



HPS

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

January 2018 Issue 128 BG
Email dorsethps@gmail.com
www.dorsethps.org.uk

January 27th meeting - Helen Yemm 'Inspiration for Late Summer Colour'

Helen is the author of the Telegraph's Thorny Problems column. She has visited us twice before and enthralled us with her entertaining and knowledgeable tales about gardening and its problems and successes. She describes herself as just a passionate, muddy-gloves-and-wellies gardener blessed with the gift of the gab!

We thank our last speaker, Neil Lucas (Knoll Gardens), for giving us generous vouchers for our raffle, one of which will be on the raffle table this month, along with other gardening treats sought out by Jane.

February 24th meeting - AGM

Our AGM will precede the February speaker and will start at 2 pm, and so doors will open at 1.30 pm. Please note that no further admittance will be allowed after 2 pm until the AGM is finished.

February speaker – Ray Broughton 'Pests and Diseases'

Our speaker will be Ray Broughton, talking on Pests and Diseases, a very popular speaker who has been to Colehill many times. He trained at RHS Wisley and now teaches staff and students there. He is a horticultural scientist and lecturer of more than 30 years experience, and is a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture.

Plant health is a priority for the RHS in 2018 too (see January's *The Garden*, p6) "We are at a pivotal point in the future of plant health in the UK and what we all do now will have a significant impact in the years to come. Our focus on plant health to reduce the risk of spreading plant pests and diseases is a process of continuous improvement." It mentions new and introduced pests and diseases such as fuchsia gall mite (I've got it), box blight and *Xylella fastidiosa* – perhaps the most concerning of all, although it hasn't yet arrived in this country. It can infect and kill a wide range of plants and it is hoped that tougher restrictions, including the suspension of high-risk imports, will prevent the disease entering the UK.

Also on the 24th February, in the morning, Anne and Guy Trehane will once again open their garden at Manor Farm, Hampreston, from 10am to 1pm for their **annual hellebore weekend** (an NGS event) – so you can make a day of your visit to Wimborne! Dorset Perennial Plants will be there with hellebores and other spring flowering plants for sale. The garden will be open again on the Sunday from 1-5pm. Hot soup, chocolate and refreshments will be served on both days by Dorset Lupus.

For several years, members of the HPS Committee have been counting **plants flowering in their garden on the first day of January** and the winner this year, by a fairly long shot, is Elaine Lofthouse in Blandford. She had 28 different flowers in bloom. Winter and spring flowers: Primroses and polyanthus, hellebore, pulmonaria, snowdrop, Cyclamen coum, crocus, ipheion, Euphorbia characias 'Glacier Blue', winter jasmine, mahonia, Viburnum tinus, Daphne odora, skimmia and daisies in the lawn. Hanging on from last summer: feverfew, Geum rivale, rudbeckia, Calendula arvensis, Tradescantia 'Bilberry ice', corydalis, bacopa, roses, ivy leaved geranium, Argyanthemum white and yellow, Abutilon megapotamicum, Erysimum 'Bowles Mauve'. Perhaps next year we can all join in!!

Book Now!

The 2018 holiday is already fully booked (it took just 3 days!), but bookings will be taken at the January meeting for the two coach outings: in April to Malverleys and Hardy's Cottage Garden Plants, and in June to Hanham Court Garden and Derry Watkins' Special Plants Nursery. It would help if you could bring your forms already completed – they are available on our website – with a cheque made out to HPS Dorset Group No.2 Account.

Open Gardens begin ...

As you should know, we have asked members to open their gardens (with donations for their own charities) in this our 20th anniversary year. The first to offer is Jane Norris who loves snowdrops and has quite a collection in her small garden. She will open on both Saturday, 3rd and Sunday 4th February from 11.30 to 3,

offering soup, hot drinks and cake, with Dorset Air Ambulance and the Flower Fund at All Saints Church, West Parley, as her charities. Her address is 10 Ryan Close, Ferndown BH22 9TP. Please park with consideration for her neighbours.

HPS Member Lyn Miles has a collection of over 100 Pulmonarias and over 300 named snowdrops in her garden at Westcroft, Boscombe Village, Salisbury, SP4 0AB. She's opening for Cancer Research, (£2.50 entrance) every Thursday in February, Sunday 11th Feb and March 1st & 8th. Home-made soups, tea/coffee and cakes! 11-4. www.westcroftgarden.co.uk

Another special event for our 20th anniversary year is the **Photographic Competition**. There will be three opportunities to enter your pictures (must be digitally), one for a picture taken January to March, another April to June and the third July to September. Cranborne Garden Centre is supplying the prizes and helping to select the winning photographs too. The three winners will then be displayed at the November meeting and members will be able to choose the overall winner. So get snapping and send your best to Roger Melton (dorsethps@gmail.com). See website for full terms and conditions or collect written terms at any meeting.

Sunday, 28th January

BLANDFORD MUSEUM VICTORIAN GARDEN CLUB will be hosting their 7th annual **POTATO FAYRE** at Pimperne Village Hall, DT11 8UZ (10.30 am to 1.30 pm). Dozens of varieties of potatoes for sale by the single tuber, onion sets, shallots, garlic, Heritage & Heirloom Seeds, fruit trees, rhubarb crowns and much more. All welcome. 50p entrance, free parking. There will be information, craft and produce stalls, a plant ID competition and a tombola – and refreshments.

Plant Fayre, 12th May

Please consider this year's Plant Fayre. All the plant sales we hold help boost our finances and hence the quality of our speakers. We would be grateful if you could help us out by potting up the various plants you dig up or divide in the next few months. If you could offer help on May 12th by selling plants or making tea and coffee, please talk to Jane or Barbara. Even better, if you propagate your own plants, you could have your

own table to sell them, please email Jane (dorsethps@gmail.com).

Topical Tips from our Experts

- * While the garden is still in its winter state it is easy to see troublesome weeds such as brambles, docks and tree seedlings. Seek and destroy now! After March new root growth will make them harder to remove.
- * Prune Wisteria, apples and pears.
- * Climbing roses need pruning - all side shoots should be cut back to within three buds and last season's strong new stems need tying in.
- * Check through your seed collection to see what needs sowing first.
- * Keep feeding the birds.
- * Check for vine weevil and use Provado if you see the little horrors.
- * Tidy greenhouse, clean pots and seed boxes.
- * Weed vegetable patches.
- * Dig a trench in readiness for beans and fill with kitchen refuse compost and/or manure.
- * Cut down your autumn-fruiting raspberries.
- * Mulch, mulch, mulch!

TAKE NOTE!!

Please renew your 2018 subscriptions by the end of January. If not, you will be considered to be a visitor to future meetings and will be charged an admission fee of £3.50. As we are expecting a large turnout, Janet Riggs will be dealing only with new memberships or queries. For straightforward membership renewals there will be a Post Box, with envelopes and a slip to complete, for your renewal subscription (cheque or cash). The post box will be on the Membership table. For those of you who have paid by standing order, your new membership card will be given out with your lanyard. **Membership remains the same this year - £5 single, £8 joint.**

Hardy Plant Society - National

Those of you who use the **HPS Seed Distribution** will be sad to hear of the sudden death of Pauline Cooper who has been the Co-ordinator since 2014. Marion Goody has stepped in and the seeds will be posted out as planned by the end of the month.

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