

**SUSSEX GROUP
NEWSLETTER**

Spring 2019

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Photographs from the HPS Image Library
and our Sussex members

Website www.hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am delighted that we continue to have high attendance at our indoor events. We have been treated to some really engaging lectures, and many tempting plants to buy. Our November meeting with such splendid food was a real highlight. My thanks to all of you who help so willingly, and to my able and knowledgeable committee who keep our Society on track. Sadly, we have lost some members to ill health and age, but we have also recruited new blood to refresh our group.



As I look out of our study window I am greeted by real signs of spring, with a bright display of crocus and Reticulate Iris in front of our pond. We have three varieties of iris, 'Harmony', 'Clairette' and 'Cantab' – 'Harmony' in particular, is thriving.



I can also see birds queuing up to bathe in the small waterfall: water is such a splendid addition to the garden, and we enjoy frogs, (just arrived back and croaking loudly), newts and a wide variety of dragon flies and

damsel flies. The Southern Hawker and Broad Chaser are my particular favourites.



We have an enticing programme of visits for the coming months, and we will be attending 2 plant fairs (see page 20).

Do, please, keep propagating, as plant sales (as well as the Trading Stall and Raffle) help swell our funds and enable us to keep our membership fees unchanged.

Wishing you all very happy gardening.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue". A long, horizontal line extends from the end of the signature.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

We currently have 164 members. We have lost a few to moves, ill health or age, but have also recruited some 18 new members over the year which is excellent. Do spread the word to your friends and family as new blood (and new ideas) are always welcome. Our October meeting will again be 'Bring A Friend, For Free', so do ask anyone who might be interested to put Sunday October 20th 2019 in their diary.

MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2019

All indoor meetings are held in the Henfield Hall, Henfield BN5 9DB. There is a large free car park adjacent to the hall. The hall is open to members at 1.30pm for all meetings unless stated otherwise. The meetings commence at 2pm.

SUNDAY 28th April 2019 at 2.15pm

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

Talk by Mark Lyman

"Delightful Delphiniums"

We welcome back Mark, as our speaker. He, previously, gave us a wonderful talk on Snowdrops. Mark is a past Chairman of Hampshire HPS and a keen grower of Delphiniums. He displays these at large RHS shows on behalf of the Delphinium Society.

Mark will be bringing plants for sale.

There will be a raffle, plant stall, seedling swap, members plant display and trading stall followed by a special 25th Anniversary celebration tea.



Seedling Swap, where the following procedure applies:

1. Bring along any seedlings or tiny plants that you have left over and do not need, still in their original compost and pot or seed tray. Clearly label the pot with the plant's name, variety, if appropriate and any other information. Add your name in case of queries.
2. The Committee provides compost, plastic cups, spoons, labels and pencils for the new owners to use.
3. Help yourself to a small scoop of whatever takes your fancy; put in a cup and write your own label. Please don't take the original label. Each cupful is charged at 10p with an honesty box for the money, so bring lots of small change!

MEETINGS PROGRAMME, AUTUMN 2019

SUNDAY 22nd September 2019 at 2 pm

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

Talk by Simon Sutcliffe of How Green Nursery

"Growing for Chelsea"

In July 2018 we visited How Green Nursery, owned and run by Simon's family. This is a wholesale nursery growing for the trade, but we were very warmly welcomed and enjoyed a most interesting morning. We were allowed to buy from an exciting selection of plants. The nursery is open three times a year for anyone to buy plants. Simon will speak to us on his Chelsea Flower Show exploits. Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea. Simon will be bringing plants for you to purchase.



Website www.howgreennursery.co.uk, Public Open Days 2019: 8th/9th June, 7th/8th September.

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

SUNDAY 20th October 2019 at 2pm

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

Talk by Dr Julian Sutton.

"The Botanical Gardener"

We welcome Julian back to give us yet another exciting afternoon in his usual enthusiastic style, embracing portraits of plants with snippets of science attached. Julian will bring plants for sale.

Website www.desirableplants.com

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

This meeting is also 'Bring A Friend, For Free'.

MEETINGS PROGRAMME, AUTUMN 2019

SUNDAY 24th November 2019

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB.

Hall open at 10-30am for coffee, meeting begins at 11am.

Talk by Troy Scott Smith

“Roses at Sissinghurst, Their Care and Cultivation”

Troy has been Head Gardener at Sissinghurst Castle since 2013. He has recently been reintroducing some of the old rose cultivars that were grown there by Vita Sackville-West.



Raffle and Trading stall.

Lunch will follow at approximately 1pm.

Lunch arrangements:

We ask you all to bring a dish, either savoury or sweet and we will sit down together and enjoy a 2-course lunch. This will be served buffet-style. Wine and soft drinks will be available on the House and there is, of course, no charge for this lunch, but booking is required for this event. A form will be included with the Autumn Newsletter.

DATES OF GROUP OUTINGS

DALE PARK HOUSE and PARHAM HOUSE

WEDNESDAY 15th May 2019

We travel in our own cars and meet at Dale Park House, Madehurst, Arundel BN18 0NP at 10.30am. Here we will enjoy a large walled garden, which includes a 200ft herbaceous border, rose and clematis arches, an interesting collection of hostas and other foliage plants and shrubs. The garden also has an orchard and kitchen garden, a small rose bed and a sunken gravel garden. The cost of this visit, which includes entrance fee and refreshments, is £8.50. Full details and instructions to find Dale Park House will be sent with your booking confirmation.

Afterwards we move onto Parham House Gardens, Pulborough RH20 4HS. There is a lovely café where we can purchase lunch, and sit outside, weather permitting. The exciting gardens here have, recently, been extensively renovated. There are vast herbaceous borders, rose and herb gardens, a vegetable parterre, together with a new jungle garden. The long, narrow teak glasshouse, pictured, is filled with many wonderful and colourful plants.



Parham is an RHS Partner Garden, so, if you are the first named member on your RHS card you have free entry (see page 48 in RHS Handbook 2019 for further details), if not, entry is £9.50 or £8.50 for concessions. Both the gardens and café open at 12 noon. You may picnic here, if you prefer. Please see their website for full details of pricing. The House can be visited at a small additional cost for RHS members.

The total cost for this visit is £8.50 if you are an RHS member, or £18.00, if not RHS member.

We look forward to you joining us at these two wonderful gardens.

DATES OF GROUP OUTINGS

CHENIES MANOR PLANT FAIR COACH TRIP

SUNDAY 14th July 2019

This is an outstanding fair for buying amazing plants and gardenalia from a wide range of wonderful nurseries from various parts of the country. On our last visit one of our members purchased over 70 plants! You have been warned, it really is a super fair. The garden at Chenies Manor is also worth exploring, with an eclectic mix of herbaceous beds, a superb herb bed, roses and so much more. A separate ticket can be bought to view inside the wonderful house. Don't forget to look up when you arrive as the chimney stacks are not to be missed. Please do come and share our exciting day out.

We meet at the Travel Lodge RH17 5NX, just off the Hickstead junction of the A23. Follow the signs for Burgess Hill via the A2300 and the garage and Travel Lodge are situated at the roundabout. Your car can be parked all day free of charge but please park as far away from the restaurant as possible.

The cost is £25 if you are a member of Sussex HPS.

We are happy to include your family and friends who may not be members, but the cost for them will be £30.

The cost includes both coach travel and admission to the Plant Fair.

There are light lunch items for sale at the fair, or bring your own picnic.

We will leave the Travel Lodge, promptly, at 8.30am for our journey, which should take 2 hours. The fair is open from 10am – 5pm. We will aim to leave at 4pm and hope to arrive back at Hickstead at 5.30 -6pm, depending on traffic conditions.

In the event that the trip is poorly supported, it will be cancelled and your money refunded. If you wish to cancel your booking, money will only be refunded if your seat can be resold, but £2 will be retained as a contribution towards administration.

TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

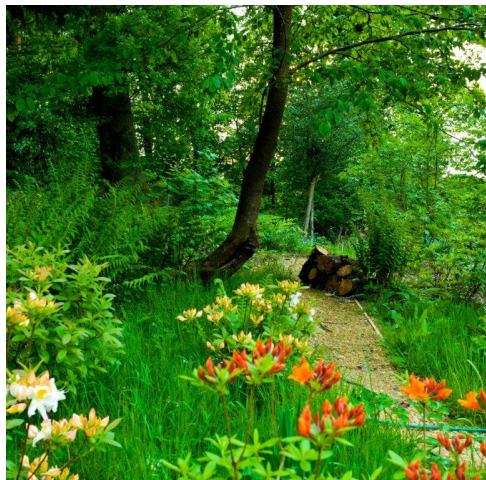
TUESDAY 28th May 2019 at 11am

Frances Druce invites us to her garden near Lindfield.

Frances says, "The garden at Copyhold Hollow muddled along in a mist of ignorance and little time for gardening for several years. Then followed attendance at Brinsbury doing the RHS General Certificate which provided a solid basis on which to grow.

"The topography cried out for rhododendrons, so I planted a few. Paths went in where I tended to walk which involved carrying 10 tons of sandstone gravel up the slope each winter for three years.

So, the garden was not "designed" but just came into being. It is in a hollow, opening out to the north, with steep slopes leading up to woodland. The area around the house is flat for those who do not care to climb the slopes and has a cottage garden feel to it. Stumpery, soft fruit and vegetable plot (grown mostly for the benefit of the wildlife!) pond and bog garden complete the site."



TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

WEDNESDAY 5th June 2019 at 11am

Carole and Ian Woodland invite us to their garden in Bexhill.

Carole says, “ Our garden is on the south coast 400 yards from the sea, with salt laden winds at times. Three feet below the surface of our garden is yellow sand, which does present challenges. In summer it does not retain moisture and in winter the sand does not retain heat. Planting is a matter of seeing which plants will survive in these



conditions, but in the sixteen years we have been here we have managed to build up an extensive range of plants and trees. The rear garden is about 130 x 60ft and this includes a gazebo, a summerhouse, a knot garden, a seaside garden, yellow borders a hot border, a white border, herb area, two water features, a fruit-cage and a vegetable plot.”



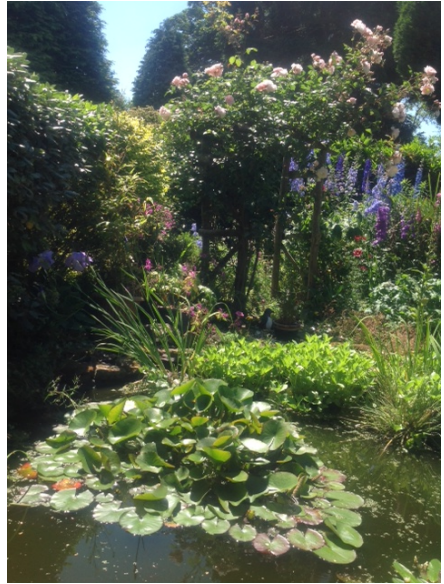
TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

THURSDAY 25th July 2019 at 11am.

Pauline Bastick invites us to her garden in Crowborough.

Pauline says,

“ A fairly large and established rear garden which I have adapted and updated since moving here six years ago. It is still work in progress as I learn to cope with the extremes of gardening conditions in Crowborough. There are flower and vegetable areas in addition to a pond and rockery. Please be aware that there are bee hives in the garden.”



TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

SUNDAY 29th September 2019 at 11 am.

Celia Withers invites us to her garden at Flansham near Bognor Regis.

Celia says, " Although there is still some renovation work to do, after three years of hacking back overgrown areas, the garden is better than it has been for some time! It is just under ½ acre, with mixed planting, including a number of shade beds, perennial beds in sun, some fruit bushes and a large pond much used by local wildlife."



TO BOOK, as usual, please contact Lesley Wembridge (her details are on the back of the newsletter). If you are not on e-mail, you will need to send her a stamped addressed envelope, so that she can send you instructions in time for your visit. Please also remember that if you book for a friend you will need to give their name and they must be a member of HPS Sussex Group as well.

If you would like to get to know more people in the Sussex HPS, then please consider volunteering to host a TP yourself. It's a great way to make lasting friends. It's not the same as a formal garden visit, just a few people round for coffee and a chat about plants and gardening. Please contact Jane Collins (details also on the back of the newsletter) if you might be interested.

COURGETTE CURD RECIPE

Too many courgettes or an unexpected marrow? Try courgette lemon or lime curd

2lbs (900g) prepared courgettes or marrow
(yellow or peeled green for lemon, green for lime)
1lb (450g) granulated sugar
4 oz (100g) butter
3 lemons or 4/5 limes juiced, and grated rind
(you get more juice if you put in microwave for a minute or so)

Wash and chop courgettes. No need to peel, (unless using green for lemon) but if more marrow like scoop out the seeds. Either steam till tender, or put in a bowl, cover with cling film and cook in microwave till soft. Strain and leave to drain overnight. Next day mash till smooth (or use a food processor). Put in preserving pan with the rind, juice, sugar and butter. Heat gently until sugar dissolves, then boil for approx. 20 – 30 mins stirring all the time. Pot up in sterilised jam jars. Keeps well in a cool dark place, once opened store in fridge.

GARDEN TABLE POSIES



On a recent HPS Sussex trip to The Down House in Hampshire, I was taken by this lovely posy in a bottle that had been placed on one of the tables by a seat in the garden. The owners of the garden, which opens for NGS, allowed us to have a private visit. I was surprised how such a simple idea could make the garden so much more welcoming. It also allows you to get up close and personal with the 'flower of the moment' and appreciate their finer details in comfort.

SHADY DEALINGS

How a greenhouse works



The rays from the sun shine through the glass and heat up the air and the plants inside, so, during the day, the greenhouse gets warmer and warmer. At night this heat is trapped inside. In winter this is no problem but during summer it is important to keep direct sunlight off your plants to

prevent leaf scorch. Young plants and seedlings can be killed very quickly if left in strong sunlight through glass.

Keeping a greenhouse cooler.

There are a few ways to keep your greenhouse cooler in summer. The most expensive way is probably bespoke blinds that can be raised and lowered as needed. These are lovely on conservatories, but working greenhouses can be shaded more cheaply.

Green shade netting can be bought, by the metre, from good garden centres or online. Various widths are available. This can be fitted to the inside of the greenhouse, which is tricky, especially if it is already full of plants. A quicker way, assuming the greenhouse is not in a very exposed position, is to attach it to the outside using clothes pegs or bulldog clips (this assumes an aluminium construction).

The cheapest method, and one that I found worked very well during last year's hot, sunny summer is greenhouse shading paint. I used Vitax Summer Cloud Greenhouse Shading which is sold in 500ml bottles at a cost of around £8. I mixed it as per instructions in a sprayer designed for spraying fences. The application process was very quick (a calm day is essential!) and the cooling and shading effect was immediate.

I was very pleased with the shade that it cast which seemed to let a lot of growing light through even on cloudy days. At the end of the season it is simply rubbed or washed off.

Now, if only there was a spray on insulation paint....

HOTBIN COMPOSTING

Carolyn McCutchan is interested in finding out more about HotBin composting.

This is a system that uses a special type of composting bin that claims to produce garden compost in 90 days from garden and food waste. The bin capacity is 200 litres, about the same size as a wheelie bin, and reaches temperatures of 60C which speeds up the time taken for the compost to be produced.

Has anyone used one of these? Reviews online suggest that it works really well for a family of about 4 but may not be as good for a single person. This is due to the amount of material that needs to be added regularly to reach the high temperatures needed to kill off weed seeds and pathogens. The system costs just shy of £200, so some reliable reviews from our members would be much appreciated.

Please send any comments to newsletter@hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk

How composting works

The key to effective composting is to create an ideal environment for microorganisms to thrive; warm temperatures, nutrients, moisture and plenty of oxygen.

The Composting Cycle: There are 3 main stages in the composting cycle in which different organisms thrive. The first is typically only a couple of days when the biodegradable compounds begin to be broken down by mesophilic organisms. Heat is a natural by-product of the process and temperatures can reach 40C. Thermophilic microorganisms then take over to further increase the heat and break down matter. Aeration of the heap is beneficial during this phase as this prevents the heap from becoming smelly. This can take from a few days to several months.

After this the heap cools down again and the mesophilic organisms resume control to complete the process.

The Ideal Recipe: Organisms that help with composting fall into 2 classes, aerobes and anaerobes.

The aerobes are bacteria that require oxygen to survive and are the most efficient composting microorganisms. The aerobes consume the organic waste and excrete chemicals such as nitrogen, phosphorous and magnesium, which plants need to survive.



The anaerobes are bacteria that don't require oxygen. However, they don't process the matter as efficiently and can produce the chemicals that make the heap smelly.

These bacteria make up over 80% of the organisms in the compost heap, the remaining microorganisms are fungi such as moulds and yeasts. Woodlice, centipedes and worms will also find their way into the pile and will break down food waste, trimmings and other organics.



A balance of green (nitrogen-rich e.g. grass cuttings and green leafy matter) and brown material (carbon-rich e.g. dead leaves, branches, twigs, shredded paper) is needed to ensure the proper environment for efficient composting. Moisture and oxygen complete the recipe.



MEETINGS WITH FAMILIAR PLANTS

Some of our most beautiful garden plants can still be seen in the wild. Here are a few that I saw last year in the Italian Dolomites.



This bright orange lily makes its home in the alpine meadows. There are never very many, they just make stunning splashes of colour drawing your eye to them. This idea could be used at home in the long grass with any of the Oriental lilies that are available. It would certainly become a talking point.

Clematis alpina can be found climbing through the native pines or scrambling up rocky slopes. The roots will have found their way down between the cracks to get to the moisture that they need. In our gardens we often grow this up a wall or trellis, but it looks just as happy when grown through a thinly branched shrub or over a tree stump.

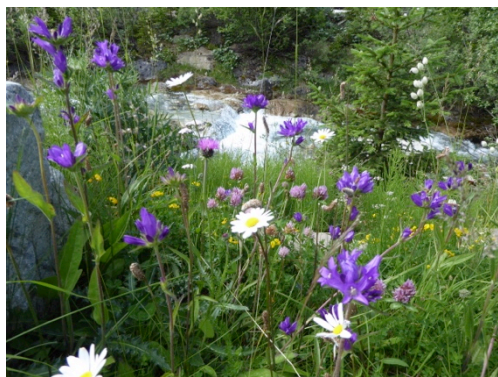


The wild home of *Primula auricula* is high up in the mountains where it can be found sheltering from the wind amongst the cracks and crevices in the boulder fields. How different a site is this from the Auricula Theatres that the Victorians created for them!



Trollius europaeus is the familiar Globeflower that is a regular component of Chelsea Flower Show cottage gardens. It is in the *Ranunculaceae* family and, so, is related to the Clematis. It is found growing in the damper areas of the high alpine meadows, or near a mountain stream. Large swathes of this sunny, yellow flower carpet the slopes just begging for their photo to be taken.

Another familiar lily, *Lilium martagon*, places itself off the beaten track and needs to be searched out. Maybe any of the more easily visible locations lead to the impressive flower stems being picked. This plant was part of a small, widely spaced community in a slight gully on a fairly steep slope.



Tumbling mountain stream-sides are home to *Campanula glomerata*, Oxeye Daisies, clover and Bladder Campion.

Elaine Boot

PLANT FAIR DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We are attending 2 Plant Fairs and would very much welcome offers of help to man the stands. We also need good quality plants to sell. In recognition of the time and effort put in by those bringing plants, growers will receive the full sale price. Ideally, you will bring the plants on the day and collect any that are unsold. It may also be possible for you to give your plants to a committee member by prior arrangement. Anyone bringing plants or helping on the stand will get free entry to the fair.



SUNDAY 9th June 2019 12.00 – 5.00pm

Specialist Plant Fair at Sussex Prairies BN5 9AT

Entry to Plant Fair £8 (Reduction for RHS members, bring your RHS card).

SUNDAY 15th September 2019 10.00 – 3.00pm

Autumn Plant Fair at Borde Hill Garden RH16 1XP

Entry to the Plant Fair is £7.



JUST WHAT IS A “HARDY” PLANT?

Now let me pose a question! Just what is a “Hardy” plant?
Is it simply one that copes where others simply can’t?
Is it a perennial, or difficult to kill?
Perhaps it merely takes up space that’s difficult to fill.



Of course, effects of temperature will have the greatest say
In deciding, after winter, if it ‘fights another day’!
The condition of your garden soil will also take a hand
In deciding if your flower beds perform as you had planned.

We gardeners all have different views, when assessing which is better!
Showy annuals are OK, but droop when it gets wetter.
Most tender plants are sure to please, but come at a cost,
For, frequently, they are short-lived, cut down by early frost!



ALL God’s plants give pleasure, give cheer and beauty, too!
With planning they’ll reward you by performing all year
through.

But many plants have failings and can suffer from disease,
But generally speaking, “hardy” plants are sure to please!

By Alan Ruby



HISTORICAL BOTANICAL

A SHORT HISTORY OF BOTANICAL GARDENS

The botanic garden is generally considered a Renaissance institution because of the establishment, in 1534, of gardens in Pisa and Padua specifically dedicated to the study of plants. They usually contained medicinal plants arranged in particular orders; students of medicine or herbalists could learn about them, learn to recognise them and learn of their uses. As you can imagine, it was essential that they correctly identified plants for medicinal uses, as information in plant manuals was very vague or, even, incorrectly illustrated. The manuscript '*De Materia Medico*' by the Roman physician Dioscorides (pictured) remained the most authoritative text up until the 17th Century.

As early as the 10th Century exotic plant collections were planted in Andalusian experimental gardens. Later, monasteries contained gardens with medicinal herbs, but until the Renaissance there was little impetus to create botanic gardens as ordered collections of plants.



Early botanic gardens were often laid out with astrological, cosmological and religious notions. Their circles, squares and triangles were intended to channel the positive energy radiating from the planets and stars into objects on earth. This was thought to increase the healing powers of the plants.

The University of Oxford Botanic Garden was the first to be established in the UK in 1621. Its mission was to promote learning and the glory of God.

Chelsea Physic Garden was set up on the banks of the River Thames on 4 acres of land donated by Sir Hans Sloane. It was first established by Apothecaries to grow medicinal plants. It contains the oldest known rockery which was constructed from basalt stone brought back from

Iceland by Joseph Banks as ballast on his ship. It also boasts a clam shell from Captain Cook's voyage to Tahiti.

A change of usage came about in the 16th and 17th Centuries with the age of exploration and the beginnings of international trade.

By the 19th Century European botanic gardens, most notably Kew, were sending botanists on plant-hunting expeditions and establishing colonial botanic gardens as outposts to hold and propagate plants destined to be sent back to their parent institutions.



Scotland's Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh was active in funding expeditions to remote areas. These men included David Douglas and Robert Fortune. Kew sent Joseph Hooker and Ernest 'Chinese' Wilson. Herbariums containing sheets of pressed plants and flowers were also collected: Cambridge University Botanic Garden contains numerous herbarium specimens that Charles Darwin collected during his 5-year voyage on HMS Beagle.

Today the global conservation of endangered plants and the ecological niches in which they grow has become an important component of the operations of many botanic gardens. However, they still hold relevance to home gardeners for inspiration and education.

The National Botanic Garden of Wales in Carmarthenshire has a series of order beds in a circular design. The innermost beds are filled with the most primitive plant families radiating out to the more advanced plant families. All plants are examples of those of ornamental value and that can be grown in UK gardens.



A TIDY LITTLE IRIS

It may still be Spring but we all need to look forward to how our displays will look later in the year.

Iris unguicularis is a dwarf rhizomatous iris that has evergreen leaves and flowers in winter and early Spring. However, if left untrimmed the tatty leaves from the previous season can spoil the show.



The solution to this problem is to totally cut down all their foliage during summer. This will seem drastic but is worth the effort as it allows the beautiful flowers to shine, unencumbered by unkempt foliage, the following winter. Another benefit of this ensures there are fewer hiding places for molluscs! In a very dry summer you might give the clump a bucket of water to encourage the

dormant leaves into action.

The buds unfurl when the temperature has dropped so their perfume and beauty can be enjoyed.

This perennial is best planted at the base of a south facing wall where it can be easily seen in winter and the beauty and perfume of the flowers can be enjoyed during the shorter days.



A HARDY SURPRISE

Following on from the Begonias in the previous issue, I would like to introduce you to two hardy species of Impatiens in the family *Balsaminaceae*. One is tall and flowers late in the summer, the other is diminutive and can be used as ground cover as it prefers the shelter under trees or shrubs.



The first is *Impatiens tinctoria* from South Africa. It grows from a dahlia-like tuber and will be cut to the ground by the first hard frost. But, do not despair, it will reshoot strongly in late Spring to a height of around 5 or 6 feet and bears sweetly scented 3" flowers, conveniently at nose level! These resemble orchids and have strikingly dark purple markings. It is as easy as Busy Lizzie from cuttings.

The second is *Impatiens omeiense* from Mount Omei in China. It is a much quieter plant and grows to about 12". This plant has dark green leaves with prominent lime green veins which make a striking contrast. It is herbaceous and will gently spread to form a pleasing clump of interesting foliage.



INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL

Most of us are familiar with growing plants from seeds and maybe also from ordinary stem cuttings e.g. Fuchsias, Pelargoniums. But there are some more unusual, if no less successful ways to propagate some plants. As with any method, the plant has to be a suitable candidate for the particular method that you wish to try.

Spring is a very good time to try taking basal cuttings from a variety of hardy perennials. These could include Phlox, Anthemis, Leucanthemum, Asters, Scabiosa, Lupins, Monarda. Morning is the best time to do this job as the shoots will be full of moisture.

1. Choose a plant with vigorous new shoots arising from the soil. These should be around 4" (10cm) in length.

2. Cut away some of these shoots as near the base as you can. Slightly below soil level where the shoot is paler is ideal. Put into a plastic bag until you get back to the greenhouse/shed.



3. Trim neatly across the base of the cutting just below a leaf (these may look like scales in their early stages) and remove the leaves from the lower third of the cutting. Nip out the shoot tip to encourage bushiness.

4. Insert each cutting around the side of a pot that is filled with a mix of compost to which sharp sand has been added (one third sand to compost is good). The bottom third of the cutting should be below compost level. Rooting hormone can be used if you like. Push the compost firmly at the point where cutting meets soil to ensure that the base of the cutting is in contact with the compost. Label with name and date.

5. When you have inserted all your cuttings (they should be about $\frac{3}{4}$ " (2cm) apart) water gently. Put a clear plastic bag over the pot or place the pot in a propagator unit. Bottom heat helps them to root. Place in a bright position but, preferably, out of direct sunlight.

6. If conditions are ideal, the cuttings should be rooted within 4 – 6 weeks and ready to pot on.

FROM THE EDITORS

Our Second Newsletter

We were very pleased, and relieved, that you all enjoyed our first, rather hurriedly composed, Newsletter. It can be difficult to follow a well-established double act, as you never know if you will offend readers with a slightly different style and point of view.

We hope you have liked the articles in this issue together with the comprehensive list of the forthcoming events and talks. Do remember to take some photos of events that you attend, or plants looking good in your gardens, together with a short description and then send them to us at:

newsletter@hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk

We would also welcome any articles that you think others might enjoy. These could be fully written and illustrated or just the germ of an idea for us to work on. Or, do you have an unusual recipe that would help to deal with the glut of fruit and vegetables that can occur at harvest time?

We have just set up a new Facebook page. Find us at:

[Hardy Plant Society – Sussex Group](#)

Please take a look at our page and ‘like’ and ‘follow’ us. We will be linking the page to the national HPS page so other regions can easily find us. This will give the Group an opportunity to reach non-members as well as members in other parts of the country. We will be able to advertise our stand at plant fairs and share photos of trips, interesting plants, even handy hints or jobs to do. The more of you that join, the more I will be tempted to put on new posts!

This edition’s cover photo is of the potted tulip display last year in the Courtyard at Standen, National Trust.