.

**In a departure from previous years, there is no booking form with this Newsletter; it will be enclosed with your membership renewal form in early February. We hope you will find this more convenient.**

Further information is available by email at [igps.northern@gmail.com](mailto:igps.northern@gmail.com) or from Yvonne Penpraze telephone (048 from ROI) 9337 2032 or Maeve Bell telephone (048 from ROI) 9066 8435.

## **The meeting**

At the AGM we will have a vacancy on the National Committee for the post of Honorary Secretary as Maeve Bell is standing down. The Committee is keen to encourage members to put their names forward for election. It is absolutely not necessary to be an award-winning gardener or a professional horticulturist or someone who has been a member for decades! Recently we have drawn up guidelines setting out what each Committee member does and a timetable of actions on a month by month basis with a view to helping a new person settle into their post. The key responsibilities of the Secretary and the sort of previous experience which would be useful are shown below.

### **1 Responsibilities**

Organise National Executive meetings in consultation with the Chair,

Organise the annual general meeting in accordance with the constitution,

Take the lead role in ensuring good corporate governance,

Ensure arrangements are in place to deal with all correspondence whether by post, email, or other media and have them reviewed on a regular basis.

### **2 Desirable experience and expertise**

Organisational and/or committee experience, preferably in a similar role,

Basic IT literacy and access to a computer.

Please think about it. Committee meetings are held in Dublin as this is the easiest location for people to get to, and currently we meet every second month in the evenings. We need fresh blood and ideas to ensure we continue as the vibrant and relevant society we have always been. Feel free to either email or telephone Paddy or Maeve to ask for the guidelines and discuss what is involved or alternatively talk to any of the Committee members – their contact details are on the back cover of the Newsletter. The closing date for nominations will be Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May and details of the procedure will appear along with the formal agenda for the meeting in the May Newsletter.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM weekend.

Paddy Tobin, Chair [pmtobin@eircom.net](mailto:pmtobin@eircom.net) +353 5 185 7955

Maeve Bell, Hon. Sec. [maeve.bell@btopenworld.com](mailto:maeve.bell@btopenworld.com) +44 (0)28 9066 8435



## *Recollections of a dear gardening friend* *Aleen Herdman MBE*



I first met Aleen in February 1968 when I started working in Dunmurry library. I actually knew about her before this date as a friend of my mothers lived near her and they were great friends. She lived in Dunmurry at this time. I think they first met when out walking their dogs. Aleen's dog was called Toby.

I remember that first month in the library, Aleen brought in some Witch Hazel to cheer us up and to make us think of Spring. She was a regular library user and would have been in most weeks. As I got to know her I learnt about her work with the Red Cross Hospital Library Service before the Education and Library Boards took over this service. About 1973 we were looking for extra part time staff and approached Aleen about joining us. I left to go to Queens in 1975

and Aleen worked on in Dunmurry for a couple of years after this.

Our paths still crossed frequently and after she left Dunmurry she helped with the housebound library service to Purdysburn Village. At this time I was responsible for the library service to hospitals, homes, housebound, lighthouses and prisons. In 1986 she introduced me to Hillsborough Horticultural Society. I am still there!! Then in 2005 just after I had retired from the library she got me involved with the IGPS. She gave a lot of valuable advice to the committee over many years and always had a great sense of fun which lightened many a meeting. She was always a great hostess and the committee members were often invited for lunch.

When Jeffrey my husband started up a gardening business after leaving the library service Aleen gave him his first customer. I have lots of plants in the garden which have come from Aleen and this is a great way to remember friends who are no longer with us. She was always very generous with plants and cuttings.



Aleen had many interests in life and was a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. She was also involved in setting up the Crossroads Care Attendance Scheme where she had been involved with Bryson House Voluntary Services. For this she was awarded the MBE.

I have happy memories that our last phone call was very cheerful and we were making arrangements to give her a lift to Seamus O'Brien's lecture. We were commenting that we hadn't had such a good giggle for quite a long time. This was just a couple of weeks before she died.

She will be very much missed by all who knew her but never forgotten. "To live behind in the lives of those we love is not to die."

Hilary Glenn

I was introduced to Aleen Herdman sadly only in recent years but during that time Aleen became a firm and dear friend. She was a very charming woman, knowledgeable about many different aspects of life and with an inquiring mind about the ever changing events of the day. We had many interesting chats. Aleen enjoyed travelling to England by car or by air. Nothing daunted her. One day I suggested a visit to Mount Venus Nursery at Tibbradden in the Dublin mountains, immediately I had a travelling companion, Aleen loved the place and many plants were bought. On another occasion Aleen took the wheel to visit friends and have lunch in Newtownstewart in Tyrone. I had suggested a departure time which she immediately dismissed as far too early, she was a speedy driver!

Aleen's great love of course was both her own garden and other peoples' gardens. She was a mine of information about plants, where to put them and was always generous to fellow gardeners with advice, cuttings and clumps of herbaceous plants. It was through Aleen that I became a member of the IGPS and I shall always be grateful for that introduction. Aleen was a member of the Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Committee, and also a supporter of the Art Fund. It was a sad duty but a great pleasure to join Elaine from Hardy Hill nursery in Hillsborough to gather flowers and foliage from Aleen's garden to decorate the Parish Church for her funeral. Aleen's cheerful countenance will be missed by us all. She was enthusiastic about gardens, had an eagerness to get on and do things and a passion for life

Charles Stewart



## So ... What's new? By Rae McIntyre

There have been several changes in our garden this year which is good. I enjoy the challenge of growing new plants and trying the recalcitrant ones in different places. The biggest challenge - I'm almost afraid to tempt fate by saying this - has been the great improvement in the old stackyard. Although it seemed to be an ideal place in which to make a garden in 1984 with no big trees, a site gently sloping south and what I, in my ignorance then, believed was well-drained gritty soil, I got it completely wrong. It was used as a kind of overflow place for things that had grown too lustily in the main garden so most of the plants were second raters. And of course it was not well drained. Indeed it was very badly drained in parts and I fluffed about for years trying to improve the drainage in a superficial kind of way. I had that supposedly weed proof membrane laid in the worst part as if that would help; it didn't as anyone in their right mind would have known. Emptying barrow loads of gravel didn't improve matters either and just meant that the water lay on top of it instead of on the stagnant soil underneath.

Andy, who does all the heavy work round here, dug proper drains, put drainage pipes in them and that has made such a difference that I don't know why I waited for so long. Every treatise on gardening stresses the importance of drainage unless a bog garden is being made. Two of the beds and the two borders on the periphery are crammed with herbaceous perennials. There's much to be said for cramming. The plants look happy and they've provided abundant colour beginning gradually in March, increasing as the summer progressed and even now, as I write in mid-November, there's still quite a lot of bloom. Recently there have been several very wet days but the beds and borders have no large puddles or mini paddy fields in them.

I have had so much pleasure just looking at the plants. Asters that were only half-hearted in their performance in the main garden are now in their element. *Geranium* 'Rozanne' so deserving of the R.H.S. award 'Plant of the Centenary' has spread and the vivid blue flowers, that have been there for months, are still going strong. Even *Verbena bonariensis*, which apparently flourished in every garden except mine, has actually seeded itself here. There was no room in the bed for babies but there are now three of them in the gravel path.

Most of the plants, moved from the former 'hot border' in the main garden, have thrived. *Watsonia beatricis* and *Iris kerneriana* sadly didn't but *Kniphofia* 'Ice Queen' bore lovely pale greenish-white flowers for the first time. In the main garden there has been a bit of rampant self-seeding by *Linaria purpurea* especially in a small gritty bed where I grow cistus, agapanthus and lavender. I have no idea where it came from although many years ago I had the pale pink linaria 'Canon Went' which only lasted for a couple of seasons. *Centaurea montana* has also placed itself in several vacant spots which is pleasing because it has very attractive grey leaves and blue flowers that smell like stewed plums as those on *Iris graminea* do.

Among rhododendrons there is a *Sambucus* 'Sutherland Gold' growing. I am very fond of this tall shrub because it has finely cut gold leaves that are there from quite early in spring and are only beginning to look autumnal now. For the past two years there has been a *Rosa canina* growing from the base and halfway up the stem. It flowered in June and I was delighted to see that it is a rambler with smallish white flowers with yellow stamens and thankfully it's not particularly thorny. I have absolutely no idea from where it came.

The number of planted containers in the garden has increased greatly. This year there are only a few 'Purissima' tulips, in the ground, in the white garden and they've been there for years. All the rest were planted in containers. I would like to have a collection of elegant terracotta containers but (a) they're costly (b) they are not reliably frostproof and (c) they're too heavy for me to lift. There are a few but most containers are either plastic masquerading as terracotta or in pale willow green which I think is a quite attractive colour but which Andy detests and describes them as 'them auld wishy-washy, pishy green pots'. Anyway tulips, crocuses, lilies, agapanthus, galtonias and eucomis have been planted in these and obviously enjoy pot life. The galtonias have been the best they've ever been and they've lived in the same wishy-washy etc. containers for three summers. One container has the white *Galtonia candicans* and the other has pale green *Galtonia viridiflora* and they were in flower for two months. When I grew them in the ground they were devoured by slugs but are now protected by copper tape. The eucomis are also much more satisfactory in containers. The white *Eucomis autumnalis* is still in flower on November 14 and 'Sparkling Burgundy', which has burgundy red leaves and stems to match the flowers, only finished recently when the stem collapsed in a gale one night.

Outside the side door of the house there are two half barrels which originated in Bushmills Distillery. I had winter flowering genera in them which stayed there until the end of May when I finally got round to renewing the planting for summer.

I have, in the past year, taken notice of photinias and admired the 'lollipop' ones which I saw in the glorious Knockanree Garden in Co. Wicklow. In the nearest garden centre there were *Photinia x fraseri* 'Red Robin' just like the Knockanree Garden ones but instead I chose two 'Pink Marble' ones which have leaves attractively variegated in grey-green, white and reddish pink. It took me ages to decide what to plant with them because I just can't kick the habit of matching flower colours or flowers with leaves. Finally I was satisfied with reddish-pink begonias and reddish-pink pelargoniums which all have flowered harmoniously together for the past five months. I've never in my thirty six years of gardening grown begonias before but I intend saving this lot and the pelargoniums for next year if possible. As usual I have bought other plants. The pattern is as follows (1) I visit another garden (2) see, often unknown to me, a captivating plant (3) admire it (4) ask the owner to identify it (5) admire it some more (6) go round the rest of the garden (7) go back to admire desired plant one last time (8) diligently make enquiries about acquiring plant for self (9) acquire plant.

In a County Down Garden last September I coveted a shrub that had shapely leaves and starry vivid blue flowers. It was *Dichroa febrifuga* described as the blue evergreen hydrangea or Chinese quinine in the Burncoose Nursery (Cornwell) catalogue. According to it, it is suitable for the greenhouse in colder areas which this is. It may grow outdoors in balmy Co Down close to Strangford Lough but here it joined the other denizens of the greenhouse as soon as it came from Burncoose. When I was watching the Chelsea Flower Show on television I saw someone waxing lyrical about *Cornus kousa*. It was a handsome small tree well covered with white bracts and I decided that I would like one. There followed yet another trip to the nearest garden centre where there just happened to be a fine specimen of *Cornus kousa* the same height as I am and well-endowed with white buds. It took quite a bit of effort to get it undamaged into the car. In the garden the buds opened forth and it was in bloom for more than a month. The leaves are still there in mid-November.

I've begun to grow bulbs in the greenhouse - not in plastic pots but in terracotta pans. Already bulbs like the autumn *Crocus goulimyi* have borne delicate little flowers that would be quickly lost in the main garden. Bulbs of *Narcissus* 'Double Roman' are growing strongly and should be in flower by Christmas. Also I have planted *Tecophilea cyanocrocus* 'Leichtlinii' and *Tecophilaea cyanocrocus* 'Violacea' in terracotta pans. I saw these one February years ago in the greenhouse of a garden in Alresford in Hampshire. They have magical, intensely blue (like gentians) crocus-like flowers. I hope they survive.

If I have given the impression that everything in the garden has been wonderful I would assure you that that is not the case. A *Viburnum opulus* just sickened and died. Instead of having large snowball flowers it had tiny ones and some didn't even open out. The leaves became scanty and much smaller too so it was dug out. Then I transplanted a small self-sown specimen of *Hoheria sexstylosa* from the white garden to the main garden. That was in mid-March. By the end of the month it was obviously dead although I kept it for another month to see if it would recover. It didn't.

What happened to *Sorbus* 'Joseph Rock' was worst of all. A representative from the Northern Ireland Electricity Service asked Davy's permission to TRIM the top of this tree because it would be in danger of touching the overhead cables. Davy gave permission and was told that someone would be sent to do the job. The cowboy who came didn't stop at a trim but did a chainsaw massacre at least three metres below the cables. I have never seen anything so unsightly or upsetting. It was bad in the summertime but at least was partially hidden by the *Magnolia* 'Wada's Memory'. This magnolia is now bare and the *Sorbus* is the shape of a cross. I just don't know what to do about it.

I shall end on a more cheerful note. The first *Iris unguicularis* opened out today and seven others have tightly furled buds ready to open and cheer up winter. This is the earliest that has happened in this garden.

### *Addendum*

In newsletter number 130 John Joe Costin mentioned the popularity of *Rosa* 'Peace', Pamela Deschamps forwarded the following additional information:

The cultivar was hybridised in 1935 and was the first grown in Meilland rose fields in 1936. It was named Madame A Meilland. Cuttings were sent to licenced growers just before the war commenced.

Cuttings were sent to the USA via the US Ambassadors diplomatic baggage on the last flight out of Paris before the German invasion. Conard Pyle Nursery in Pennsylvania propagated and multiplied the stock during the war. They registered the trade mark in April 1945. The marketing coup followed later that year when delegates met for the inaugural meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco. A Peace Rose was presented to each of the 49 delegates with the message:

"We hope the Peace Rose will influence men's thoughts for everlasting world peace".

It may have sold 10m in France, but worldwide sales exceeded 100m, making it the best selling rose of all time.



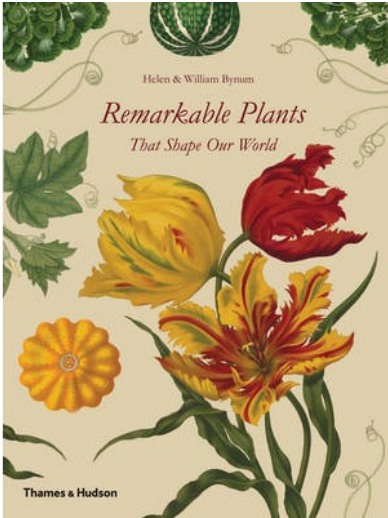
## *Worth a Read by Paddy Tobin*

What makes a good Christmas gardening book? This is not a topic to which I have given any great thought but three books which I have been reading over the holiday season have struck me as perfectly suitable for the Christmas season – or for any other holiday season, for that matter. What made them so perfectly suitable, I felt, was that each could be picked up for a short read and put down again and yet the thread of the book was never lost. Quite simply each book was a collection of short essays and, while some might have been grouped in a thematic manner, each essay was a pleasant and short read in its own right while, equally, several could be enjoyed at a reading just as well.



***The Garden Anthology*** from The Royal Horticultural Society is a collection of articles from past issues of The Garden magazine. The articles are organised thematically – Seasons & the Weather, Gardens, Wildlife & Wildflowers, The Environment, People, Garden Design, Kitchen Gardens etc – with contributions from over 80 authors and the material selected from past issues over the last century and contributions from such as Gertrude Jekyll, E.A. Bowles, John Brookes, Nigel Slater and Tim Richardson. Ursula Buchanan edited while Jenny Bowers illustrated. The selection is eclectic, interesting, readable and, very importantly, very enjoyable.

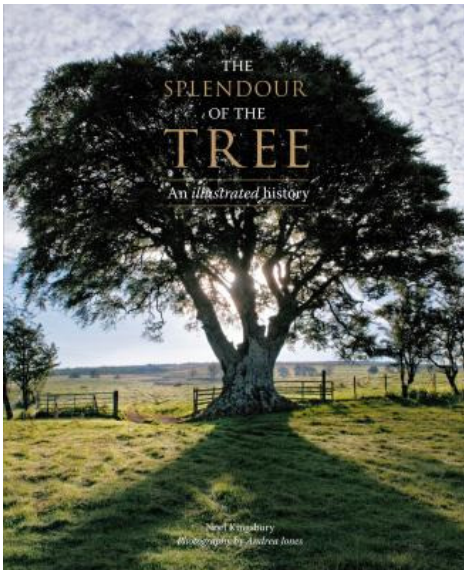
[Frances Lincoln, Hardback, 320 pages, £16.99]



***Remarkable Plants That Shape our World*** by Helen and William Bynum describes 80 key plants which have been significant in our world. These are organised into eight themes ranging from those which have basic food plants to cash crops, those revered and adored, wonders of nature to those which heal and harm. Both authors have backgrounds in the history of science and medicine and, as might be expected from such, the historical stories of the plants are wonderfully presented, making for very interesting reading. Very interestingly, the illustrations for the book have all been taken from the herbarium at Kew Gardens and are very interesting in

themselves. [Thames and Hudson, Hardback, 240pages, £24.95]

Combine the talents of a wonderful writer and the photographs of an award-winning photographer and you have a fabulous book in Noel Kingsbury's ***The Splendour of the Tree – An Illustrated History*** with photographs from Andrea Jones.



One hundred species are described, grouped under six headings: Antiquity, Ecology, Sacred, Utility, Food and Ornament and the book was a pleasure from beginning to end with fascinating histories of each species described along with wonderful information of our interactions and use of each tree. Without hesitation - a very enjoyable book.

[Frances Lincoln, Hardback, 288 pages, £25]



## *Irish Heritage Plants – plants with an Irish connection by Stephen Butler*

Many thanks to the people who responded to previous articles (May and September 2014), many more responses would be good. I have briefly repeated the first few paragraphs for new members and for the record, apologies for that but it is the easiest way. Irish Heritage Plants have been central to the work of the IGPS since its formation. Their conservation is listed in our constitution as one of our major aims; we have published “A Heritage of Beauty” to spread information on them and over the years have sought out threatened Irish plants, recorded their whereabouts, propagated and distributed them and continue this work today. We need the full involvement of our members in this work. Such a task is always a work in progress; we have to keep checking which plants are safe, which are seldom seen and which are quietly joining the ranks of ‘not seen for years and where can we find it now’? With web access, checking plant availability is now much easier although not the complete answer. The database we are compiling can be sorted by genus, species, or cultivar name. It takes a few seconds to find all cvs that are, for instance, called “Lissadell” or “Glasnevin”. Eventually, with a lot more input, we will be able to sort by garden, or individual, that the plant is connected with.

What we would like to do now is build on our survey of 2007, and try to keep an accurate record of who is growing which plant, and where. Members can rest assured that any information received, for example, details of name, address etc. will be kept entirely within the IGPS database and not given out to third parties. If anyone contacts us looking for particular plants we will contact the person growing the plant directly ourselves. We will also be contacting gardens and nurseries, seeking the same information, and encouraging the growing of Irish Heritage Plants.

Since May 2014 each newsletter lists Irish Heritage Plants which our research has shown have limited availability as listed in the Plant Finder. This will be a small percentage of the total number as there are many more not listed at all because they are no longer commercially available. So please let me know if you grow any on the list below. It would be good to know if you are propagating them or if you would allow propagation material to be taken and where or who you got the plant from – the more information the better. All details will be kept confidential. Of course if you have any other plants listed in A Heritage of Beauty please feel free to list them too.



Listed alphabetically M - Z totals 4728 plants, I have, for the present, put aside *Malus*, *Narcissus*, *Rosa*, and *Tulipa*, all have specialists interested in them who we will contact directly, and also list those groups in future newsletters. With those 4 genera excluded, we have 951 plants, of these 105 are listed as available, 65 of these listed below are only available from 1 to 3 nurseries, the other 40 not listed are available from 4 or more nurseries. Within the plants listed below I see some that I know grow in Irish gardens, but I haven't been told officially! A very respectable 39 are recorded as being grown by members in the IGPS survey of 2007. More worrying is the last listed section, look at how many have dropped off the 'available' list in the past few years. Please look through the list below, do you like *Primula* – especially *P. auricula*?? Would you be interested in collecting any with an Irish connection?? The same question with *Rodgersia* or *Saxifraga* – there are not many to collect and spread around once propagated. I am looking at *Nerine*, quite a few to get, they would fit in with our African plants at the zoo too.

Comments, as always, welcome! [stephencbutler@gmail.com](mailto:stephencbutler@gmail.com)

Stephen Butler, Curator of Horticulture, Dublin Zoo, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

### **Available from only 1 nursery**

*X Cuprocyparis* (syn *X Cupressocyparis leylandii*) 'Olive's Green'

*Magnolia sargentiana* var. *robusta* 'Multipetal'

*Meconopsis x beamishii*

*Nerine* 'Ada Bryson'

*Nerine* 'Grania'

*Nerine* 'Lady St Aldwyn'

*Nerine* 'Tweedledee'

*Nerine* 'Mab'

*Oenothera fruticosa* 'Lady Brookeborough'

*Papaver orientale* 'Lady Frederick Moore'

*Philadelphus coulteri*

*Pieris formosa* var. *forrestii* 'Balls of Fire'

*Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Nutty's Leprechahun'

*Polypodium cambricum* (syn *australe*) 'Grandiceps Foster'

*Polypodium cambricum* (syn *australe*) 'Semilacerum Falcatum O'Kelly'

*Polystichum setiferum* 'Rotundatum Phillips'

*Polystichum setiferum* 'Divisilobum Bland'

*Populus* × *generosa*

*Primula* Lissadell Hybrids

*Primula* 'Rowallane Rose'

*Prunus* 'Woodfield Cluster'

*Primula nana* (syn *edgeworthii*)

*Rhododendron* 'Summer Flame'

*Rhododendron* 'W. E. Gumbleton'  
*Rodgersia pinnata* 'Perthshire Bronze'  
*Rodgersia pinnata* 'Rosea'  
*Rodgersia* 'Panache'  
*Rubus* 'Margaret Gordon'  
*Sanvitalia procumbens* 'Irish Eyes'  
*Saxifraga* × *andrewsii*  
*Saxifraga longifolia* 'Walpole's Variety'  
*Sedum brevifolium* var. *quinquefarium*  
*Sempervivum* 'Mount Usher'  
*Taxus baccata* 'Adpressa Variegata'  
*Thuja occidentalis* 'Caespitosa'  
*Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Rowallane Variety'  
*Rhododendron* 'Buccaneer'  
*Sedum floriferum*  
*Trollius* 'Orange Globe'

**Available from only 2 nurseries**

*Oxalis* 'Gwen McBride'  
*Polypodium cambricum* (syn *australe*) 'Cristatum'  
*Polystichum setiferum* 'Gracile'  
*Potentilla fruticosa* 'Sophie's Blush'  
*Potentilla fruticosa* 'Farreri Improved'  
*Primula* 'Apple Blossom' (Au)  
*Primula* 'Cloth of Gold' (Au/A)  
*Primula* 'Duke of Edinburgh' (Au/B)  
*Primula* 'Mrs Dargan' (Au/B)  
*Primula* 'Old Irish Yellow' (Au/B)  
*Rudbeckia hirta* 'Irish Eyes'  
*Salix phylicifolia* (syn *hibernica*)  
*Sarracenia* × *moorei*  
*Sarracenia* × *popei*  
*Ulex gallii* 'Mizen Head'  
*Saxifraga* 'Myra'  
*Saxifraga* 'Lissadell'  
*Saxifraga callosa* var. *australis* 'Lissadell Variety'  
*Trollius sinensis* 'Smith'

**Available from only 3 nurseries**

*Tanacetum* (syn *Chrysanthemum*) *parthenium* 'Rowallane'  
*Tropaeolum majus* 'Margaret Long'  
*Nerine* 'Diana'

*Thuja occidentalis* 'Ericoides Glauca'  
*Pentaglottis* (syn *Anchusa*) *sempervirens*

**Recorded in members gardens in IGPS 2007 Survey**

*Mahonia x media* 'Charity'  
*Malus* 'Irish Peach'  
*Narcissus* 'Coleen Bawn'; *Narcissus* 'Lucifer';  
*Narcissus* 'Rip van Winkle'  
*Olearia* 'Henry Travers'  
*Omphalodes cappadocica* 'Starry Eyes'  
*Papaver orientale* 'Lady Frederick Moore'; *Papaver* 'Fireball'  
*Parthenocissus henryana*  
*Penstemon* 'Evelyn'  
*Pericallis* 'Purple Picotee'  
*Pieris formosa* 'Daisy Hill'  
*Plantago lanceolata* 'Burren Rose'  
*Primula* 'Rowallane Rose'; *Primula* 'Guinivere'; *Primula* 'Kinlough Beauty';  
*Primula* 'Lady Greer'; *Primula* 'Tawny Port'  
*Prunus laurocerasus* 'Castlewellan'  
*Rhododendron* 'Joan Slinger'  
*Rodgersia pinnata* 'Perthshire Bronze'; *Rodgersia pinnata* 'Irish Bronze'  
*Romneya coulteri*  
*Rosa* 'Belvedere'; *Rosa* 'Souvenir de St Anne's'  
*Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Prostratus'  
*Ruscus aculeatus* 'John Redmond'  
*Sambucus nigra* f. *porphyrophylla* 'Guincho Purple'  
*Saruma henryi*  
*Saxifraga* 'Ballawley Guardsman'  
*Saxifraga* 'Lissadell'  
*Solanum crispum* 'Glasnevin'  
*Symphytum x uplandicum* 'Axminster Gold'  
*Tweedia caerulea*  
*Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Rowallane Variety'  
*Viola* 'Irish Molly'; *Viola* 'Molly Sanderson'  
*X Cuprocyparis* (syn *X Cupressocyparis*) *leylandii* 'Castlewellan'

**Not available at present, last listed in Plant Finder in year after name**

*Myosotis azorica* 'Barton's Variety' 1988  
*Potentilla fruticosa* 'Daisy Hill' 1989  
*Nerine* 'Lady Howard de Walden' 1990  
*Sedum dasyphyllum* var. *suendermannii* 1991  
*Saxifraga* 'Avoca Gem' 1992

*Saxifraga* 'Knapton Red' 1992  
*Pieris formosa* 'Daisy Hill' 1995  
*Platanus* 'Augustine Henry' 1995  
*Rhododendron* 'Vanguard' 1995  
*Sempervivum* × *praegeri* 1995  
*Osteospermum* 'Mrs Reside's Purple' 1996  
*Potentilla fruticosa* 'Donard Gold' 1996  
*Sedum spathulifolium* var. *majus* 1996  
*Primula rosea* 'Splendens' 1997  
*Rhododendron* 'Sir Frederick Moore' 1997  
*Saxifraga rosacea* var. *hartii* 1998  
*Scabiosa* 'Irish Perpetual Flowering' 1998  
*Pieris formosa* var. *forrestii* 'Rowallane' 2000  
*Primula vulgaris* 'Ballyrogan Cream Edge' 2000  
*Nerine* 'Glensavage Glory' 2002  
*Potentilla nitida* 'Alannah' 2002  
*Rhododendron* 'Grenadier' 2002  
*Nerine* 'Curiosity' 2003  
*Nerine* 'Glensavage Gem' 2003  
*Olearia macrodonta* × *arborescens* 'Rowallane Variegated' 2003  
*Viola* 'Anna' 2003  
*Mahonia* × *media* 'Charity's Sister' 2005  
*Plantago lanceolata* 'Burren Rose' 2005  
*Pulmonaria saccharata* 'Plas Merdyn' 2005  
*Phlox subulata* 'Daisy Hill' 2007  
*Pieris* 'Fota Pink' 2007  
*Pinus sylvestris* 'Hibernia' 2007  
*Ribes sanguineum* 'Splendens' 2007  
*Sorbus* 'Molly Sanderson' 2007  
*Phormium* 'Ballyrogan Variegated' 2008  
*Rhododendron eclecticum* 'Rowallane Yellow' 2008  
*Saxifraga rosacea* 'Clare Island' 2008  
*Saxifraga* 'Ballawley Guardsman' 2008  
*Saxifraga* 'Clare Island' 2008  
*Phlox subulata* 'Brightness' 2009  
*Olearia* 'Talbot de Malahide' 2010  
*Potentilla nitida* 'Lissadell Variety' 2010  
*Salix* × *grahamii* 'Moorei' 2010  
*Saxifraga* × *hornibrookii* 2010  
*Olearia* 'Rossii' 2011  
*Quercus robur* 'Fenessii' 2011  
*Watsonia* 'Mount Congreve' 2011



# *Forty Shades of Green*

*by John Joe Costin*

Agriculture was the first industry disadvantaged by the Celtic Tiger building boom. The scale of modern agriculture is milking a herd of 500 cows, in some farms three times a day to maximise milk yield, or growing cereals or potatoes as 200-400Ha (500-1000 acres) crops. The modern farm tractor approximates in size nearer to a train engine than to the family size car models of the 1960s. When builders required experienced operatives for their heavy duty equipment, farm workers migrated en masse to their building sites.

The Department of Agriculture addressed the resultant labour crisis by issuing farm work visas to Eastern Europeans. Many of these shared two fascinations. One they satisfied soon after arrival. Most had never seen an ocean and went to the west coast as soon as they could afford to, to observe Atlantic Ocean size waves rolling all the way from Labrador into our cliff faces.

The second obsession was broadleaved evergreens. Before every bus return trip home to **Cracow** or **Lviv** for holidays, there was one repeated question “**would that grow in my country?**” The answer they most regularly got was a heart-breaking, - No.

Our record winter temperature low was recorded in the **National Botanic Gardens Glasnevin on January 12th 1982 – 18.5°C**. The deep freeze refrigerator that is the vast land mass of Siberia exerts its influence on the winters of all northern European countries that lie North and East of the Alps. It induces lows of -40° C and monumental snowfall where the Siberian air flow meets the moist Atlantic winds. In such extremes, plant diversity is reduced to extensive monocultures, such as Pines, Firs and Birch. What we rather parochially call **Scot’s Pine, *P.sylvestris***, growing here at the western edge of its natural distribution, could more accurately be called **Siberian Pine** because its eastern distribution extends across the entire Eurasian land mass to **Okhotsk** on its eastern seaboard. Likewise, once you drive east from Berlin, virtually the sole roadside verge tree is Birch. An acquaintance advised “that you would want to be very fond of that tree”, to endure the Transiberian Railway journey, as they accompany you all the way to **Vladivostok**.

The yearning for broad-leaved evergreens may be hereditary. New England was settled 300 years ago, but they still demand English Holly for Christmas, even though it is not hardy enough to grow on the east coast. There are 1500 acres of Holly orchards in Oregon, the berried produce of which is lorried across that continent in temperature controlled trucks to satisfy that holiday demand. When I went to the Nine Elms Market in London, the traders related that the bulk of their supplies were delivered as lorry loads of branches broken by hand from hedge row trees across Ireland by Irish itinerants. They could procure no other supply. There is now one 3 acre holly orchard in Ireland.

Ubiquity can breed indifference. I had mine to ivy recalibrated by the rhapsodies of a Dutch visitor I was driving, who marvelled at the luxuriant growth, the glistening greenness and the freshness of ivy in our winter landscape. They do not have its equivalent in the Netherlands. While we are indifferent to it, because of its ubiquity, the Danish house plant industry responded to peoples' needs for broadleaved evergreens by producing and exporting annually millions of Ivy plants to the housewives of Europe, listing all its tolerances to low light, low temperatures, dust, shade and long periods of neglect, that makes it such a resilient houseplant. What grows in the open here, they have to produce in heated glasshouses.

I drove across and visited five of the Iron Curtain Eastern European countries in 1971. In **Cracow**, I learned of their angst. - ***Hedera helix***, considered endangered, was listed as a **protected species**, I could not offer sympathy. There was no endangerment. They were simply recording a geographic fact that the eastern boundary of the natural distribution of ivy was retreating a little westward. It would be more scientific to ask where is the Polish border, because it has moved both further east and west as different powers held sway in central Europe. Plants do not recognise national boundaries. The Poles' concern could be more accurately termed neurotic nationalism or bad science. **'Endangered' is a trigger** word to attract journalists' antennae now, and seems to be indispensable to strengthen applications for research or film funding. It was painful for the Poles only in the sense that so few broadleaves grow in their climate. I did not doubt their sincerity.

**'Discovery'** used to be the most exciting word in the lexicon of garden writers. Now, unfortunately **'extinction'** seems to have displaced it. It is a precise, scientific term if used correctly to define loss, but is a term, more often misused by propagandists, a sensationalism for those seeking news headlines. It should make us appreciate how blessed we are with the choice and range of evergreens we can grow. My Dutch guest could not understand why we had not selected ivy as our national emblem.

**Graham Stuart Thomas (1)** wrote that the Irish Ivy *Hedera helix* '**Hibernica**' AGM "is not only the finest ivy for ground cover but is one of the most reliable and useful of all cover plants for large areas. It will grow equally well in sun or shade and is not as prone as other self-clingers to ascend trees or upright objects". When we tire of weekly mowing and edge trimming or re-evaluate those activities as unsustainable practices, then we may see the beauty of and the wisdom in planting an **Irish Ivy lawn**. Why we do not already have such an educational feature in at least one of our many state owned gardens or horticultural colleges is a mystery. Restoring old garden properties guided by archival evidence is a good principle, but it does not have to be slavishly adhered to or invoked as an intellectual bandage by the cautious who lack courage to make an imaginative change. Over the past 14 years the word 'sustainable', has been bandied about and much abused, with claims often made that are either invisible or unverifiable. An Ivy lawn might be a self-evident first.

The Plant Finder 2006 lists 302 cultivars, **19** of which have received an AGM. '**Dunloe Gap**', '**Irish Lace**' and '**Shamrock**' show there is some native appreciation but it is minuscule, compared to international acknowledgement in place names such as 'Boskoop '(NL), 'California', 'Chicago', 'Pittsburgh' (USA), 'Niagara Falls' (Canada), 'Heise' (Denmark). 'Jerusalem' (Palestine) 'Stuttgart' (Germany). Auslese is the third highest of 7 categories in German wine laws that define quality by ripeness, sweetness and price. 'Koniger Auslese' might suggest a superior vine. Naming a cultivar 'Dead Again' is definitely a new departure in plant marketing, suggesting a focus on the Gothic or ghoulish. *H.H.*'Hibernica' is listed in only 1 Heritage Garden, Fota. I know of one embankment c 150mx4m high planted with *Hedera helix* 'Hibernica' that amplifies the contours of the slope, where a conventional timid fuss pot planting of a wide range of plant material would conceal.

Eidhnean (ine-aun), the Irish for Ivy, is common in place names such as Inan (Meath), Inane (Cork and Tipperary), Inagh River (Clare and Donegal), Gleneany, Cloneanagh (meadow of Ivy) (Laois), Lough Inagh, (Ivy lake) Galway.

We show little appreciation in our landscape or gardens of the Zen Buddhist principle that less is more. We like exotics in our gardens and demonstrate a loathing to allocate precious space to natives. If we had the developed sensibilities of the Japanese, we would see enormous variety in shades of green and great diversity in our **mosses, ivies, ferns and hollies**. Accessing the prestige of owning a moss garden might be the easiest of all, simply by killing the little grass that is left, in so many of our moss rich lawns.

In what we might see as dull, the Japanese see food for the mind and balm for the soul. We have been conditioned to equate a great garden to a feast of colour. We have not yet acknowledged our own individuality or developed our own style. Making a statement that what a garden design is inspired by or based on 'is an admission' that we must try harder.

John Healy, Irish Times political analyst in the 1970's, excoriated the Taoiseach of the day Jack Lynch for his limp leadership, with a refrain "Where are my people going. I am their leader, I must follow them." Irish garden designers and writers might note what the people are doing. When Coillte became a semi state company in 1991, one of the first proposals put to its first board of directors was "that a substantial saving would be made, if all the forest parks that were open to the public were closed down". The board indignantly and unanimously rejected the proposal. Those Forest Parks are a remarkable success, hoovering unprompted **18m** visitors per year out of their suburban homes, to soothe souls and eyes and find solace for frazzled minds in meandering across our forest floors, every weekend of the year

The Japanese are not alone in their appreciation of the aesthetics of green. Green is the emblem of salvation for Muslims and is doubly appreciated for its preciousness in a religion that emerged from and flourished in the vast deserts and steppes of Western Asia. It is the dominant colour in the national flags of many Islamic States where that colour enjoys a status similar to that conferred on gold in Western world civilisation. Saudi Arabia is a vast desert that covers a land area equal to 75% of the land mass of Europe. While supervising the development of a nursery in an oasis 500Km north of Riyadh in 1980, I learned from a constant stream of nomadic Bedouin sheep herders, clad in black, of their need for greenery and the commitment they willingly made in order to enjoy the status of growing a tree. I explained to each that it was like another marriage. The trees would have to be watered daily for the rest to their lives. It fazed no one. No one considered that a burden. Muslims are called to pray four times a day; to them a daily watering was just another form of prayer.

### ***Arbutus unedo* 'Rubra' AGM**

Any system devised to evaluate the comparative value of ornamental plants should have a weighting favouring those that provide dividends in the leaner months of the year. Every day for 6 weeks the flowers embroider its crown, always a therapeutic surprise if disorientating experience, because the gloom of shortening days promises little. It is my favourite of available cultivars, because its clean glossy foliage is the perfect backdrop to enhance the conspicuousness of its pink red flowers that create such an unexpected eye-catching display in October-November.



This cultivar is propagated by grafting. The species is readily raised from seed, but the provenance is crucial as the ornamental quality of the foliage varies greatly. Seed sourced from the Mediterranean countries are to be avoided as the foliage invariably has a hairy grey bearded scruffiness, a necessary modification that protects against the heat of warmer places. Our own **A.u.'Rubra'** is a standard tree now. The densely branched head formed naturally, and is not a poodle piece of topiary created by the shears of a nurseryman. Originally, located out of sight in a bed of mother plants, set apart for propagation, it was a dense 4m<sup>3</sup> cube of foliage, planted in 1994. Its growth seems to have accelerated since it was transplanted to a more conspicuous location 7 years ago, by ramming the forks of a teleporter under its root plate and replanting it immediately. Moving it in September was the only concession to science. Roots grow at low temperatures, so by April the following year, it would have developed a new root system, this is fibrous, like all ericaceae, making it amenable to transplantation in the largest sizes. A temperature of -13°C damaged the foliage in 2010, but one of -17° C in 2011 defoliated it and killed all side branches. In 2012 regrowth on the central erect stem encouraged a severe coiffure. This funnelled all the new growth into forming a glossy leaved crown, above a 1.5m clean, grey/brown coloured bole that is now 5m in height.

In Ireland the oldest specimens of the strawberry tree grow in wild native groves in Killarney. The tallest measured 10 x 1.01m. girth in 2010. The Irish name is Caithne. Renowned for its beautiful wood, it is known to, and sought by sculptors and furniture makers as '**Killarney wood**'. Auction catalogues occasionally list pieces for eye popping prices. The Museum of Decorative Arts in Collins Barracks displays exquisite examples in their furniture exhibition. Queen Victoria visited Killarney in 1861 and where ever she went became a fashionable destination. Wordsworth, Tennyson, Thackeray and Alfred Austin wrote glowing accounts that created the worldwide fame of Killarney. However, the resultant tourist boom did not cause the depredation of the Arbutus groves in Killarney. The natives had developed an artistic eye before the outsiders arrived. **Lewis** (2) 1837 recorded that "a variety of useful and ornamental articles are made from the Arbutus tree and are sold to strangers visiting the lakes".

We do not know the extent of the losses. Killarney derived its origins from iron smelting works in the neighbourhood (for which ample forests afforded abundant fuel) and for copper and cobalt mining in Muckross and on Ross Island. Tanning was also favourably advantaged because of the "abundance of adjacent oak woods". One can assume that at that time, Arbutus was probably just another wood for the furnaces.

Given the amount of land and historic properties that are in state ownership and given the extraordinary allure Forest Parks now have for the public, it is opportune to plant a large plantation of Arbutus with each cultivar allocated a block of at least 2Ha (5 acres) so that future generations can traverse the first broadleaved evergreen forest in Ireland along broad avenues. In the longer term this would ensure an unlimited supply of Killarney wood for our artists, sculptors and furniture makers. It would be a project with more credibility than a lot of the environmental guff that fills the airwaves.

Society does not show much evidence that it is willing to pay the real cost of precious, slow growing hardwoods that we might make disposable products from. What consumers want is fast growing, high yielding sources of inexpensive cellulose. 90% of our forest output is disposed of in a day; 30% in newsprint and paper products, 30% is consumed in tissues, napkins, towels and toilet paper and 30% in baby napkins. 5% is used to make pallets and the rest is macerated into pulp and extruded in sheets, veneered and sold as oak, beech or pine lookalike furniture. Manufacturers do not want to deal with knotted timber that can warp and change, especially as the alternative is so much easier to work and manage with no waste. Unfortunately 99% of the public only want 'flawless' lookalike timber. There are artists and specialists who still work with real wood, but it is a very small market.

An enthusiastic gardener, from the Gap of Dunloe in Kerry, once offered me **cain apples**, a fruit unknown to me. It was the local name for the Arbutus berries. Derived from **Cahina** (which is how one pronounced Caithne), the Irish for Arbutus, it was a literal translation as the berry in Irish is called 'Caithne Ull' (Ull=apple) the Strawberry Tree Apple. Arbutus has not given rise to many place names, Owenacahina, (river Arbutus), near Glengarriff, Ard na Caithne, the Irish for Smerwick, the infamous harbour near Dingle, Quin Co Clare is derived from a slightly different root, Cuinche. The most northerly place name is one of the many islands in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo that is named Quinsheen.

The limited number of place names does not suggest a former ubiquity. It is surprising that **Malahide Castle** is the only one of **29 Heritage Gardens** that lists it. One would imagine that connoisseurship of exotics would be inclusive of the most exotic in our native flora.

Had I the power of compulsion, I should 'recommend' that an Arbutus tree be planted in every garden! This bit of omnipotence was inspired by no less a character than Hitler. My mother had a saying that "there was bad in every good person and good in every bad person".

When I read that on coming to power in Germany, Hitler had ordered every landowner to plant a specified number of Walnut trees on their land, I gave him the benefit of the doubt that he must have had some redemptive values.

Walnut, if you have the space, is a choice that would reflect well on the planter. It is a handsome tree with bold masses of foliage and is the last tree here to leaf out at the end of May. As I walk beneath it, I always crush a leaf to fill my nostrils with the rich fruity aroma that is particular to this tree. It is now 20 years old but I have yet to harvest a nut. Most of our summers lack the heat of its native place in southern Europe. I knew the wood, before I knew the tree, as I was enthralled by the quality of a wood that was marked **Walnut** in a furniture exhibition. I later learned that it fetched champagne prices for large trunks which are cut into veneers. Our tree will feature in my will. (Later I was to learn that Walnut is the preferred timber for gun stocks due to its inexpandability. The credits I had issued to Hitler had to be cancelled).

### ***Buxus***

When Napoleon was upbraided for taking such a quintessential Italian painting as the Mona Lisa back to Paris as war booty from his successful campaign, he patiently explained to the complaining pernickety official, that all great artists irrespective of where they were born are Frenchmen. Based on that precedent, *Buxus* should be considered an honorary native Irish species, because it grows better here than most places. *Buxus* is perceived as a dense slow growing subject for a low hedge and many of us mistakenly identify the dwarf form, used for that purpose, ***B.sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'** as the species. We should therefore, be grateful to those among us who have the virtue of patience. The tallest Box in the UK and Ireland growing at **Birr Castle**, measures **11.5m** or **37ft and 9 inches**. This is a figure that many gardeners will look at with incredulity. It is of course a small desirable evergreen tree. A visit to gardens like Birr Castle should be compulsory for every aspiring garden designer and landscape student to correct the misleading impressions given by the internet and the 'consumer information' provided by some garden centre labels and websites that only list the size that a plant will attain in 10 years, but never list its ultimate height. Box edging done well is fine, but it is overused and often badly done. The weightier charge is that we have underused the gems, among the **93 cultivars** of *B. sempervirens* listed by Plant Finder

***B.s.* 'Pendula'** is without doubt one of the best evergreen small specimen trees gifted to us. It is elegant, with pendant branches that will eventually do justice to the name. It is difficult to procure already formed but it is easy to train. Like good wine or port, there is pleasure in the anticipation.

Height and elegance can be accelerated and aided by inserting a 3m tubular pipe stronger, neater and more elegant than a stake in the ground adjacent to the specimen. Then, take one of the leading supple shoots, bend it upright to the vertical and tie to the support tube, and continue to tie it to the tube annually, until it reaches the top of the tube. Thereafter all its growth will weep and will form an elegant furnished cone. On the other hand, the readily available alternatives, the specimens of small weeping trees available in Garden Centres offer instant gratification but poor long term satisfaction. The arbitrary graft height on 1.5m stems is determined only for efficient distribution to Garden Centres and for the convenience of fitting them in family cars by the purchaser. The chosen height is not the optimum for garden display. The amenity value can be greatly improved by retraining them as outlined above on a pole. Many of the incongruous, incompatible marriages of a small pendant head dangling like a bad toupee on top of a vigorous rootstock make poor garden plants.

### ***Buxus sempervirens* 'Handsworthiensis'**

**Longleys Boxwood Nursery** who grow box only near Liss in Hampshire, are the specialists who supply this shrub. Its distinctions are its foliage and growth habit. The high gloss large leaves measure 5x2cm. The dense pyramidal habit is topiary untouched by a shears. It measures 110cm at the base and tapers rocket like to the tip. Its height is 240cm. I ordered it in 1974 and it delivered and labelled as *B.s* 'Myrtifolia'. When it did not behave as expected in its first location it too was transplanted with the same delicate finesse as used to move the *Arbutus*. It benefited as it has grown vigorously since it was relocated.

Errors can occur, because in a staff of 30 employees on a nursery, it may come as a surprise that perhaps only one or two at most, might have a plant-person's inclinations. Motivations vary some like working in the outdoor environment, some in the comforts of a glasshouse, some driving machinery and one of our employees was addicted to filling 12m containers. Plant persons are scarce. This box is an excellent cultivar for formal assignments and for smaller spaces and for those who like an array of topiared pyramids but without the need for laser controlled trimming or the need to cope with the growth rate of *Taxus baccata* specimens.

### **References**

1. Thomas, Graham Stuart, 1970, *Plants for Ground-Cover*, J.M. Dent & Sons, London, p97.
2. Lewis, Samuel, 1837, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Lewis & Sons, London, p126.



## *Seed Distribution Scheme 2015*

As I write this in very late November seeds are still coming in, some as trickles, others as floods with 30 or more packets carefully posted, so I cannot say definitely how many we will have listed for 2015. However, we are already at 320, with another 50 promised, and that is 70 more than last year, so even allowing for deleting duplicates and the odd packet that has no seeds or no name, we will have a bumper year to choose 20 packets from.

As always, many many thanks to all our seed donors, without you there is no list!

If requesting seeds, please remember to use the form provided, and send in a stamped addressed envelope to post back to you. It's important to remember too to fill in the substitute boxes – many of the seeds sent in are in very small numbers, so they run out within the first few requests, and the rarer they are the quicker they go!

Choice or more unusual ones so far include *Acis nicaensis*, *Albizia julibrissin*, *Arthropodum cirrhatum*, *Daphne longilobata*, *Meconopsis villosa*, *Nepeta bowdenii* var. *wellsii*, and *Ranunculus cortusifolius*. Some of these have only 1 or 2 entries in the Plant Finder, so are very rare in cultivation. And 12 *Geranium* this year must be a record too!

Happy sowing – and remember to maybe pen a few words for Mary our editor, successes and failures, tips and tricks, always welcome!

Stephen Butler  
Seed Distribution Coordinator

Stephen's contact details: [stephencbutler@gmail.com](mailto:stephencbutler@gmail.com) or

Stephen Butler,  
Curator of Horticulture,  
Dublin Zoo,  
Phoenix Park,  
Dublin 8.



## *Regional Reports*

### **NORTHERN**

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** By Strangford's Shores – a visit to Ringdufferin

When almost 70 people gather of an April evening at the end of a long single-track country road, you realise that it must lead somewhere special. Ringdufferin on the west shore of Strangford Lough in County Down is special on several counts: its situation at the water's edge of one of the most beautiful sea loughs in Ireland, its wonderful collection of trees, its walled garden, and the fact that it has been planted and cared for by three generations of the same family. We were fortunate to be shown around by Tracy Hamilton who with her husband now own Ringdufferin and her father, Paddy Mackie, both members of the Society.



Mr. Paddy Mackie



Tracy Hamilton & the Irish champion *Cupressus macrocarpa*

On the front lawn we first looked at some remarkable trees: two beeches, one with apparently no trunk at all and the second with many of its branches fused together, a cut leaf beech with a very graceful habit, a deodar cedar, and a golden ash resplendent in its spring growth with branches sweeping to the ground.

The Monterey pine, *Pinus radiata*, looked almost as if it had been cloud pruned; Paddy explained that its odd shape was a result of being hit by lightning and remarked that it was a superb refuge for wild life sheltering at different times the exotic wood duck he used to keep and long eared owls.

Close by is Ringdufferin's Irish champion, *Cupressus macrocarpa* or the 'Monster Cypress' as Aubrey Fennell called it in his recent book *Heritage Trees of Ireland*. Planted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and 31 metres high, its girth is phenomenal – 12.65 metres. Adding to the exceptional sense of place was the carpet of lilac-coloured toothwort which is parasitic on the roots of several of the nearby trees. In addition to the eclectic collection of trees there are many choice shrubs some of which have reached tree-like proportions including *Magnolia campbellii* and *Magnolia 'Galaxy'*, *Drimys winteri*, *Styrax japonica* and some impressive specimens of large leaved rhododendrons including *R. falconeri*, *sinogrande* and *macabeanum*.

The walled garden covers almost two acres. There is a dramatic, dark enclosure in the centre where a circle of eight Irish yews have grown together and merged

to create a living roof. The upright Irish or Florencecourt yew is known to have become available commercially after 1820 so the trees in this venerable circle may be approaching their bi-centennial. Another amazing specimen is the unusual *Rosa roxburghii* var. *hirtula*; while vast, it is a stripling by comparison with the yews having been planted in 1954. A final treat was being entertained to tea and biscuits in the traditional stone boathouse on the edge of Ringhaddy Sound as dusk fell.

Maeve Bell

### **August 16th** Visit to Billy Old Rectory, Co. Antrim.

The summer visit and picnic to Billy Old Rectory overlooking the North Antrim Coast took place on a day reminiscent of late autumn but thankfully we managed the food before the intermittent torrential rain began. This Georgian rectory was built in 1810 with evidence of a more modest building close to the church which could perhaps have been an earlier rectory. An 1830 map shows a small lawn to the front of the house with lots of trees but by 1850 the gardens were considerably developed both back and front, with walkways and an orchard planted between 1830 and 1850. In 1979 the Page family purchased the property and began work on the gardens which continues today.

In the grassy remains of the old orchard, still with productive fruit trees, is a wildflower meadow featuring three beehives in pastel shades of lemon, pink and lavender, set in a profusion of plants and colour. I identified *Achillea* in white and pale pinks, *Calendula*, *Alchemilla mollis*, *Cosmos*, *Viola*, gladioli, welsh poppies... yellow and orange, *Buddleja* to name just a few. Moving back towards the house we walk through an alley of raspberry canes into the small formal herb garden with its carefully tended box hedging and enclosed vegetables and then through to the front garden. We follow the path, lined on one side with pink and blue hydrangeas, on the other with blue/gray hostas, into a woodland area under mature trees, newly planted with hellebores, ferns and other shade loving plants. Here the Pages have installed a family of willow deer and suspended willow spheres from the lower branches of the trees to create interest in this part of the garden.

As we emerged from under the tree canopy, we came across a stone structure on the edge of the lawn. This was The Glebe Well... "an ancient holy well"... which is a stone lined basin with steps leading down to the water. It was thought that the well had a canopy of stones which had collapsed and these Meta Page has used to construct the alpine bed which surrounds the well at present.



What strikes me about this garden is the tremendous personal attachment which Meta holds for it. Many parts are associated with close family members. The bird feeding station, for example, is a signpost directing us to various parts of the world where her children and grandchildren live; the pond with its waterfall and stepping stones is a reminder of her son, while the summer house overlooking it is attributed to his wife.

The influences of the past are very strong in this garden and they blend beautifully with the ideas which the Pages have developed since 1979. There are plans for a new garden in the furthest corner from the house involving the restoration of the old walls and a certain amount of earth moving. I look forward to our next visit with anticipation.

Yvonne Penpraze

### **September 3<sup>rd</sup>** A visit to Adrian Walsh's Garden at Stranmillis Belfast

Small, plant-packed and beautiful.

Around forty of us met at Adrian Walsh's interesting town garden on a beautiful balmy September evening in the established, leafy area of Stranmillis in Belfast. On entry, we could see a well-tended entrance garden and short driveway, a calm and uncluttered space with pots. The walk to the back has a narrow border with many interesting specimens; the beautiful new *Salvia* 'Amistad' caught the eye immediately while *Podophyllum versipelle* 'Spotty Doty' was looking very happy in the shade of an established *Crinodendron hookerianum*. Another of the joys of being in the company of well informed gardeners is their help with identification.

The main garden at the rear of the house is mainly flat, not large but so well designed and planted to give a good three dimensional effect. Square and rectangular beds have been set out at right angles divided by closely mown grass pathways and this formal layout provides maximum effect for the intensive informal planting. There are many types of grasses and specimen trees including a *Betula jacquemontii* just off centre; with a carpet of lilac-coloured *Colchicum* underneath to complement the white bark it demanded attention. A mature *Cercidophyllum japonicum* just taking on its autumn colour showed up well against the early evening sky. There were several tall plants, many with purple flowers, leaves or stems, which combined well with the grasses, including hydrangeas and two slightly different examples of the lofty *Eupatorium maculatum* Atropurpureum Goup. I also spotted two beautiful *Acteas* just in bud. Here and there, bright red dahlias added a splash of intense colour together with the soft red *Schizostylus major* now known as *Hesperantha coccinea*. Another bright splash, this time white, of a double

Japanese anemone also lit up the autumn palette. Everyone seemed to be drawn to the unusual planting in a large oblong container; *Stipa tenuissima* 'Pony Tails', *Rudbeckia* and *Verbena bonariensis* made an effective late summer combination. In addition to a small reflecting pool, another feature is a carved stone which looks centuries old; Adrian explained that it is a piece of sandstone carved by a local artist, the design copied from one of the stones at Boa Island in Fermanagh.

Adrian spent time with everyone talking about his design and the planting. He explained that he won the BBC Gardener of the Year competition in 2001; judging by his current garden he was a worthy winner. We are privileged to have had the opportunity to share his garden and to learn so much about planting and use of colour in early autumn within a limited space.

Jenny Constable

### **23<sup>rd</sup> October** 'In the Footsteps of Joseph Hooker' - Seamus O'Brien

As I write this Seamus will be on his third expedition to the prolific state of Sikkim in the high Himalaya. His enthusiasm for the journeys of Joseph Hooker was infectious as he led us from the Lachung River on the Tibet frontier to Darjeeling, across precipitous roads to freezing Lachen and higher to Ravangala. Many of the views he showed us exactly matched the paintings of Joseph Hooker, which were often the first views of Everest and the Himalaya to be sent back to Kew in the 1850s. Hooker's constant correspondence with the Botanic Gardens of Kew, Edinburgh and Glasnevin have provided invaluable records for subsequent expeditions through the years, even to Seamus in 2014. Joseph sent home plants and seeds from every climate type, which amazingly exists in Sikkim, a state only the size of Co. Cork. Calcutta Botanic Gardens, the Kew of Asia became a distribution house helping to send seeds worldwide.

Conditions are just right for *Cypressus cashmeriana* which at Yuksan grows to 100 feet, *Schleffera rhododendrifolia* to 50 feet and the mid temperate area produces a forest of *Acer campbellii* and *Magnolia campbellii*. In 2012 Seamus found *Berberis virescens* and *Berberis angulosa* which had been sent to Kilmacurragh long ago. He also showed a slide of *Sorbus hedlundii* which had first been cultivated at Kilmacurragh. *Aster*, *Acer* and *Primula* all have a sikkimensis variety. *Prunus*, *Meconopsis*, *Larix* abound, *Pleione praecox* is epiphytic on *Exbucklandia populnea* and *Rhaphidophora eximia*, a houseplant here, grows happily on the hillside. We wish Seamus and his party a safe return to our shores and look forward to his next tales of exotic discoveries.

Sharon Morrow

## LEINSTER

**September 14<sup>th</sup>** National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh, Co Wicklow

On a wonderful warm sunny September day over 30 IGPS members, including several from our Northern Region, enjoyed a remarkable tour with Head Gardener Seamus O'Brien. Famous for Rhododendrons in early summer, this garden is packed with so many rare and unusual plants it is well worth a visit at any time of the year.

Owned for many years by the Acton family who originally planted the arboretum, and taken under the control of the OPW, as a satellite of NBG Glasnevin in 1996, developments have been gently introduced, respecting the history, and often rediscovering original planting ideas. Links with Glasnevin, between the Actons and the Moores, greatly influenced the original planting, so it is fitting there is an even stronger link today. 10 years of very careful clearing of overgrown laurel and *Rhododendron ponticum* have revealed many original plantings, often from the initial introduction to cultivation.

Plants that caught my eye – a long list mind you – included a wonderful in full flower *Campylotropis macrocarpa* - like *Lespedeza* or *Indigofera* but bigger, a glorious thistle – *Cirsium lipskii*, a great display from *Silphium perfoliatum* – described by Seamus as one of his desert island must have plants, and among many Irish Heritage Plants, *Escallonia rubra* 'C F Ball', *E.* 'Alice', and *E.* 'Glasnevin Hybrid'. One of the last trees we looked at was a seldom seen *Taxus baccata fructo-lutea*, a yellow fruited yew, which seems to be resistant to the current fungal threat of *Phytophthora* that is attacking many native yews.

A great day enjoyed by all, the gardens were as always a pleasure to see, especially with Seamus to guide us and recount so much information.

Stephen Butler

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** Leinster Plant Sale

The Annual Plant Sale organised by the Leinster Committee, held again in the Trinity College Botanic Gardens on Dartry Road, was a great success, on a wonderful sunny day. Good crowds meant we were almost completely sold out, which is very good news for the helpers.

Many, many, thanks to all the people, nurseries and individuals, who brought in plants, and bought plants, who carried plants in and out, made tea, put up and down marquees and tables, cleared up afterwards, and for all the extra help people gave when asked – it would not work if we did not have the hands and willing help to do it. We raised approximately €3,500, a remarkable total for a couple of hours selling. Well done everybody!

Stephen Butler

### **October 16<sup>th</sup>** ‘Why not make a Miniature Garden’ with John Dower

With much experience of making miniature gardens for AGS shows in East Lancashire, John flawlessly, and with good humour, led us through the techniques needed, from basic construction, to plant choice. As with all shows there are rules, and a miniature garden has to be no more than 36cm across the widest part of the pot, though I was stunned when he said he would get an average of about 40 plants in that area.

Crucial drainage – with grit or, lighter, poly beads – and a gritty compost are essential, then choice of rock type, tufa, schist, or limestone are good, and then having a good idea for the actual piece of rock – it has to look right, and be about half buried perhaps, to give the correct appearance. Choice of tools was interesting too, going from small spade – a teaspoon, large spade – a dessert spoon. For show work, essentials would be nail scissors for dead heading or dead leafing, and a toothbrush for cleaning some algae or moss off if needed, often it can look well if not dominant.

Plant choice was very wide, from trees, *Ulmus parvifolia* ‘Hokkaido’ – full size it is too small for bonsai, to an array of exquisite alpine flowers. *Globularia repens* ‘Nana’ with wonderful blue flowers, *Daphne rollsdorfii*, *Bolax gummifer* for leaf texture, dwarf *Clematis*, thousands of *Saxifrage* (singling out the annual *S. cymbalaria*), *Campanula petrophila* with very large good blue flowers on such a small plant, *Leontopodium nivale* as the only edelweiss worth growing, *Asperula sintenisii* with masses of small pink flowers, and *Townsendia montana* var. *minima* again with very large flowers on such a small plant, to name a few. Pictures of *Androsace* were real stunners, and some of snow melting from the various miniature gardens in John’s garden were just perfect.

I was surprised by the very vigorous planting regime. If changing the plant selection for a show, new plants, grown in deep trays, would be carefully dug up, soil almost fully stripped off the roots (very tenderly though!), and the roots

then inserted into the small planting hole. With gritty soil the compost does fall off easier, and if well watered in they seem not to notice, and at shows the judges may argue, but if it looks 'established' then that's alright. New show classes for artistic and models caused comment, same divisions as garden gnomes cause. An excellent talk, well delivered, and well received by a large audience.

Stephen Butler

### **November 13<sup>th</sup>** Darren Topps 'Lismore Castle Gardens – Past and Potential'

Joseph Paxton, going back to the 1840's, with some elements almost certainly older, Lismore is steeped in history, Darren guided us through the various areas, the lower garden, with a height champion *Magnolia delavayi*, and a 300 year old plus yew avenue, but after a good spring display from Rhododendrons and Magnolias it has little in flower, though the *Eucryphia* are excellent. The upper garden has long been used for fruit and vegetables, and still is, with an emphasis on cut flower production for display in the castle too. A mix of herbaceous borders and shrubs gives a very colourful summer display.

Times change though, and with very few planting records there is a very free hand in replanting. Overgrown hedges – essential for the framework – are being reduced back to a correct width and height. Weed infested borders are being stripped, dug over, cleaned, and replanted. Box blight has badly affected the garden, but an edge to the borders is essential, so instead of box, chestnut hurdles, or step over apple cordons have been used. The orchard used to be mown grass, but this year it was sown down as a meadow, giving much more floral interest, great increase in insects, and far less work. The garden enjoys a remarkable microclimate, which is taken advantage of with new planting of unusual plants.

A ridge and furrow greenhouse range, a very rare style seldom found now, is due for renovation, hopefully soon, and an area termed the relic garden, with an interesting tree collection, especially conifers, is also due to be opened up. The Devonshire's interest in art is evident too from the various sculptures around the gardens. Forty people braved the wind and rain for the lecture, and their interest was very evident by the amount of questions that Darren fielded. An excellent talk enjoyed by all.

Stephen Butler

## MUNSTER

### November 4<sup>th</sup> 'The Weird and Wonderful World of a Plantaholic'

We had a great turn out for Deborah Begley's talk on her garden. Deborah has a strong following which is a reflection of her engaging and humorous presentation. She began by showing us what she started with all those years ago, a blank canvas which could be either a great thrill or a terrifying challenge. For Deborah it sounded like it was a whole lot of fun with the flexibility of change as her children grew up and needed different things from the garden and also the availability of time and space changed. But what is immediately obvious is that Deborah is above all a lover of plants and she has the knowledge and the artistic eye to put that plant in exactly the right spot.

Over the years she has created a beautiful picture using different plants for colour, texture, structure, but has also been constantly changing the picture as her vision has changed. She took us on a walk around her garden, highlighting her favourite plants of the moment, using plants to lead us to a particular view or the opposite, to stop us in our tracks and see some special plant. Deborah's garden is full of artistically placed features, full of fun and humour. One of the major projects undertaken has got to be her tea house which is the backdrop to some exotic plants like Cannas, Impatiens, ferns, bananas, *Cautleya* and *Ricinus*.

Another feature which stands out is the lovely pergola built by Martin and Deborah told us it hosts her favourite rose, Teasing Georgia. She also has some lovely lilies in good strong groups, *Lilium leichtlinii* being a particularly beautiful one. As she is an avid grower of plants from seed, Deborah has amassed a collection of unusual and difficult to find plants.

Deborah finished by telling us about her next great project which is in hand.... her classroom and plant shop. I think we will all be making a trip down to her early next year to visit her nursery which is guaranteed to excite. A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Janet Edwardes



# Details of upcoming lectures

**JANUARY Thursday 15th 8.00 p.m.** A joint lecture with the Alpine Society at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. **Martin Walsh** *'Chinese and Himalayan plants for the Irish Garden'*

Garden designer, plant collector, and regular expedition member Martin Walsh, well known for his excellent pictures, will share his alpine and woody plant choices for our temperate conditions, particularly for woodland.

**FEBRUARY Tuesday 3rd 8.00 p.m. Shane Lehane** *'Much ado about bees!'* at the SMA Hall, Wilton

Shane Lehane is a relative new-comer to beekeeping with just seven years' experience of the vernacular craft. He is nonetheless hugely enthusiastic and has written extensively on the history and culture of beekeeping. Now the proud custodian of 14 hives, Shane will deliver an informative illustrated lecture outlining the essentials of beekeeping in Ireland. He will detail the intricate and complex life of a bee colony; the nectar and pollen sources available to bees and the challenges facing the modern beekeeper. His talk will include some humorous anecdotes and interesting first-hand observations drawing from his own personal experience of beekeeping.

**FEBRUARY Thursday 12th 8.00 p.m. Paddy Tobin** *'Snowdrops in an Irish Garden'* at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin

IGPS Chairman Paddy Tobin will talk about his experience of growing one of our favourite garden plants.

**MARCH Tuesday 3rd 8.00 p.m. Pat Fitzgerald** *'The Irish Primrose'* at the SMA Hall, Wilton

Kilkenny Horticulturist Pat Fitzgerald established Fitzgerald Nurseries in 1990. In 2006 he stumbled across an article in the IGPS Journal, Moorea Vol. 15, and it was this chance discovery that led to the world being introduced to the distinctive Kennedy Irish Primroses.

Join Pat as he brings us on a journey beginning many decades ago, leading to the present day, demonstrating how a passion for plants and Irish flora can contribute to the economy, while preserving our native floral heritage

**MARCH Thursday 19th 8.00 p.m. at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin** *'In the Shadow of Mighty Kangchenjunga - A botanical expedition to the Bhutan and Sikkim Himalaya'* Seamus O'Brien, Head Gardener at Kilmacurragh NBG, recounts the adventures of an expedition he led to the mountains of Bhutan and Sikkim in November 2014, where he and a party of Irish horticulturists and tree enthusiasts re-traced the routes of early botanical explorers like William Griffith, Joseph Hooker, Frank Ludlow and George Sherriff. The journey took the team from tropical valleys to glaciers and icy mountain passes.

**MARCH Thursday 26th at 7.30 p.m.**

Spring Lecture, (in Association with Antrim Borough Council)

**Paddy Tobin** *'Snowdrops in an Irish Garden'*

Clotworthy House, Antrim Castle Gardens, Randalstown Rd, Antrim BT41 4LH  
IGPS members free. Non-members £3. Refreshments provided.

Paddy Tobin, IGPS chairman and an enthusiastic galanthophile, will explain why he enjoys snowdrops and shows their value as a winter flower. He will take a look at them through the season in the garden from early winter to spring, with a particular emphasis on Irish snowdrops.

**APRIL Tuesday 7th 8.00 p.m. - at the SMA Hall, Wilton**  
*'What Garden Plants Grow Where? A Plant Detective Story'*

**Prof. Peter Jones, Head of Plant Science, U.C.C.**

Author of "The Science of Gardening", Peter shares with us his passion for plants, along with his knowledge and understanding of the hows and whys of successful growing. In his lecture he investigates how characteristics of garden plants offer clues as to the origins of these plants, providing tips on where and how best to grow them.

There will also be a Members' Plant Sale

**APRIL Thursday 9th 8.00 p.m. at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. Tom Christian** *'Saving our Conifers'*

Based at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Tom Christian, Manager of the National Tree Collections of Scotland (which will be one focus of the talk) and the iCONic Conifer Conservation Programme, and active participant in the International Conifer Conservation Programme, with fieldwork in Norway, Poland, Lebanon, Chile, Japan, and Ireland, where many conservation worthy conifers are growing in various gardens.





## *Snippets*

Congratulations to IGPS members **Ann and Bob Kavanagh**, Ros Ban Garden, Raphoe, Co. Donegal whose 1.5-acre garden was awarded the Medal of Distinction for 2014 by the Donegal Garden Trail. Gareth Austin, resident horticulturalist with BBC Radio Foyle described the garden as “a horticultural cavalcade of medicinal plants and horticultural education, a multi-sensory experience”.

More information is available on Ros Ban garden and other Donegal gardens at [www.donegalgardentrail.com](http://www.donegalgardentrail.com).

Congratulations also to **Roz and Victor Henry** of Newtownards, Co. Down, members of the Northern sub-committee, who won the Belfast Telegraph’s *Blooming Marvellous Garden of the Year* award during the summer. Described by garden designer Trevor Edwards, one of the judges, as “a charming, intimate experience filled with many choice shrubs and plants framed within a number of well-structured compartments.”

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February** The GLDA 19<sup>th</sup> International Garden Design Seminar

*‘The New Perennial Movement: Transient Trend or Adaptable Style?’*

**Venue:** The Crowne Plaza Hotel, Northwood Park, Santry, Dublin 9.

**Speakers:**

Thomas Rainer, Landscape Architect (USA);  
Keith Wiley, Wildside Nursery and Garden (UK);  
Sylvie & Patrick Quibel, Le Jardin Plume (France);  
Verney Naylor MGLDA, Garden Designer (Ireland)

Details from: [www.glda.ie](http://www.glda.ie) or [info@glda.ie](mailto:info@glda.ie) Telephone: 01 294 0092

## ***Snowdrop Time:***

**January Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>** and every Friday - Sunday in February 2p.m. - 5p.m.  
Woodville Walled Garden, Kilchreest, Co. Galway.  
See [www.woodvillwalledgarden.com](http://www.woodvillwalledgarden.com) for details

### **February Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>**

Snowdrop Gala & other Spring Treasures  
Ballykealey Manor Hotel, [near Altamont], Ballon, Co Carlow  
059 915 9288 [www.ballykealeymanorhotel.com](http://www.ballykealeymanorhotel.com)

#### **Speakers:**

Jim Jermyn and Matt Bishop

Cost €70 before 23rd January. Cost includes lectures, lunch, admission to bulb sale, guided tour, afternoon tea and cake at Altamont.

For sale – Snowdrops from Avon Bulbs, Matt Bishop, Altamont Plants and Coosheen Plants; Hellebores supplied by Ashwood Nurseries and Harvingtons.

Contact Hester Forde, Coosheen Garden 086 865 4972;

[hesterforde@gmail.com](mailto:hesterforde@gmail.com)

Or Robert Miller Altamont Plants 087 982 2135; [sales@altamontplants.com](mailto:sales@altamontplants.com)

### **February 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Snowdrop Week at Altamont Gardens**

Daily tours with the head gardener at 2.00p.m.

### **February 14<sup>th</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup>** daily from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Burtown House and Gardens, Athy, Co. Kildare

See [www.burtownhouse.ie](http://www.burtownhouse.ie)

### **February 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> Saturday & Sunday at 2.00 p.m.**

See the extensive snowdrop collection, learn about their use in the garden and see how they are propagated and planted. Admission £7.50

Ballyrobert Cottage Garden and Nursery

154 Ballyrobert Road, Ballyclare,

Co. Antrim BT39 9RT

For booking and further information: [www.ballyrobertcottage.com](http://www.ballyrobertcottage.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **April Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> 11.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.**

Fota House Plant and Garden Fair

Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork. €8 donation includes car parking fee.

This event is organised in association with Marymount Hospice New Building Fund. For details see [www.fotahouse.com](http://www.fotahouse.com) or call 021 4815543



## *Ivy Alert by Margaret Casey*



Ivy growing on an Ash tree

Ivy is taking over Ireland! Look around the country side. Every hedgerow appears to have succumbed and any emerging tree is wrapped in its stifling green embrace. In our gardens it creeps up, over and under walls, clings tenaciously to any foothold and secrets itself in any cranny. How many of our choice plants are being quietly strangled by its clutching tentacles. Beware too of the decorative ivy so innocently promoted by the garden centres. It is well camouflaged by its attractive appearance and fancy Latin name but once established will revert to its true thuggish nature. Ecologists are fifth columnists extolling the virtues of ivy as winter food for birds and cosy nesting sites. Naturally this is its master plan, for the same birds are its willing agents carrying out an aerial invasion by bombarding the land with seeds. Be alert – check your garden for infiltrators and be very wary of standing around, it could be creeping up on you.

# *The Irish Garden Plant Society*

**IGPS E-mail:** [igps.ireland@gmail.com](mailto:igps.ireland@gmail.com)

**Northern email address:** [igps.northern@gmail.com](mailto:igps.northern@gmail.com)

**Munster email address:** [igps.munster@gmail.com](mailto:igps.munster@gmail.com)

**Leinster email address:** [igps.leinster@gmail.com](mailto:igps.leinster@gmail.com)

## **Membership Correspondence/Membership Secretary:**

Patrick Quigley,

24 Areema Drive, Dunmurry, Belfast BT 17 OQG

**Email:** [igps.ireland@gmail.com](mailto:igps.ireland@gmail.com)

## **Chairman**

Paddy Tobin

“Cois Abhann”, Riverside, Lower Gracedieu, Waterford

**Telephone:** +353 (0)51 857 955

**Email:** [pmtobin@eircom.net](mailto:pmtobin@eircom.net)

## **Honorary Secretary:**

Maeve Bell,

1 The Drive, Richmond Park, Belfast BT9 5EG

**Telephone:** + 44 28 9066 8435 / +44 7713 739 482

**Email:** [maeve.bell@btinternet.com](mailto:maeve.bell@btinternet.com)

**Website:** [www.irishgardenplantsociety.com](http://www.irishgardenplantsociety.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/IrishGardenPlantSociety>

<https://twitter.com/igpstweets>

**Registered Charity Number CHY 7893**