



HPS

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

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Email dorsethps@gmail.com
www.dorsethps.org.uk

February 24th meeting

AGM

Our AGM will precede the talk 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.

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.

A pat on the back ...

Helen Yemm who spoke to us last month told us how much she enjoyed coming to the Dorset Group and even gave us a thumbs-up in her Thorny Problems column. One of her letters asked about a problem the writer was having with hellebores, the buds were being nipped off but not eaten. She said “Obviously I have some answers but I could not be sure on this one, never having heard of nor experienced it before, so didn’t want to stick my neck out in print. However, I suggested it could be voles.

A chance conversation following my talk to the Dorset Hardy Plant Society with hellebore specialist Diana Guy confirmed my suspicions (in my experience these meetings are usually awash with enthusiasts and experts). Voles definitely - little devils, she said. Answer? Mousetraps baited with peanut butter.”

And we also had a lovely thank you letter from a new member (abbreviated and anonymous, but those kind members who helped her out will know who they are!):

“I just wanted to write and say a big thank you for yesterday's meeting. I attended as a visitor and was quite amazed at how friendly and kind people were to me. After buying some raffle tickets I was drawn to the plant sales table and, suffering as I do from Galanthomania, I couldn't resist buying two lovely snowdrops. However, this cleared me out of cash completely as I hadn't thought about buying plants. When I was relating this tale to a lady sitting in the same row, she kindly gave me 50p for a cup of tea! This was so unexpected and kind. And then... when I queued to pay for this and chatted to another lady about how kind someone had been, she then bought me a piece of cake!! How very embarrassing for me but I was and am so appreciative of the kindness shown to me the whole afternoon and found the atmosphere really warm and friendly.”

20th Anniversary Open Gardens

Jane Norris started the ball rolling with her extensive collection of unusual snowdrops:

“I opened my garden on 3rd and 4th February which happened to be the Feast of Candlemas. Long ago men brought back snowdrops from the Crimean wars and they were planted around churchyards: snowdrops were known as Candlemas bells. I want to thank those who came and helped and supported the venture. I raised £246 from donations, 50/50 to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and the Flower Fund at All Saints Church.”

Jane Norris

Who will be next to open their garden for members and friends? You'll be surprised how much you enjoy it! Just email as above suggesting a date and we will support you on the day and let everyone know by email.

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 has opened for Cancer Research, (£2.50 entrance) every Thursday in February, and

March 1st & 8th. Home-made soups, tea/coffee and cakes! 11-4. www.westcroftgarden.co.uk

And of course, admittedly not for us but for the NGS, Anne and Guy Trehane of **Manor Farm**, Hampreston, are opening on Saturday (10-1) and Sunday (1-4) 24th & 25th February. A beautiful garden in a lovely village. Full of spring flowers and masses of hellebores. Dorset Perennials will be selling plants and Lupus will be serving refreshments including home-made soup. The weather forecast is good for that weekend – sunny in fact – it’s a wonderful event to begin the garden-visiting year with. The NGS booklet is out now and you should be able to pick one up at our meeting.

Book Now!

The trip to Malverleys and Hardy’s Cottage Garden Plants sold out so quickly that we organised a second coach for 30th April, so there are still seats on the coaches of both outings; the second being 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.

Photographic Competition

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. The closing date for the first January-March period will be 7th April – we do not have a March meeting because of Easter.



And our final **20th Anniversary Event** will be “**An Afternoon with James Alexander Sinclair**” on 24th November. We will be selling tickets for this event at our next meeting, for £1.50 members/£5.00 visitors, to include refreshments, simply to have control on the number we have in the Hall. First come, first served.

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

We do have the occasional dry day when we really feel like wrapping up and getting stuck in – so here’s what to do!

- * 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.
- *Dig a trench in readiness for beans and fill with kitchen refuse compost and/or manure.
- *Mulch, mulch, mulch!



**WHY NOT “BAG” A
DORSET HPS BAG
IN OUR 20TH
ANNIVERSARY
YEAR?**



**FOR ONLY
£2.50 EACH**

Pick up at our next Meeting, or from Manor Farm Open Garden, or order using our email address or contact us via the website