

Irish Garden Plant Society



Newsletter
Autumn 2018

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Helen Dillon's New Garden

June 2018

Photos: Kirsten Walker

Salvia Patens
'Dot's Delight'

Crocsmia

Agapanthus
'Midnight Blue'



Editorial

Autumn Leaves

An element in every garden which rarely receives the attention it deserves is the foliage, the leaves themselves. Perhaps only at this time of year, as Autumn colours the trees and shrubs, do we turn our admiring gaze on the leaves, just as we are about to lose them. Of course, there are superb 'architectural' plants with highly distinguished leaves which are generally admired: a prime example would be Skunk Cabbage (*Gunnera manicata*) which cannot fail to attract attention. [Privately I mistranslate the 'manicata' as 'manic gunnera'.] But the general leaves which form the backdrop of every garden are rarely the subject of much consideration.

Therefore I was delighted to find a book entirely about leaves: it is called *Nature's Fabric* by David Lee, an American biologist, and the subtitle of the book indicates the breadth of his engagement with what might seem at first a rather meagre subject. The subtitle is 'Leaves in Science and Culture' and I found it most compelling; indeed it has refreshed my view of the whole garden. This summer has been so unusual, with late snow and 'the Beast from the East', followed by the heat wave and drought which is still affecting much of the country, that I have been constantly aware of how the plants are faring from the state of their leaves. A walk in a forest this summer would have demonstrated an unusual amount of summer leaf-drop; this was especially noticeable I found among the native hollies and invasive laurels which have made crackling carpets underfoot. Of course, other native trees such as the pioneer birches and hazels dropped a lot of leaf as well, but they have sprung back again with fresh growth once the temperatures declined and a little moisture was available (largely mist, in this part of the world).

I wonder whether the autumn colours will be especially fine this year? Some beeches are already turning a little yellow, and the Japanese maples in many gardens seem to be brightening their reds and golds. The biological processes which are expressed in the beautiful effects of autumn now seem to me to be at least as interesting as the visible changes themselves. Reading Lee's book has brought many questions into focus: the sizes and shapes of leaves; the economy by which deciduous plants flourish by recycling their leaves; the added

value of this process to the various creatures which live in the soil and in turn increase its fertility for the plants - in short, the whole amazing ecosystem. With your indulgence, I will outline a few of the book's chapters as I think that they are particularly interesting to any gardener or indeed anyone who just really likes plants.

The reason why I was so eager to read this book, having read a review, is simply that I had no clear idea of what photosynthesis could possibly be. I must confess to no knowledge of chemistry or biology, and very little knowledge of any scientific discipline, as my education was strictly Arts. But I don't really like leaving things as mysteries, and the way in which plants actually provide for all life on this planet by means of photosynthesis was something which I longed to understand. I am delighted to report that Lee's book has clarified this for me, and that the process seems even more extraordinary now that it is explained. The research he reports comes from recent discoveries in the field, but he also takes in a historical perspective. I was delighted to find this quotation from Goethe (1787): 'All is leaf'.

Although the fall of deciduous leaves is the most dramatic change, leaves actually pass through an entire 'life-cycle' from bud to senescence, during which they perform many functions which supply the rest of us with almost everything we need. The drought this summer has brought the need to recycle water sharply to mind: Lee points out that 'leaves are the surface for the movement of water into the atmosphere', almost pumping the water around the planet. The wholesale destruction of forest, in history and in the present, is a major factor in climate change. Plant biomass is the 'most abundant protein on our planet, and chlorophyll the most abundant pigment.' In short, the 'Green Machine' which is the leaf, working via photosynthesis, provides the basics. As we start to clear up the fallen leaves and cut down some of the browned perennials in the garden, perhaps it is useful to think that these discarded things are part of what Lee calls 'a highly co-ordinated breakdown of organelles within cells, releasing nutrients (particularly nitrogen and phosphorus) for resorption by the parent plant.' [I had to look up 'organelle', which is 'a specialized structure within a living cell.']

After these chapters, Lee explores topics which are more likely to interest gardeners, such as the shapes and sizes of leaves. Although it is true that larger leaves frequently occur in shade, this is not a rule:

larger leaves have all sorts of qualities which need to be taken into account before the payoff from the larger surface area is confirmed. But these big leaves create 'a layer of still air on the surface' and this actually restricts the exchange of gases which is also cooling. Large leaves may heat up so much that photosynthesis is reduced. Furthermore, larger leaves require stronger structures and 'thus the construction costs of larger leaves are actually greater per unit area.' These are considerations one might bring to bear when planning where to place those huge-leafed 'architectural leaf plants' which create visual diversity and pleasure in a garden. In contrast, different efficiencies constrain the small leaves as well, in drier climates or at higher altitudes. Similar analysis is given of the shapes and edges of leaves, which I had only considered until now as being useful for plant identification. Even at that, I am all too often foxed: I came across a toothed edge species of *epimedium* recently. Unfortunately the gardener could not tell me its name, but at least I can now think about it: this form, according to Lee, could bring the advantage (over rounded/entire leaf types) of increasing the rate of photosynthesis in the early spring. The garden was high up in the Dublin mountains, and so maybe this particular *epimedium* was especially happy there.

Following this, there is a chapter on leaf Surfaces which I found absolutely fascinating, all the more so because I now had some notion of how a leaf actually works. There seem to be so many special functions, for example, for hairy leaves: the hairs may help to keep the leaf cool; or overnight to insulate it against a chill; they may protect the leaf from harmful insects, but in some cases, they may actually bring beneficial insects to the plant. An example would be the carder bees which like to harvest the hairs of *Stachys lanata* for nesting material. At the same time, they can pick up pollen and nectar for provisioning the nest - a very neat arrangement. There is also the question of how rainwater is either shed from a leaf, or alternatively how it is retained. Apparently the 'lotus effect' noted by Wilhelm Barthlott in 1997 demonstrated how the exact structure of the lotus leaf enables the plant to shed water, and at the same time to clean its surface - an effect called 'super-hydrophoby' which has led to patents for super water-shedding paints. There is also recent research into 'slippery liquid-infused porous structures' (to reduce wear and tear from friction) which is based on the study of pitcher plant hairs.

Hairs on leaves can also give UV protection by reflecting light, and in the case of the hairs on nettles, there is a dual effect, as the hairs deter most of us but serve as a kind of protection for the butterflies which choose to lay their eggs on nettles, including the Red Admiral, the Small Tortoiseshell, the Comma, and the Peacock. Clearly the fact that the emerging caterpillars will eat the leaves does not preclude this relationship. Equally fascinating is the discussion about the way in which variegated colour pattern in leaves is achieved, in the case of *Begonia maculata*: the light is not reflected from the immediate surface, but 'at the junction between the epidermal cells and the palisade layer immediately beneath... penetrating light is reflected back towards the surface before it encounters chlorophyll pigments and produces a silver colour.' So we see a beautiful silver pattern on the leaves.

There is discussion of leaves as food, as providing homes for all sorts of creatures, and as material for 'Design, Fakery, and Art'. But for me the most significant gain I took from this book was a strongly enhanced appreciation of the importance of Leaves in the whole ecology of the garden. Those patches of bare scarified earth which surrounded the bedding plants in the parks of my childhood, seem now to have been the opposite of gardens. As the leaves fall this Autumn, I suggest the following thought from David Lee's chapter on 'Colour':

"The difficulty of explaining the colour of autumn leaves, whether a physiological and/or a biological one, is that the leaves are nearing the end of their life spans. The colour comes just before they fall to the ground and decompose. It makes no sense for the production of an elaborate protection mechanism to be established just before the death of the leaves. However, if the colour improves the function of the tree the following spring, then such a mechanism would make sense..." Two hypotheses are proposed; firstly the 'honest warning' of red colour which could deter harmful infestations over-winter; secondly the protection of the subtle processes of senescence in the leaf itself, by reflecting the UV light. I wonder how many more hypotheses might fit the bill of evolutionary advantage in the colours of the Autumn leaves?

[David Lee, *Nature's Fabric, Leaves in Science and Culture*, 2017]

Chairman's Notes

The summer was rather chaotic for me and if I had not attended Mike Snowden's talk on Ashfield House I probably would have convinced myself I was too busy and the journey too long to visit the garden in August. The garden was inspirational and the hospitality offered by owners Mick and Therese Bailey was unsurpassed with some members not leaving until well into the evening. I got to thinking that the expression 'you don't know what you're missing' would have been very apt. So I hope you read the enclosed event list and maybe consider attending events in other regions, as it may be ... you really don't know what you are missing.



In the last *Newsletter* I was jubilant in having had volunteers coming forward at the AGM to fill committee vacancies and take on tasks. It was suggested to me later that I may have given the impression that we now had all the help we needed. Far from it, we will always accept help when offered and we have still plenty of work in hand; so for anyone who would like to get more involved, you will be most welcome. It is certainly noticeable the difference the new volunteers and committee members have made already.

Now into autumn I expect many of you will be dividing or lifting plants. I would like to appeal to members, particularly our keen propagators, to consider potting up a few plants for the regional plant sales. Yes, the extra plants bring in a little more revenue but equally, or possibly, more importantly, there is always something different that turns up including that rarity that sets the volunteers off on a search through the reference books. So common or rare, we would love to get more of your plants and Irish cultivars are always in demand. If not plants, maybe you could save some seeds and post them (clearly labelled) to Debbie Bailey for the seed distribution.

Regards

Billy McCone

Commemorating Armistice Day

National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh, Co. Wicklow

Seamus O'Brien



The Verdun Oak (*Quercus petraea*) Kew Gardens, 2012 [photo: Seamus O'Brien]

November 11th 2018 marks one hundred years since Armistice Day when a hard-won peace reigned over Europe. By the time soldiers were returning to Ireland, almost 50,000 of their fellow countrymen lay buried in distant lands. Many years later, Phyllis, Lady Moore, wife of Sir Frederick Moore, Keeper of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, sadly related that after the Great War, 'many an Irish demesne gate had closed, never to open again.' It was a time of shocking death duties and with staggering changes of land ownership, as a result of so many casualties. The war meant the loss of an entire generation of young men, many of whom were professional gardeners or owners of large gardens and demesnes.

The three major botanic gardens of Great Britain and Ireland, Edinburgh, Glasnevin and Kew, all suffered badly. It's said that material

coming into this renowned trio, from the great plant hunters of the time, fared badly because many of their most skilled staff had been lost on the European battlefields. The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, named a number of newly described species after their war dead, while at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the garden's war dead are honoured on commemorative plaques in the Temple of Arethusa near the Victoria Gate.

No such memorial exists at Glasnevin, though the Kew plaque carries the name of Private Charles Frederick Ball, of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers (who had their headquarters in Naas, Co. Kildare). C. F. Ball was Glasnevin's Assistant Keeper and had formerly worked at Kew. He was killed at Gallipoli in September 1915, aged just 36, and had apparently collected seeds of various plants, including Gallipoli oaks for Kew and Glasnevin during his time there. He was one of three staff members never to make it back to Glasnevin.

The Temple of Arethusa, designed as a folly for Princess Augusta by Sir William Chambers in 1758, overlooks Kew's iconic Great Palm House and pond, and until recently, one of the garden's most famous trees grew on the Victoria Gate side of the pond, by a pair of Chinese lion dogs.

The tree in question was a sessile oak, *Quercus petraea*, grown from an acorn collected on the muddy battlefields of Verdun, France in the autumn of 1916. One of the longest battles of WW1, lasting from February to December 1916, it also devastated massive swathes of Verdun's oak and chestnut forests. It is hard to think of so many young horticulturists and plant enthusiasts forced into such ferocious fighting, yet this un-named soldier found the time to gather acorns from beyond the trenches and send them to Kew where a sapling was planted in a prominent spot by the Great Palm House in January 1919. It was sad then, when this notable tree was hit by the severe St Jude's Day storm that hit the south of England in October 2013 and was so badly damaged that it needed removal just before the Armistice Day remembrances for that year. By chance Thomas Pakenham, on a visit to Kew, had gathered acorns from the tree, before its sudden demise, and raised several at Tullynally Castle in Co. Westmeath. After a visit there a number of years ago, I left with one of Thomas's young seedlings and so the progeny of Kew's historic Verdun oak persists in

a number of Irish gardens. The Tullynally seedling is now almost 2 m tall here at Kilmacurragh and thriving.

As a mark of respect to those Irishmen who died in the Great War, particularly those who were gardeners, a gathering will take place at Kilmacurragh at 11 am on November 11th 2018, when on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, Thomas Pakenham will plant the Verdun oak seedling on the 18th century Pond Vista, by the ruins of the drawing room of Kilmacurragh House, which saw two consecutive owners die in 1915 and 1916, alongside several tenants and gardeners from the estate.

The event will be attended by the principal Irish gardening and arboricultural societies; the Irish Garden Plant Society, the Irish Tree Society, the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland, among others.

November 11th 2018 at 11 am. National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh. Meet in visitor car park at 10.45 am.



Seamus O'Brien holding *Escallonia* C.F. Ball, at the ceremony in the Memorial Gardens in Dublin, 2016. [Photo: IGPS library]

IGPS Farewell Visit to the Zoo with Stephen Butler

23rd June 2018

The sun shone both literally and metaphorically on this special trip, which was Stephen Butler's Farewell IGPS tour of the Dublin Zoo, where he has worked for more than thirty years. The transformation which his work has made to the Zoo is spectacular; no longer does one encounter animals in cages, staring at the people staring at them. That memory of the old zoo is quite wiped out by the superb landscaping and planting, making 'habitats' for the animals. It also creates visual excitement for the crowds of people who see the animals relaxing around their grounds, like Falstaff 'taking mine ease at mine inn'. The sight of the gorillas lazing, one huge male resting his head on his crooked arm for all the world like a gentleman of leisure, was entrancing. The June heat wave clearly suited many of the inhabitants of the Zoo, and made our visit entirely memorable.

But of course, it was the plants which we came to see. Stephen explained so many details about the particular plants chosen: some to resemble exotic species which would not survive in our climate; others entirely familiar but mixed with unusual plants, suddenly given extraordinariness; and some which quite simply were not edible by the animals. It was fascinating to hear how the many different demands of the Zoo planting had been met. Stephen took us first into the Bamboo forest which created a most wonderful atmosphere of jungle. He explained that they chose many different types of bamboo, thereby ensuring that, when one flowered and died, the others would continue to provide the green leafy tunnel over the path.

The fences were a point of interest in themselves: Stephen pointed out that, in contrast with the old-fashioned visible wire fences which simply made a boring barrier between the animals and the visitors, he had planted densely so that the fences in many places were completely concealed by foliage. A star performer he pointed out was the lovely *Lonicera henryi* 'Copper Beauty' which was bred by Cor van Gelderen, who



visited Leinster IGPS earlier in the year. This beautiful plant has coppery leaves and is just as rampant as you would expect a honeysuckle to be. Although Stephen didn't mention it, I felt it was specially chosen as an Irish Heritage subject as well, named after Augustine Henry.

The effect of the dense planting at the fences was to make visitors peer into the animals' realm; you could imagine that you were on safari, not disturbing them in their home. Stephen spoke about the need for the animals, primates particularly, to be interested, to use their minds in fact; the planting supported this. For example, the gorillas would carefully pick the berries off *berberis* and *pyracantha*, minding the prickles. This meant that they were not just sitting around, bored, waiting for the keepers to feed them. It was illuminating to realize that all the animals would try almost any plant which they could reach. The elephants, for instance, would strip out plants in no time, once they could reach them with their trunks. Interestingly, one plant which seemed able to take this punishment was the old nuisance plant, *Petasites hybridus* (our common Butterbur), its big leaves making a suitably jungly-looking patch where nothing else managed to survive.

All round the paths there were superb clumps of *Libertia* spp. again a tough subject which almost no animal would munch up. Stephen was almost grieved at the state of these plants, though, following the late cold winter: instead of the usual display of flowers, there were just the spear-like leaves, and many of those were browned by the late chill. Even so, they formed a splendid dense foliar backdrop



Libertia butleri 'Amazing Grace' [Photo Stephen Butler, PGG website]

for viewing. We had to remind Stephen to point out to us the special *Libertia* which was named after him, *L. butleri*, and which his characteristic modesty was all too eager to brush over. Instead, he was concerned that the abundant *Libertias* of all spp were not looking their best, after the appalling snow in April, and the equally bizarre heat and drought which we were currently experiencing.

The Zoo planting was exciting in itself, with many plants which are unusual mixed with some very well-known species. With Stephen as guide, the tour became a walk of discovery, and he was always willing to pause and tell you their names and the habits - and the edible or not quality - of so many different plants. In fact, the Zoo animals must have been feeling their noses distinctly out of joint, with this large group taking so little notice of them, but just studying leaves, and flowers, and exotic vistas. The only time we really paused to take proper notice of animals was when we came to the Orang-utans: their enclosure possessed uniquely non-vegetable trees! These bare trunks were in fact constructed out of concrete, so that the high cables for the Orangs to climb would be supported. These animals, which had lived far too long in much more confined conditions, delighted in their new, airborne freedom. The story was a complete revelation about the real value of conservation zoos, like Dublin: the welfare and happiness of the animals is paramount.

Stephen was presented with a leather-bound copy of *A Heritage of Beauty*, as a token of our huge appreciation of the wonderful changes he has achieved in the Zoo during his long period of service. Anyone who remembers visiting the Dublin Zoo back in the 1970s will understand the complete - indeed 'root and branch' - reform which he has directed and accomplished. His dedication, and his refusal to be deterred by the insatiable appetites of the animals, are quite simply inspiring.



Worth a Read

Paddy Tobin

John Brookes: *A Landscape Legacy*

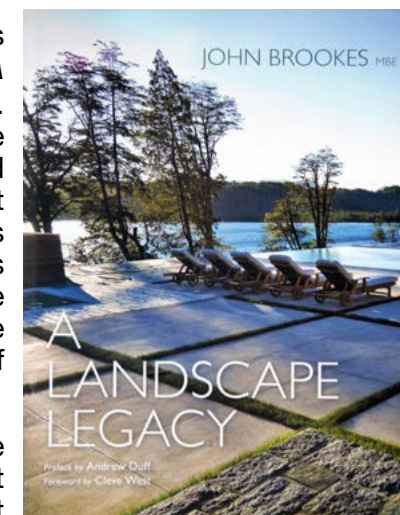
John Brookes made garden designers of us all and his final book, *A Landscape Legacy*, is to be treasured. There have been other books over the years, a great legacy of gardens, and we are most fortunate that he has, at the very end of his life, written this present volume which he describes as "a scrapbook of things which have caught my eye and with which I have made a connection – a retrospective of my work."

It was John Brookes who coined the phrase 'Room Outside', a perfect phrase to capture his philosophy that the garden was for people, that it was for use, that it should be practical and a benefit as much as a joy to those who used it. More than any other garden designer, he was a designer for the people.

The earlier chapters give an insight into his development as a garden/landscape designer from his early influences to the early learning stages of his career on to journalism, teaching and Chelsea appearances. A substantial portion of the book reviews his own work, from early small private gardens and large public gardens, his engagement with modernism, time in Iran and India, projects in America, Canada, Japan and Russia and back to his home garden at Denmans which gets extensive coverage in his final chapter.

It is a delightful and insightful book and as important in the literature of garden design as his monumental 'Room Outside'.

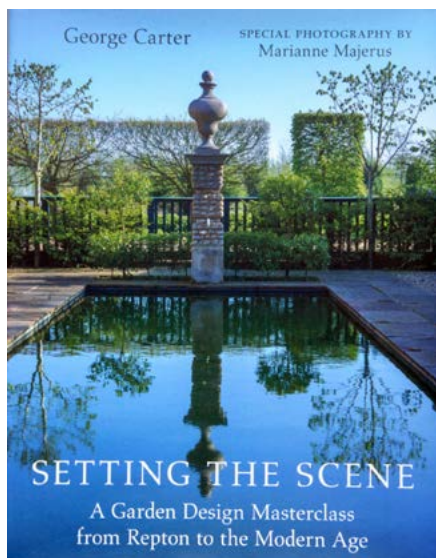
[John Brookes, *A landscape Legacy*, Pimpernel Press, 2018, Hardback, 280 pages, £40, ISBN: 978-1-910258-93-4]



George Carter: *Setting the Scene: A Garden Design Masterclass from Repton to the Modern Age*

Humphrey Repton, one of the greatest landscape designers of the world, died in 1818, yet George Carter shows that his thoughts on gardens and design are as pertinent, relevant and applicable today as when he was alive.

George Carter has had a very successful career in garden design, both at home in the United Kingdom and around the world. He has won eight Gold Medals at the Chelsea Flower Show and has written two very well received books, *Garden Space* and *Garden Magic*.



This book is almost a textbook of garden design with chapters organised under various headings – Character, Situation, The Flower Garden, Water in the Garden, Ornament, Buildings, etc. with each chapter introduced with a quotation from Humphrey Repton and the theme then illustrated through gardens the author has created himself.

It is remarkable how perfectly applicable Humphrey Repton's thoughts are even today and the author elucidates how he has worked to those theories of design, and illustrates how he has worked through the development of the gardens he discusses from initial assessment to the finished project.

This is a book which the student of garden design and the lover of gardens will enjoy. It is well written and, with photography from Marianne Majerus, perfectly illustrated as one would expect.

[George Carter, *Setting the Scene*, Pimpernel Press, London, 2018, Hardback, 208 pages, £50, ISBN: 978-1-910258-59-0]

Tim Richardson: *You Should Have Been Here Last Week*

If ever there was a gardening book to be carried in the glove compartment, to be permanently in the handbag, to always find a place in your holiday luggage, to be at the bedside, the bath side or even to sit beside the throne, it is Tim Richardson's *You Should Have Been Here Last Week*. I never return to read a book a second time – yes, I refer back to certain books again and again but never a cover to cover read – but this is one I have read again and enjoyed it all the more on the second reading. It was published in hardback and has recently been released in paperback, an indication of its popularity.

Tim Richardson is an opinionated writer, a critical writer, an acerbic writer, a contentious writer but, and it is this which raises his writings above mere snide or sarcastic comment, he is a deeply informed, educated, honest and thoughtful writer and, very importantly to the reader, he is wonderfully entertaining. The articles are short, a collection of short articles previously published, mainly in *The Garden Design Journal*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Financial Times*, and are ideal for a short read here and there – the doctor's waiting room, the bus stop and the like – but one article is never enough and one finds oneself reading on and on, still giggling or thinking of previous articles. They are best enjoyed in small portions; but who stops after just one chocolate liqueur!

[Tim Richardson, *You Should Have Been Here Last Week – Sharp Cuttings From A Garden Writer*, Pimpernel Press, London, 2018, Paperback, 203 pages, £9.99, ISBN: 978-1-910258-86-6]



A Garden in Autumn

Adrian Walsh

I moved to this Belfast city garden (which has quite a nice 1920s house attached) about thirteen years ago.

It is situated in South Belfast and on the heavy clay soil that once provided the raw material for the Laganvale brick company. The back garden is about 20 metres long by 13 metres wide and is south-east facing with a back boundary of mature trees comprising two rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and a *Cotoneaster* 'Cornubia'. The garden is formal in layout, and what used to be a large lawn has been turned into a gridwork of square and rectangular beds, containing mixed planting in a naturalistic style, transected by straight grass paths.

Although the garden is a city garden, this has not stopped me from adding more trees. A Katsura tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), a multi stemmed white birch (*Betula utitis* var. *jacquemontii*), a *Cercis Canadensis* 'Forest Pansy', a Chinese red birch (*Betula albosinensis*) in a large pot, and a *Eucryphia x Nymanensis* 'Nymansay' have all been added in addition to several *Aralia echinocaulis*. A range of shrubs has also been incorporated; lots of topiary *buxus*, *Hydrangea aspera* *Villosa* and the witch hazel *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Pallida', amongst others. A wide range of perennials (both hardy and tender), grasses, bulbs (spring and autumn) and annuals accompany these.



There is something to enjoy all year round but I have been tasked with describing the garden in autumn. Given the mid-summer heat together with a three week hosepipe ban from late June to mid-July in Northern

Ireland, I thought it best to review the autumn garden in terms of how this has affected it.

Save for the *Betula albosinensis* in the pot, which required twice daily watering, the trees have survived without watering throughout the summer. The *Eucryphia* shed leaves in late June and July but then proceeded to flower at its most prolific in August. The leaves of the *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* have yet to colour up as I write in early September, but appear unaffected by the drought.

Amongst the late summer and autumn flowering border plants, salvias, dahlias, cannas, heleniums, rudbeckias, persicarias, crocosmias, sedums and asters are all performing better than usual and only some required watering with a can during the drought.

Some of the star performers at the minute include single flowered dahlias grown from seed and flowering in shades of orange, deep velvety reds and ecclesiastical purple, *Salvia curviflora* in hot magenta pink, *Salvia x jamensis* 'Violette de Loire' with intense velvety violet flowers, *Salvia* 'Amistad' with its purple flowers and black calyces, *Rudbeckia laciniata* 'Autumn Sun' with clear yellow flowers on tall (180cm) stems, *Helenium* 'Sahin's Early Flowerer', *Canna* 'Tropicana Black' (just about to flower but the dark foliage alone creates drama) and *Aster x frikartii* 'Monch' (although this has been much later in flower with me this year).

Eupatorium purpureum is flowering as well as ever but it is a good 40cm shorter than usual (it usually flowers at 200 cm) and required two or three soakings with a watering can during the drought when it started to wilt. *Hesperantha coccinea* 'Major' is about to flower and required no watering.

Amongst the grasses, the feather reed grass, *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' is at its best ever. In a usual moist summer here, the growth is soft and many stalks can be broken in two by wind and rain. This year, with the drought, the stands of grass are standing to attention in autumn as they should be. It was the opposite story with some *Deschampsia cespitosa*, a grass that forms a small clump of mainly evergreen foliage with many very fine stems (to 120 cm tall) with seed heads that colour to a light biscuit shade in late summer and autumn. Usually these seed heads stand throughout the autumn and winter undisturbed by gales or rain. This summer, however, some of

the *Deschampsia cespitosa* gave up, unable to cope with the drought and heat. The stems dried out in July, rather than autumn, before collapsing out from the centre like the spokes of a wheel when rain finally came. Their softening effect is absent from some of the beds this autumn.

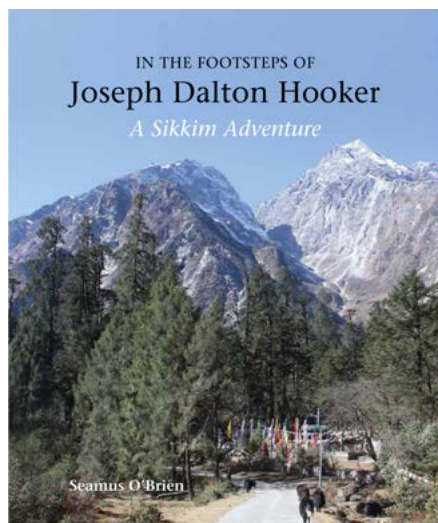
Amongst the annuals, *Tithonia* 'Torchlight' was the star performer. Normally it only starts to flower in September here but it has been flowering well since July and is a favourite of hoverflies. It did require nightly watering during the drought as the young plants were only planted out in early June.

At this point in time, the flowers of the autumn crocus, *Colchicum* 'The Giant' are just coming into flower and smothering the ground at the foot of the multi stemmed white birch. The mauve-pink flowers suit the coolness of the white birch stems and provide a contrast to the riot of strong oranges, reds, purples and yellows in the rest of the garden. An autumn garden is a joy.

IGPS Book Launch

In The Footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker

by Seamus O'Brien [An Extract from Kew Publications]



The Irish Garden Plant Society are delighted to launch Seamus O'Brien's second book, *In The Footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker*.

The book will be launched in Dublin, Cork and Antrim. At each venue Seamus will be presenting a talk on his expedition to the eastern Himalayan region of Sikkim.

Seamus O'Brien, IGPS member, is one of Ireland's best-known plantsmen and has travelled extensively across the world to study plants in their native habitats. After several expeditions to the Himalaya Seamus began to record the plant hunting adventures of Hooker.

In 1847 Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911) embarked on an expedition to Sikkim in the eastern Himalaya, a region where he would discover a huge number of botanical treasures previously unknown to the West. A scientist of breath-taking ability, Hooker would go on to become one of the greatest botanists and explorers of the 19th century and is perhaps the greatest of the lauded Directors of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

In this fascinating travelogue, Seamus retraces Hooker's footsteps in Sikkim, bringing alive the adventure, dangers and discoveries that Hooker and his companions experienced in the mid-19th century. Seamus describes how his drive for this expedition came from a yearning to see in the wild the plant discoveries made famous by Hooker, who described the region as 'a perfect microcosm of the Himalaya.' Following in Hooker's footsteps, he describes how these places compare to the descriptions made by Hooker 170 years previously, and how in many ways how little Sikkim has changed over the course of time.

Hooker was a highly skilled geographer and cartographer, and in Sikkim he created the first comprehensive map of the kingdom, highlighting mountain passes that would be of enormous strategic value in the decades to come. Some of these maps are reproduced in the book along with Hooker's original sketches of the region and plants, as well as illustrated throughout with stunning photographs.

The book also features heavily on both Sir William, and Sir Joseph Hooker's contacts in Ireland, their relationship with notable Irish botanists like William Henry Harvey and David Moore for example, and exactly where Joseph Hooker's Sikkim seeds and seedlings were sent to in Ireland, besides the botanic gardens in Belfast and Dublin. Many of these are still in our gardens and important parts of our Irish garden plant heritage One example is *Rhododendron arboreum* 'Fernhill Silver' and of course Hooker's Rhododendrons still grow there and at Kilmacurragh.

A chapter on 'The Irish in India,' explores the role they played in introducing plants from India, and this includes figures like Edward Madden, M. Pakenham Edgeworth, Harry Corbyn Levinge and a host of other figures who, as civil servants and soldiers in India, sent seeds and living plants back to Ireland. It also highlights the many Irish Viceroy's in India who embellished their Irish gardens with Indian plants, and high ranking Irish Directors at the court of the British East India Company who did likewise.

This is a wonderful celebration of one of the greatest adventures by one of history's greatest scientists, and ideal for anyone with an interest in the flora and history of the region.

Seamus describes his travels:

Over the course of four major expeditions to the Sikkim Himalaya, between 2012 and 2015, I completely re-traced the routes taken by the great Victorian botanist, Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911). Our travels brought us from the former Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta (where there is still a 'Hooker Walk'), to the verdant tea plantations surrounding the old British hill station at Darjeeling.



Beyond there, the course of our travels took us to some of the most remote corners of the eastern Himalaya, most memorably to the Goecha La, where, at 16,200 feet (4,940 meters) we stood within 3 miles of the great south-eastern, snow-clad flank of Kangchenjunga, the third tallest peak on the planet.

While based in Sikkim between 1847 to 1850, Joseph Hooker, a talented and prolific artist, sketched hundreds of landscape scenes, plants and buildings, which we were able to track-down and match and record with modern-day photographs. In some cases we found the very trees he had sketched, most notably several Kashmir cypresses by Buddhist temples in North Sikkim.

Hooker is of course famous for the staggering number of botanical discoveries he made in what was then a tiny independent kingdom, especially *Rhododendron* species, and he was to double the number

of species then in cultivation through the enormous seed lots he sent to his father, Sir William Hooker, then Director of the Royal (Botanic) Gardens at Kew. Many of his rhododendrons still flourish at Kilmacurragh to this day.

What he is lesser known-for are his alpine garden plants, like the stunning forget-me-not relative, *Chionocharis hookeri*, or the wonderful ink-blue *Meconopsis horridula*, for example, classic alpine found by him beneath the glaciers of North Sikkim. These, and many other alpine plants, feature prominently in the book.

The book will be launched at three venues:

The selling price of the book will be £40 or approx. €45. **ONLY** for the launch, members can buy the book at £30 or €32. An opportunity to buy a great Christmas present or just treat yourself to a fabulous book. For those who bought Seamus's first book, *In the Footsteps of Augustine Henry* (incidentally selling as high as £95 on Amazon) this would make a perfect companion.

N.B Dublin and Cork launches:

Price includes a signed copy of the book and admission to the talk. Please see the Eventbrite link on the IGPS website for full details. Books can be held for collection at other forthcoming events.

Dublin: Friday 12th October, 2018

National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, 7pm
 Launching the book will be Patricia Butler, Art curator and author of *Irish Botanical Illustrators & Flower Painters*
 IGPS members should arrive between 6.30 and 6.55 pm and enter the door nearest the main gate. Booking is **ESSENTIAL** on Eventbrite.

Cork

Saturday October 20th at 2pm, Fota House, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork.

Antrim

Thurs 25th October 2018 at 7.30pm
 Antrim Old Courthouse
 Market Square, Antrim, BT41 4AW

Admission to members is free. Signed copies will be available to buy on the night.

Around the Regions

Northern Region

Garden Visit to Ashfield House: report by Barbara Kelso

On Saturday 4th August, members of the IGPS visited the fabulous garden at Ashfield House, Beauparc, Co. Meath, home of Michael and Teresa Bailey. This spectacular Georgian house, with 170 acres of garden and surrounding farmland, dates back to the 1840s.

The large country estate garden, has been beautifully restored over the past 10 years by IGPS members, Mike Snowden and Angela Jupe. Mike, former Head Gardener at the National Trust Rowallane Gardens, Saintfield, was our guide to areas in the garden he had restored, including the magnificent walled garden. Apart from the Bramley apple, all of the apples trees he had selected were old Irish Heritage varieties and he had them perfectly espalier trained along the horizontal supports. The pleached hornbeam trees, trained from young whips by Mike, were wonderfully perfect. In the centre of the garden was a magnificent metal arbour constructed by local craftsmen, 7 metres across and 5 metres high. A superb kitchen garden supplied the house with bountiful fruit and vegetables, many of which we would later sample at lunch. Garden designer, Angela Jupe, from Bellefield House, Birr, shared her experience of the restoration of the heritage buildings and gardens. Angela led us to parts the garden which she had developed, including a beautiful woodland walk with wonderful planting in dappled shade and some intriguing sculptures.

A neatly clipped yew hedge enclosed another part of the garden, with some magnificent trees and a border containing a superb planting of *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Vanille Fraise'. After the tours, Michael and Teresa Bailey very kindly treated us to lunch within the walled garden, where a succulent hog roast on a spit was served with delicious salads, along with refreshing drinks.



Many thanks to Mike and Angela for the wonderful guided tour and to Michael and Teresa for your very kind hospitality.

Castle Dobbs: Report by Maeve Bell

"Walking through the small arched door in the wall, we felt we had entered a secret garden. Then we were completely enveloped by the scent of roses," said Yvonne Penpraze summing up her reactions to the walled garden at Castle Dobbs, near Carrickfergus, which we visited on a dazzling summer day at the end of June.

Barbara Kelso sets the context of this very private and personal garden. "The present layout surrounding the mid-18th century Palladian mansion which overlooks Belfast Lough, takes the form of a landscape park with a lake, bridge and cascade. There are many fine mature trees in the parkland and the informal walks along a glen. Our visit, however, concentrated on the large walled garden to the west of the house which mixes a fabulous rose garden, wonderful herbaceous borders, ancient walls festooned with climbers and espaliered fruit trees, and a very productive vegetable garden."

For some, the highlights were individual plants such as *Lobelia tupa*, a *Hoheria* covered in white blossom, the flower spike of *Cardiocrinum giganteum* standing tall among the hostas and ferns crowding the base of a grey stone wall, a clump of bright blue *Amsonia*, an unusual peachy-coloured dwarf *Dierama* and numerous *Penstemon*, iris and roses. Others were smitten by the colour combinations ranging from the pairing of a single white peony, possibly *P.* 'White Wings', with an exceptionally pale icy-blue *Eryngium*, a deep blue clematis about to burst into flower on an obelisk surrounded by matching delphiniums, and the emerging flower heads of the pink form of *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle' picking



up the warm tones of one of the many roses beside it. Several of our members were envious of the vegetables especially the huge, mature asparagus bed, while anyone who peeked into the potting shed was entranced to see the orderly rows of forks and spades hanging on the wall below an artistic arrangement of venerable sieves.

It is hard to believe that our hostess, Carola Dobbs, looks after the garden without outside

help although her son takes charge of the vegetables; she shrugs aside any suggestion that she might need help saying that she enjoys being able to have it to herself. We were lucky to be invited to share a little bit of personal paradise created by one very energetic, talented lady.



Munster Region

Visit to Curraghmore House: report by Janet Edwardes

On a lovely sunny Saturday recently a group of the Cork members of the IGPS met at Curraghmore House, near Portlaw in County Waterford for a visit and lunch to this lovely place. We were greeted by Eibhlin who was to prove to be a very informative and welcoming tour guide. Our tour started at the breathtakingly lovely courtyard entrance which was indicative of the grandeur of the house itself. It was framed by a row of beautiful buildings on either side which led us up to the entrance to the house itself. Before we entered the house, Eibhlin gave us a brief history of the family name and how it had evolved over the centuries and also explained that the house had been occupied by the same family over several hundreds of years so it was unusual in having so many generations of the same family in continuity down through all those years. And of course the most important thing to remember is

that despite its grandeur, it is primarily a much loved and lived in family home. So we continued on into the reception area of the house which had been formerly the castle section of the house. We were surrounded by items which gave us an insight into the colourful activities of the family - hunting, evidence of large game which had been brought back from foreign places, and horsemanship. Eibhlin had already told us how the house was saved from burning during the time of the troubles in Ireland. Due to a reflection of the moon on the courtyard of a crucifix which was part of the family crest mounted on the top of the tower which was seen by the men who had come up to set fire to the house, they thought the family was Catholic and so left without carrying out their intended destruction.

As we went into the inner hallway, we were able to see portraits of many generations of the family on the walls. What was striking is that so many of the family had died in tragic circumstances, often connected to riding accidents as the sons of the family were keen horsemen. What was also unusual was that at one time the whole estate was inherited by a woman, Catherine, Countess of Tyrone, thus breaking with tradition that it went to a male heir.

There were many examples of fine plasterwork on the ceilings by James Wyatt and also unusual paint effects and although our tour guide told us the house had not been painted since it was first decorated, this very intricate work was in very good condition. We also saw a vast collection of pottery and china, one set which was a gift from the Prince of Wales for the wedding of one of the family. The dining room table is used regularly for dinner parties and afternoon teas when there are visitors to the house. We then headed out into the garden through a window which is an unusual feature and were brought up to see the shell house which was made in less than a year by Lady Catherine. The floor was cobbled in an intricate pattern and the shells themselves were just so beautiful. The same Lady Catherine used to go down to Waterford quays by pony and carriage to collect shells from exotic places that she had requested the sea captains to collect for her on their journeys abroad. Then she painstakingly glued them onto the walls with a special bonding. The garden itself was laid out in parkland, lake and formal parterre and contains species of many very large mature trees, particularly Sitka spruce. After our tour we headed into a converted stable building for our lunch which was delicious homemade fare.

Curraghmore would be worth a return visit in the autumn when the trees are turning and you would see a completely different picture of the gardens and spend several hours walking around the several thousand acres of the estate.



IGPS Cork at Curraghmore

Lecture by Orlaith Murphy: Report by Janet Edwardes

Our winter season of lectures kicked off with a marvellous lecture given by a very entertaining, dynamic and informative Orlaith Murphy. It was particularly appropriate for this time of year because most of our gardens are giving us a bountiful harvest of berries, nuts and fruit so ideal for us all to get inspired to go out and find out different ways to use and store this harvest. And for those who do not have access to fruit, etc. in the garden, there is a rich larder for us to dip into along the hedgerows and in the countryside in general. Orlaith divided her talk into categories of different things we can use and some innovative ways to preserve and make them tasty. So she dipped into fruit, flowers, nuts and seeds, offering us a wide selection of ideas and recipes to use. She made the very valid point that we only use a very tiny proportion of the wild foods that are available to us so by using more foraged food, it should have a positive effect on the sustainability of food supplies for the human race. The bonus is that these foods are

tasty, very good for you nutritionally and many have medicinal properties, so all in all it is the way to go. It was amazing to see the number of different flower petals for example that can be eaten in a salad. And of course jams, pickles, vinegars, syrups are all ways of using this bountiful harvest. Orlaith had brought along a wide range of flowers, seed heads for us to taste and nibble and she rounded off the evening by making a salad using 50 different types of food.

Leinster Region

*Helen Dillon's New Garden,
Saturday, 28th July, 2018*

Nobody would guess, from the road outside, the extraordinary horticultural riches which have already been amassed in Helen Dillon's new garden. The garden is not large, but it is so cunningly arranged with beautiful granite edges to the ample but reachable beds, that it contains a whole world of different species - and, as you might anticipate, unusual and special forms of many of them. In spite of the abundance and density of the planting, there was no difficulty in viewing all of the specimens. It is hard to convey just how much botanical knowledge and understanding is on display in this small, town garden.



But the first thing to be addressed, Helen told us, was the ground itself. She spoke passionately about this; there was the 'bloody onion' in the garden, almost impossible to eradicate as we all know, and then the builder piled all the topsoil in a mound at one end, so it could never be properly sorted out. The only thing to do was to dig out the entire garden and bring in new, clean soil. This is what they had done, and the results are simply spectacular. One would never believe that this garden had been planted less than two years - the healthy, strong growth which is evident everywhere is extraordinary. Indeed, Helen said that this new soil, which was from a farm and had never been 'gardened', was much better than the soil in their old

garden. It really showed - there were such vigorous plants and with so many flowers, it took one's breath away.

Everyone had questions for Helen, and she was more than generous, not just in her answers but also sometimes handing cuttings to the questioner. It was thrilling to find plants growing which one had never even heard of, let alone seen: in my case, there was *Cantua buxifolia* to discover, and later to look up and wonder at even more. It was 'the sacred flower of the Incas' and is the emblem of both Peru and Bolivia. You will have guessed that this sacred plant was growing in a pot, as it requires protection. But again, there were many beautiful subjects which were in the ground and the harsh spring did not kill them. It seemed that Helen had found a particularly favoured spot as her new garden; very little of it is 'north facing' and the wonderful old walls surrounding it create a specially gentle microclimate, I guess.



It was distinctly a plants-woman's garden, and Helen was on familiar terms with all her plants. However, I was particularly struck by the way in which the beds achieved so much visibility and form. There wasn't a scrap of lawn; and the beds were so designed that it was almost as if the whole place was as deeply satisfying to view as a really splendid border. The key was that the beds were laid out in such a way that they formed almost continuous bays in the sunken area. On the other side of the house, there were more typical borders, and even at the very back of the house where there seemed almost to be a corridor of space, special plants had been accommodated. I particularly remember the *Indigofera pendula*, with its delicate, airy sprays in full

flower. And then there was her elegant *Polygala myrtifolia*; Helen commented on the *Polygala* plants which are usually available in garden centres - nothing like so graceful, but just 'blobs', tight little shrubs in fact. Her *Polygala* was a revelation.



The weather turned suddenly wet, and we all trooped into her sitting room for tea and biscuits, and much discussion of the rare and beautiful plants we saw. As a lover of *Salvia*, I went around the garden to count the number of species Helen was growing, and there were twenty-seven. If there had been nothing else, that would have made me the happiest of plant-fanciers. But the entire garden must have felt like that to us all, each with our different enthusiasms, entranced by the variety and splendour of our favourites. Helen's garden had room for so much, both the rare and the common-or-garden. I delightedly spotted a thistle, a beautiful small artichoke in one bed. 'Oh, I picked that up in Morocco, long ago.' I think that the experience of this wonderful, new Helen Dillon Garden could be summed up in one word: sumptuous.

Warble Bank Summer Lunch 7th July 2018: Report by Michelle Nolan

So, on a glorious Summer's day, we had the perfect setting on a two pronged Summer Garden Lunch. The day began in Warble Bank, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow, home to Anne Condell. Anne's late mother who lived here from 1940 established the garden. The cottage style garden is now maintained full time by Anne with some help from her brother, John. It's a charming garden that fits in well to its natural surroundings amongst woodland and meadow.

The planting is primarily of Roses, namely 'Kiftsgate', 'Mulliganii', 'Paul's Himalayan Musk' and 'Charles de Mills'. Some are displayed on pergolas which enable us to view Anne's other loves: *Phlox* spp, *Lychnis coronaria*; *Sidalcea* 'Brilliant'; *Geranium flore plena* 'violacium' and *Aconitums* to name just a few. We certainly came at the right time to see the garden in full colour. The aroma from the Roses and Sweet Pea created a lovely romantic feel to this garden. Anne is always looking and picking up new bits from her travels throughout the country and the enthusiasm and love for gardening shines through.

Moving down the M11 to Anne's friend, Noreen Kennedy's garden in Cloncallow (off Coyne's Cross): Another little hidden gem of a garden. Noreen's daughter, Ella (of 'Kitchen and Larder') was our chef and did we eat well, as all main ingredients were either home-grown or locally sourced. Some of us ate in the garden amongst the trees next to the stream and duck pond, others dined in the chalet to shelter from the hot sun. We had a walk around Noreen's garden to see her beautiful homemade labels made from local slate to inform us of her plant choices. Noreen's inspiration comes from the late Beth Chatto.

Our day ended with the opportunity to buy some plants (from Anne's garden), bread, duck eggs and Warble Bank honey after sampling all before. We will certainly keep both gardens on our radar and plan to sample their wares once again.

SEED DISTRIBUTION SCHEME 2019

It is hard to believe that another year has passed – and what a year it has been for the garden and for seed collecting! Despite the extremes of weather I really hope that many of you will be able to collect some seeds for our invaluable distribution scheme.

I have been asked if I could try and explain what is involved in the distribution scheme and as I am now in my third year, perhaps I can give you a little insight of the work involved.

I took over from Stephen Butler who explained, in great detail, the method he had used for sorting, cleaning, naming and distributing the seeds. He did however give me leave to hone or amend the system if I found alternative that worked better for me.

In brief: Between August and December, seeds are sent to me in a myriad of envelopes, jiffy bags, hand made paper sachets and much more besides. Most are beautifully labelled with the correct Latin name and sometimes with a description. All are initially checked to ensure (a) there are actually seeds and (b) the seeds have not gone rotten (often because they have been packaged and sent when still damp). On a spreadsheet the name of each pack of seeds is numbered with the contributor's name. If two or more packs of seed with the same name arrive, they are kept separately with the individual contributor's name assigned to their seeds.

In due course the seeds are more thoroughly checked and if necessary cleaned. Stephen supplied me with an excellent set of differing sizes of sieves and lots of tips on how to separate the seed from the chaff. Everything is then checked in Plant Finder to ensure the name is correct (allowing for changes and spelling mistakes). It must be remembered that we rely on the contributor to supply the correct name.



As close as possible to the deadline for printing, the seed list is sorted into the classifications (Annuals, Trees/Shrubs, Bulbs, etc.) alphabetically and only then can the seed packets be numbered according to that list.

The seeds are then 'filed' into boxes by number and kept in a cool, dry place ready for the orders to arrive.

Almost as soon as the *Newsletter* with the seed list and order form drops into letterboxes, the flurry of early orders arrives to me. Each order is numbered and the date received noted – this is to ensure that the first orders received get priority and therefore get the best chance of having their requests fulfilled. The date that the order is filled and posted is also noted on the order form.

As each order is filled, the master copy of the seed list is checked to ensure that the seeds are still available. If not, the alternative orders are filled instead. As time goes on and as the most popular seeds run out, the alternative requests become more and more important. Only once have I been unable to fill any orders on a request form – a late order that only requested three numbers – all of which were long gone.

The time consuming part of the job is filling the small envelopes with the seeds, sealing them well and packing them into the stamped addressed envelopes. Luckily this takes place during the winter months so I don't resent being indoors in the warmth. To put it in context, each order is for 20 packets and on average we get over 100 requests – that means 2,000 packets of seeds to be filled and sealed.

The rewarding part of the job is receiving lovely notes and messages from members with their thanks and gratitude. In addition, those contributors who take so much time to collect, clean and package the seeds makes the job so much easier for me. The slightly annoying part of the job is when no sae is sent – it is not a big ask that members should fund their own postage and I believe we have made it very simple by suggesting Eire or UK stamps are sent.

So please do:

1. Continue (or start) to collect and send in seeds.
2. Send in orders.
3. Get in touch if you have any queries or suggestions.

My contact details are:

Debbie Bailey
Clonguaire
Ballynacarrig
Brittas Bay
Co Wicklow
debbiebailey797@gmail.com Ph. 086 6085849

Irish Heritage Plants Update, September 2018

Stephen Butler

A strange and challenging year for many of our gardens, and plants. 130 days of January, 10 days of mid May, then 80 days of high season dry July ... so much for a temperate climate!

Another year has brought more additions, but as I always say, this is a marathon, any plants new to our list of 'grown by' will be small in number.

Coming up shortly is the **Leinster Plant Sale** in Marino. This has the largest number of IHPs for sale anywhere in Ireland, many bought in from nurseries as they are still in trade, but a good few brought in by members. This is the most important section, often no longer in trade, and I can only plead with anyone growing IHPs, please check if it is commercially available – ask me if not sure – and if not, then please either propagate it yourself or ask someone to help. Again feel free to contact me if need be.

Plants for sale last year at Marino were: *Aconitum napellus* 'Newry Blue', *Agapanthus* 'Kilmurry Blue', *Agapanthus* 'Kilmurry White', *Anemone nemerosa* 'Robinsoniana', *Azara microphylla* 'Variegata', *Berberis stenophylla* 'Corallina Compacta', *Bergenia* 'Ballawley', *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Kilmacurragh', *Cornus capitata* 'Kilmacurragh Rose', *Crocsmia* 'Rowallane Yellow', *Crocsmia* 'Kilmurry Orange', *Crocsmia* 'Rowallane Orange', *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Kilmacurragh', *Dierama* 'Kilmurry Seedling', *Emmenopterys henryi*, *Epilobium (Zauschneria) canum* 'Dublin', *Escallonia* 'Glasnevin Hybrid', *Geranium* 'Mt Venus', *Geranium himalayense* 'Irish Blue', *Gloxinia* 'Glasnevin Jubilee', *Griselinia littoralis* 'Bantry Bay', *Hebe* 'Headfourtii', *Iris* 'Kilmurry Black', *Luma apiculata* 'Glanleam Gold', *Omphalodes cappadocica* 'Starry Eyes', *Potentilla fruticosa* 'Longacre Variety', *Pulmonaria* 'Blake's Silver', *Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Fota Blue', *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata', *Tilia henryana*, and on the bulb table: *Narcissus* 'Border Beauty', *Narcissus* 'Spellbinder', *Narcissus* 'Empress of Ireland', *Narcissus* 'Rip van Winkle'.

There is of course no guarantee that the same range will be there this year, but it is always interesting to see what's around.

Great to see a few flowers on *Narcissus* 'Countess of Annesley' growing in NBG Kilmacurragh this spring. This was recently refound by Alwyn Sinnamon at Castlewellan, and has since been identified at Annesgrove House too. The twisted perianth segments are very distinctive.

Good to see *Aconitum* 'Newry Blue', with several accessions, at NBG Glasnevin too, but worryingly they looked very different to each other: work in hand!



Narcissus 'Countess of Annesley'

Dates for Your Diary

Saturday, 29th September : 11am – 4pm

Autumn Plant Sale Rowallane Garden, Saintfield, Co. Down, BT24 7LH

The Plant sale is organised as part of the National Trust's Autumn Plant Fair at Rowallane Garden and is an opportunity to acquire plants both from professional growers and enthusiastic amateurs alike. Enjoy light refreshments or lunch in the National Trust Café in Rowallane House and take the time to explore one of Northern Ireland's finest gardens.

Donations of good quality plants and help on the stand would be very welcome. Plants may be left in advance by arrangement with Agnes Peacocke, 15 Finnebrogue Rd, Downpatrick, Co. Down BT30 9AA Tel. 02844612766 or email apecocke@hotmail.co.uk. Alternatively, plants can be dropped off at Rowallane from 9am on the morning of the sale. Contact Agnes Peacocke as above for further information.

Note: Visitors are asked to please use the main car park as the drop off point when bringing plants to the IPGS stall, as the main route along the front of Rowallane House is pedestrianised. There will be a signposted route from the Avenue for stall holders.

Tuesday, 2 October: *Autumn at Ballymaloe* with Susan Turner at Northridge House, 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm.

Saturday 20 October: 11am - 13.00 PLANT SALE, Rare & Unusual Plants, Irish Heritage Plants, Bulbs Botanical Art and lots more Marino College of Education, Griffith Avenue, Marino, Dublin 3

Thursday 25 October: 8pm Lecture
Colin Wren, *Plants & Gardens of the National Trust of Scotland*
National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin

Saturday 27 October: 12.00 15.00
Visit to Tullynally led by Thomas Pakenham. Booking essential.

Tuesday, November 6: 8:00 pm – 9:30 pm Northridge House.
J. Maher, *Patthana Garden through the Year*
Members free. Non-members €5

Saturday 10 November: 2.30pm

Woodland Gardening' by Ken Cox from the renowned gardens of Glendoick in Perth
Malone Presbyterian Church Hall, 452 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 6GT

This afternoon lecture is organised by the Alpine Garden Society (Ulster Group) and, by their kind invitation there is free admission to IGPS members. Refreshments will be provided. Parking available in the church grounds. Please note the change of venue from the usual AGS meeting hall.

For catering purposes, the AGS would like to know if you plan to attend; therefore please inform Barbara Kelso by email (barbara.kelso@yahoo.co.uk) or phone 028 90861854

Sunday, November 11: 11:00 am – 12:00 noon

Commemorating Armistice Day at National Botanic Gardens,
Kilmacurragh, National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh.

Wednesday, 5th December: 7.30pm Malone House, Barnett Demesne, Belfast BT9 5PB

Oliver Schurmann, *From Show Gardens to Real Gardens*

The IGPS are delighted to welcome Oliver Schurmann from Mount Venus Nursery in Dublin. Oliver presents an illustrated talk on designing cutting edge show gardens and how these creations have a positive or negative influence on our real gardens.

Admission: IGPS Members free, Non-members £5. Refreshments provided, plant raffle on evening. This lecture is in Association with Belfast City Council.

NOTICE:

Do you grow Penstemons? If so, would you kindly be willing to donate a plant or cuttings to Belfast Botanic Gardens?

IGPS Northern Region has been working with Belfast Botanic Gardens to their mutual benefit for some time. If you can help with some correctly named varieties of Penstemon, please contact:

Barbara Pilcher <be.pilcher@icloud.com>

Castle Dobbs

June 2018



Inside the Potting Shed

Clematis recta 'Purpurea' introduced by Daisy Hill Nursery (IHP)

Cold Frames & Flower Borders in the Walled Garden, with Castle Ruins in the background [Photo: B. Kelso]



IRISH GARDEN PLANT SOCIETY

% National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

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