



**CORNWALL GROUP
NEWSLETTER FOR
August 2019**

A day of rain in the middle of July has made an enormous difference to the garden. The bramble shoots, which were long and stringy, have become long and fat, arching aggressively under their own weight.

It is the season of weeding. I can't spend too long on my hands and knees these days so I resort to a long handled hoe. It is well worth getting one with a particularly long handle, it saves bending over and makes the effort of pushing it easier. There is something very satisfying about slicing the weeds off at ground level, knowing that they will shrivel in a matter of hours in the sunshine. I do occasionally slice off something important but it's a small price to pay to avoid backache, and there's always something new to try in the space.

Just before the rain arrived I slipped away for a weekend break and had a chance to study at first hand the summer traffic. The intention was to get away before the holidays started and avoid the jams. I was successful in the first part at least. Best not to think about Stonehenge or the M25.

The World Garden at Lullingstone Castle.

Just a short distance from Junction 3 of the M25 sits Lullingstone Castle, home of the Hart Dyke family since the 15th Century, and the recently built World Garden.

In the year 2000 Tom Hart Dyke was plant hunting in Columbia when he was taken prisoner by rebels and held for 9 months under threat of death. While he was being held he used his diary to plan a garden that would hold plants from around the world laid out on a geographical plan. The idea for the World Garden was born. When he was released he took over the walled garden in the castle and started to build.



Entrance to the World Garden.



Gatehouse to the castle.



The World Garden.

The Mediterranean Zone is watched over by a statue of Europa riding a pink bull on a plinth of blue curled shapes representing the waves in the sea. Among other iconic Mediterranean plants I was very pleased to see a young plant of *Albizia julibrissin* 'Summer Chocolate' with good coloured leaves. It was briefly popular as a pot plant a few years ago but it needs a hot, continental climate and a reasonably mild winter, not an easy combination in the UK. The species originates in southwestern Asia but it is commonly planted in Southern Europe. North Kent might just fall within its range!

More reliably European was *Colutea arborescens*, the Bladder Senna. The yellow flowers are

attractive (in their own way) but the plant is really grown for the inflated seed pods, a curiosity rather than a great beauty.



Albizia julibrissin 'Summer Chocolate'.



"Europa" in the Mediterranean Zone.



Colutea arborescens.

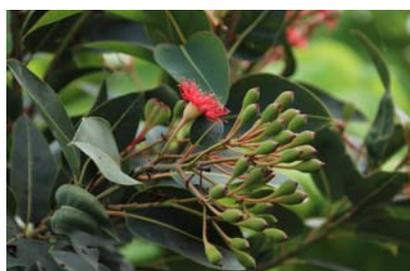
The other Mediterranean climate zones of the world were also well represented and plants from them are prospering in the local climate. Tom Hart Dyke has been collecting *Eucalyptus* species for a long time and Lullingstone Castle currently holds the National Collection. I had never seen *Eucalyptus morrisbyi* before, and that seemed like a good reason for a photograph. I have seen *Eucalyptus stellulata* or Black Sally growing in a glasshouse, but never before in the open. It was a great lesson in the species that can be grown outside in the UK, they may well become more important as trees if the climate changes as predicted. The dwarf *Eucalyptus nichollii* looked good as a small tree growing to about 5m with a weeping silvery grace. The Snow Gum, *Eucalyptus pauciflora* ssp. *niphophila* had fabulous broad blue leaves and demonstrated rather clearly the inferiority of my specimen.

In the greenhouse I was pleased to see the bright red flowers of *Corymbia ficifolia*. It used to be the hardiest of the red flowered *Eucalyptus*, almost tough enough to grow outside but frustratingly killed in the really bad winters.

It used to be the hardiest red flowered *Eucalyptus*, now it is the hardiest red flowered *Corymbia*. Hurrah for name changes!



Eucalyptus stellulata.



Corymbia ficifolia



Eucalyptus morrisbyi.

The dry climate of Kent suits succulents particularly well, along with plants from dry prairies. *Berkheya purpurea* comes from the South African veld, producing its large lilac thistle heads throughout summer. In the World Garden they were being grown in massed blocks, mixed with other South African perennials, particularly *Kniphofia* and *Dierama*. *Achillea filipendulina* 'Gold Plate' produced a fantastic display, a familiar plant used to spectacular effect in a "dry" planting. On the other side of the world, and the other side of the garden, an area was dedicated to the flora of Mexico. It included a large number of *Agave* and a spectacular *Hesperoyucca* (*Yucca*) *whipplei*, well corked for safety! Further south, in South America, a white flowered form of *Eriolarynx* (*Iochroma*) *australe* was flowering abundantly. We sometimes see the blue flowered form in gardens locally, there is even a purple flowered form named 'Trebah' but the white one had a particular charm.



Achillea filipendulina 'Gold Plate'.



Berkheya purpurea.



Eriolarynx australe.

A greenhouse nearby held a large collection of cacti and succulents growing to magnificent proportions in the beds, and a lot of the classic flowering shrubs of the Mediterranean region including Oleander and *Bougainvillea*. Some unusual *Pelargonium* species added an extra splash of colour.

I wasn't sure what to expect from the World Garden before I visited. I had seen Tom Hart Dyke talk about it at the AGM of Devon Plant Heritage last autumn but the reality was far more impressive than I was expecting. The walled garden had a delightful, peaceful atmosphere. Geographical regions were well marked and the plants were well labelled. Lullingstone Castle is easy to get to, just a short distance from the M25. The World Garden is well worth a visit if you are in the area.



Hesperoyucca whipplei, well corked.



The Mexican bed.



One wing of the greenhouse.

LAST MEETING

Roseland House, Chacewater.

3rd July 2019

A long, hot day gave way to a wonderful sunny evening as we gathered at Roseland House in the centre of Chacewater to visit the beautiful garden created by Liz and Charlie Pridham. The garden stands on the hillside to the east of the village. The high walls give a sense of calm and privacy but the view down from the front garden looks straight into the centre of this bustling community and makes the garden seem like the green heart of the village.

Charlie and Liz are long standing members of the society and organise the Spring Plant Sale for us as well as running a successful nursery specialising in climbing plants and opening the garden to the public. They must be constantly busy. Members were welcomed warmly and encouraged to explore the garden while Liz and Charlie answered questions and identified plants.

Rising out of their professional enthusiasm for climbing plants, Liz and Charlie also hold National Collections of *Clematis viticella* cultivars and *Lapageria rosea*. The *Clematis* were in full bloom supported on a range of obelisks, trellis, walls, pergolas, apple trees and rambling roses. Some of our less sprightly members were looking nervous, worried that if they stopped

for too long Charlie might plant another at their feet. Charlie likes to have a winter project to get on with, and last year he was replacing the wooden pillars of a pergola with brick built columns to give more space to grow climbers. In previous years he has rebuilt the walls around the garden, rebuilt a potting shed and constructed a *Lapageria* house for the National Collection.



The garden



and hardy planters



at Roseland House.

After a day of bright sunshine the *Clematis viticella* collection was a restful delight. The flowers are predominantly blue and purple and they wove through their supports adding depth to the various roses and honeysuckles growing with them and flickering like the shadows of exotic butterflies. *Clematis viticella* is a very convenient species for Cornish gardeners. In spring it will rush up to six or eight feet tall, clinging by twisting the leaf petiole around any support. Cornwall is renowned for spring flowers but as they go over it is useful to have something with rich dark colours to fill the gap. Pruning is easily managed. At some stage in the winter they are cut back almost to ground level and left to regrow in the spring.

Several cultivars caught my eye. 'Prince Charles' had large wide open flowers in a cool pale blue, the tepals twisting and reflexing slightly, which gave an interesting effect. 'Blue Angel' was a very similar colour, the flower was much rounder which made it look rather heavy.

'Alba Luxurians' is a very floriferous older variety. The small white flowers are often marked with green and mingle with the foliage like a billowing green wave crashing down. 'Hagelby White' had a simpler effect, the pure white flowers nodding with a quiet charm.

Among the darker colours, 'Charlie Brown' was flowering profusely, the pale wine coloured flowers cascading in a mound of colour. 'Vitiwester' was a richer colour but not yet large enough to give the same show. Even better was 'Dark Eyes', a young plant getting established on an obelisk drew a lot of attention. The dark mahogany flowers seeming to spring from the rusted brown of the support in a splendid and stylish combination.



***Clematis* 'Prince Charles' .**



***Clematis* 'Dark Eyes' .**



***Clematis* 'Alba Luxurians' .**

Earlier in the spring, Liz and Charlie had flown to California to pick up a collection of *Lapageria* from a friend who was "scaling down" his collection. The plants had to have the soil removed and the roots washed to pass the plant health inspection, a process that took a couple of days. They then flew back with the plants to the UK so that they could be on hand to guide them through customs if required. They were worried that the plants would resent the harsh treatment but they were all repotted on arrival home and are now growing in a section of the tunnel dedicated to their needs. Liz was particularly pleased that just before our visit, one of the last of the new plants finally put up a new growth from below ground.

The plants usually flower in autumn and winter, but there were still some blooms to see in the

Lapageria House. 'Pink Panther' in particular was still putting on a good show and a close relative, *Philesia magellanica* was also covered in its scarlet bells.



Lapageria rosea 'Pink Panther'.



The new *Lapageria* establishing.



Philesia magellanica.

Tea and cake rounded off a delightful evening and gave me a chance to reflect on some of the other plants seen. The giant flowers of *Lonicera hildebrandiana* made a spectacular show in the conservatory. It probably isn't hardy enough to grow outside but it doesn't need a lot of protection to prosper. *Dregea sinensis* had clothed a wall with its felty leaves and the scented white flowers hung in great bunches between them. I was very pleased to see *Lathyrus tuberosus* flowering so freely. It is a low, scrambling perennial pea with reddish-pink sweetly scented flowers, much more appealing to my eye than the coarser *L. latifolius*.

Lilium regale was in flower in many parts of the garden, its heavy scent best appreciated while sitting on the terrace. It's not a plant to bring indoors unless you like the idea of being cudgelled with a giant vanilla pod. The scent can be overwhelming. Outside it is a constant delight.

Philadelphus 'Belle Etoile' had a similar effect on us earlier in the evening as we assembled, wafting its rather fruity fragrance around the front of the house. The red flowered rambling rose 'Rambling Rosie' grew nearby, providing some bright colour to compliment the scent of the *Philadelphus*.

Charlie and Liz run a successful nursery and there were plenty of plants for sale. I was delighted to find the rose 'Bengal Crimson' and I'm going to clear space behind the camellias to try a few Clematis, something I wouldn't have thought of without Liz and Charlie Pridham's example. Thank you both for a delightful evening.



Dregea sinensis on a wall.



Lathyrus tuberosus.



Philadelphus 'Belle Etoile'.

OTHER EVENTS LAST MONTH

I seem to have spent the whole month on the road and I have seen a few gardens on the way that I have never visited before. If you manage to visit any gardens or events either locally or further away, please take some pictures and share them with us.

Alpine Garden Society Show, Pershore. 6th July 2019.

The summer show of the Alpine Garden Society at Pershore straddles the gap between spring alpines and the first of the autumn ones. It is an interesting show and attracts exhibitors from far and wide, hungry for some tiny sparks of excitement in the sweltering heat of summer.

I was most impressed with *Campanula asperuloides*, several plants were on exhibit forming neat

mounds of ice blue flowers. I'm not usually a fan of the genus but this was a charming, compact and miniature species that could inspire me to fight off the inevitable slugs with a sharp pointed stick.

The first of the seasons *Cyclamen* put in an appearance. *C. colchicum* had produced a handful of pink flowers growing in a small clay pot. I looked hard under the trees when I got home, but none of the *C. hederifolium* were showing so there's still some summer to enjoy before the long slide into winter begins!

Haemanthus humilis had sprung into early bloom. It is a South African bulb that remains dormant until the first rains of autumn sweep in from the southern oceans to inspire the large white (or pinkish) heads of flower to appear. I imagine this one was simply watered to start it into growth.

Other delights included the impossibly rare *Spathoglottis ixioides*, a yellow flowered orchid from Bhutan and Sikkim and a golden leaved form of *Sedum makinoi* from Japan called 'Ogon'. The Farrer medal for the best plant in the show went to a gorgeous dark flowered cushion of *Thymus serpyllum* 'Coccinea'. A rich, dark pink (red is a little optimistic) form that was common, compact and delightful.



Campanula asperuloides.



Pershire AGS show.



Haemanthus humilis .

Kew. 12th July 2019.

Kew is always worth a visit if you find yourself in London during the summer. If nothing else, the leafy shade of mature trees offers some respite from the overwhelming heat. I have been in Cornwall for too long, I find it hard to travel far from the sea breezes.

The newly refurbished Temperate House is settling in very nicely and attracting a large crowd. Fortunately it is a large building and it can easily accommodate them. On sunny days they open all of the side doors and the cool air whisks across the path. Strange how many people seem to dawdle at that point! The gardens are filled with the glass sculptures of Dale Chihuly at present and the strong light shining through the coloured glass shapes had a strange effect as they loomed through the dense green foliage.

I always pay attention to a small tree of *Aristolochia arborea* in the Princess of Wales Conservatory. On this occasion it was in full bloom, the flowers springing directly from the trunk like cluster of sleeping bats. Rather hardier was *Clematis integrifolia*, one of the lower growing herbaceous species. It tumbled down the rock bank, the silvery seed heads cascading through the last of the purple flowers. It is always a delightful plant but the low light of evening made it sparkle.



Aristolochia arborea.



The Temperate House with red shapes by Dale Chihuly. It has a name. I have forgotten it.



Clematis integrifolia.

Wakehurst Place. 14th July 2019.

I don't get to Wakehurst Place very often, so I jumped at the chance to visit "Kew in the country". The garden was feeling the effect of the long dry spell but the weather had suited a lot of the southern hemisphere shrubs that make such a feature of the gardens surrounding the house. The house itself is a rather intimidating pile of greyish stone towering over the lawns. The garden team do their best to jolly it up with scarlet *Penstemon* and *Dahlia*. From a distance it looks as though the stone is bleeding into the ground, possibly not the desired effect.

I had hoped to see the *Iris ensata* bog in full flower but unfortunately I was a fortnight too late, a few flowers remained but they had little effect. I also wanted to see Wakehurst's plant of *Persea ichiangensis*, a Chinese relative of the avocado. I have one, and the identity has always been a bit questionable. To cut a long story short, it is not the same as the Wakehurst plant but the Wakehurst plant doesn't entirely agree with the description in the Flora of China. I haven't made any progress but I had a lovely day not making it!



**Blood red *Penstemon*
'Torquay Gem'.**



Wakehurst Place.



***Persea ichiangensis* .**

Shade and Woodland Plants Group. by John Mann.

Gilly and I attended the AGM of the Shade and Woodland Plants Group on Sunday 30th June held in Cefn Primary School in the village of Glyncoch just north of Pontypridd. We also received a talk on 'Woodland Treasures' from Colin Ward of Swinesmeadow Farm Nursery. He had brought with him a large selection of plants. A candy stall could not compete and those present responded appropriately.

A plant auction of some rarer plants gifted by members was topped by £40 for a rare *Trillium tennesseense* whose flowers were said to smell like shoe polish.

Also part of the day was a visit to the nearby garden of Brian and Sue Dockerill. An acre of nearly complete shade from a variety of trees, mainly oak, contained a staggering variety and presented in such good order it made one wonder if they worked all night!



Powis Castle.



Ness Botanic Gardens.



Wollerton Old Hall.

While we were there and visiting friends we had a look at some of the gardens on offer. Old favourites Powys Castle, Ness Gardens in the Wirral and Wollerton Old Hall were much as expected. The Dorothy Clive Garden had grown since our last visit and a much loved and remembered feature, a 'river' of gravel rock, was no longer.

Three gardens in the Delaware Forest area, Abbeywood, tidy formality extending to prairie planting; Stonyford Cottage, created from a wetland area with boarded walkways around the pools; and Mount Pleasant, an intensively planted hillside with statuary at every turn.

Cholmondeley Castle coupled extensive landscaping with temples, herbaceous borders, rose garden and lakes and all with an astonishing standard of upkeep.



Dorothy Clive Garden.



Abbeywood Gardens.



Mount Pleasant.

Hidcote has long been a favourite garden and inspiration. Some years ago I acquired a copy of 'The Rock Garden' by Reginald Farrer, with whom Laurence Johnston spent time plant hunting. Imagine my astonishment on opening to find it signed "Laurence Johnston, Hidcote 1912."

I had shown it to their archivist on a previous occasion and knew of their interest so I took this opportunity to leave it, as it was only deteriorating on my bookshelf. It appears that the library had been sold off before the National Trust acquired Hidcote, hence the reason for their excitement.

One last stop on the way was Kilver Court, Shepton Mallet, dramatically set among old waterways and under a railway viaduct.

Interspersed with a few well placed hotels, with a little gastronomy on the side, altogether a good week (but hot)!



Cholmondley Castle Gardens.



The Red Border at Hidcote.



Kilver Court.

British Iris Society Open Day. Rosemoor. 21st september 2019, 2.00pm.

The British Iris Society is holding their AGM and Lecture day at RHS Rosemoor on 21st September 2019 and as the lecture is open to all, we thought it might be of interest to some of your members. This year we are delighted to welcome Sarah Cook who has the National Collection of Sir Cedric Morris irises in Suffolk and you may well have read her article in a recent edition of The Garden magazine. Perhaps you would be kind enough to circulate the details to any interested members, they would be more than welcome. Although the lecture is free, normal admission applies to Rosemoor unless they are RHS members.

The details are:

RHS Rosemoor, Devon EX38 8PH - Saturday 21st September.

Lecture at 2pm Sarah Cook - 'Sir Cedric Morris - art, irises, gardening and friends'

Most plants tell a story - Morris' irises and his other plants are no exception. Sarah will weave these stories through her talk, she will look at his art, introduce us to some of his friends and take us through some of the other aspects that her research has taken her.

COMING EVENTS

The county is buzzing with events in the coming weeks, please let me know if you hear of anything I should know about and I will add it to the list. If you go to anything interesting please consider sending in some pictures so that we can all enjoy it. Many thanks.

Boyton Mill, Launceston PL15 9RG.

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th July, 10.30 - 5.30pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

Millpool Grange, Cardinham, Bodmin, PL30 4HZ.

Sunday 28th July, 2.00 - 5.00pm .

Open for Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

Check website for details: www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Byeways, Launceston PL15 9JE.

Sunday 28th July, 1.00 - 5.00pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

Trenarth, High Cross, Constantine TR11 5JN.

Sunday 4th August, 2.00 - 5.00pm .

Open for Cornwall Wildlife Trust.

Check website for details: www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Kitpurva, Truro TR2 5EY.

Sunday 4th August, 10.30 - 5.30pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

Bonython Manor, Helston TR12 7BA.

Wednesday 14th August, 2.00 - 4.30pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

Bosvigo House, Truro TR1 3NH.

Sunday 18th August, 2.00 - 6.00pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

Crugsillick Manor, Truro TR2 5LJ.

Sunday 25th August, 11.00 - 5.30pm .

Open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Check website for details: www.ngs.org.uk

If you go to any of these events, please would you take some pictures for the newsletter! Three "landscape" (broad and low) pictures fit the page perfectly. "Portrait" (narrow and upright) pictures may have to be cropped to fit them in. Add some words if you like. Thanks.

Please would you let me know of any garden shows, open days or other events that may be of interest to our members so that I can include them in the next newsletter.

If you are planning to attend an event please check the details for yourself. I try to verify them all, but I might make mistakes!

All other content gratefully received.

cornwallhps@gmail.com

NEXT MEETING

Visit to Sue Newton's garden.
 Wednesday 7th August 2019 .
 Gardens Cottage, Prideaux, St Blazey PL24 2SS.
 6.00 for 6.30pm.

This interesting 1.5 acre garden is set on the the edge of the Luxulyan Valley, in a tranquil location and has lots to see. There are many different beds with herbaceous planting and shrubs, all with good colour combinations. Near the charming old granite cottage are terraced rockeries with a wealth of planting, and a productive kitchen garden. Refreshments will be available to buy. Please try and car share as the car park is fairly small.

Directions: From the A390 in St Blazey turn into Prideaux road opposite the Gulf petrol station signed Luxulyan . Proceed half a mile then turn right signed Luxulyan Valley and Prideaux. Soon after seeing the big house you will come to Gardens Cottage, on the left.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Wednesday 4th September 2019 .

**Marina Christopher from Phoenix Perennials will bring plants and talk to us about
 Autumn Colour.**

7 for 7.30pm, Ladock Village Hall.

Wednesday 2nd October .

Dr Julian Sutton from Desirable Plants will say "I believe in the Western Cape".

7 for 7.30pm, Ladock Village Hall.

Please let me have any items that may be of interest to the members so that I can include them in the next newsletter. News items, visits, photographs and upcoming events especially welcome. Please let me know if I drop any clangers!

John Sirkett cornwallhps@gmail.com