



HPS

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

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

Please note that you can contact any member mentioned below via our email address dorsethps@gmail.com.

On Saturday, 7th April, (no meeting in March this year, but two in April) our speaker is **David Hurrión**, broadcaster and Deputy Editor of the BBC Gardeners' World magazine, and his subject is "The Answer Lies in the Soil". David's deep love of gardening grew from listening to Gardeners' Question Time. He taught botany, soil science and plant identification, propagation, garden design and crop production.

On April 28th we are delighted to welcome back Mary Payne, very popular garden designer, writer and broadcaster.

On the 7th you'll be able to book yet another coach outing for our 20th anniversary year!! On Saturday, 8th September we are going to **RHS Garden Wisley**. Our affiliation to the RHS gives us free entrance so the cost is a very reasonable £18 for members and £23 for non members. Wisley is one of the world's great gardens, packed with horticultural inspiration. The visit is during Wisley's Flower Show and Plant Fair.

There are also some seats left on our second coach to **Malverleys** – Monday, 30th April. You can download booking forms from the website, or fill them in at the meeting.

HPS Mid Shires Holiday

The balance is due by the end of March – please send your cheque to David Burnham-Slipper or use BACS to pay into our bank account, Angela will be sending a reminder with details.

Photographic Competition

Please join in and enter the competition, we're all amateurs – even I have entered and I don't even own a camera! Send your entry (anything horticultural) to dorsethps@gmail.com by 7th April, or bring it on a memory stick to the meeting. Terms and conditions on the website.

Auriculas

In early spring they begin to grow again from their winter dormancy, putting out fresh foliage which is a



relief after their worryingly drab winter appearance. Carefully remove rotten leaves and keep them in a cool ventilated greenhouse and water as and when required, but avoid swamping the corms. Flower spikes will begin to emerge at varying times this month.

They are best displayed outside, preferably out of the rain. Auricula theatres were very fashionable in Victorian times and are quite simple to make, or you could use an unwanted bookcase.

New member Kevin Steele has a passion for growing seeds and vegetables and is having a go at all the methods recommended to him. He has agreed to let us know how he gets on ...

Kevin's Krafty Korner

"Well, before I joined the HPS, you could put what I knew about gardening on the back of a postage stamp. But things have improved with a lot of tips from our speakers. So during March (after Ray Broughton's talk) I have signed on to the potato blight app, bought some 2-spot ladybirds from the RHS, armed myself with vinegar for my carrots and tomato sauce for my tools, hoed under my lilies (that sounds rude!), and bottled all my nettle and comfrey feed. With our next speaker David Hurrión, I have improved my seed germination by over 50%, just by knowing the difference between vermiculite (retains water, so put on top of compost) and perlite (lets water through, so mix with compost before seed sowing or planting on). I have also continued my fixation on composting, with hot bins, leaf mulch, alpaca poo, horse manure etc. Happy gardening!!"

We would like to hear about your successes - or failures - with the many tips Ray Broughton gave us at the last meeting, and circulated by Debbie a week later. Just let me know if you followed any of his suggestions and we can recommend them to others or not.

A request from National HPS:

"Following the sad and unexpected death of the previous postholder, Pauline Cooper, the Society is in urgent need of a new Seed Distribution Coordinator.

Pauline and her predecessors have built an excellent and efficient team but someone needs to hold the reins.

The Seed Distribution Scheme receives and distributes seed all around the UK and to several countries internationally. It is open to both members and non-members. Seed remaining after all orders have been fulfilled is distributed at shows and to other organisations. By becoming a part of this Scheme, enabling it to continue, grow and develop, you will be helping our Society to achieve its own charitable aims and keeping a lot of seedaholics very happy.

If you think you might be interested and would like to know more about what the role entails please email or give me a ring. I look forward to hearing from you."

Judi Deakin, Honorary Secretary, hpsonsec@gmail.com, 01686 624621

Our **May Plant Fayre** is an important annual event for our Group and some of us are very busy propagating plants for sale – but we do need more! There must be some interesting plants in your garden that have outgrown their space and need splitting – or spare seedlings you have grown – or plants you no longer need. Please save them for us and bring them along on the 12th May. We would like your help too, selling plants or selling teas – it's fun! Even better, if you propagate enough of your own plants, you could have your own table to sell them, please email Jane.

Open Your Garden for our 20th Anniversary

Several of you have volunteered to open your garden for members and friends but we would love more of you to offer. Liz Underwood has kindly agreed to co-ordinate the Members' Open Gardens for us so if you are interested and would like to know more about

it, why not contact her. You choose the date and the charity you wish to support and we will do all we can to help out on the day.

Jean Antell



Sadly, after a year of dealing with cancer, Jean passed away on March 22nd. She was a regular visitor to our meetings and enjoyed the trips and holidays. Despite her illness, she remained so upbeat and positive throughout. We shall miss her wonderful smile.

Topical Tips from our Experts

- Pot up Dahlia and Canna tubers and put them in the greenhouse to start into growth.
- Check through your seed packets and sow what needs sowing now.
- Stop cutting hedges as birds are nesting.
- Divide perennials and pot up some good bits for our plant sale in May!
- Carefully mulch beds with manure to give plants a feed as they start into growth. Chuck some chicken pellets around.
- Gladiolas can be set up on compost and rooted a few at a time to give a longer flowering season.
- Harden off sweet peas.
- Carefully split large clumps of snowdrops and replant, try not to damage the roots
- Sow annuals - cosmos, African marigolds, morning glory, etc.
- Most vegetables can be sown, good idea to cover soil in vegetable garden to warm it up.
- Tomatoes potted on and cucumbers and courgettes could be started.
- Hard prune last year's growth on Buddleias, hardy fuchsias, Leycesteria and Romneya.

Knoll Gardens – 6th April 2018 – 10 until 3

The Knoll Gardens Foundation welcomes local horticultural groups to the garden free of charge as part of the charity's drive to promote wildlife-friendly gardening with the 'wow factor'.

Individual HPS members can attend anytime that day, showing membership ID. Always worth a visit, whatever the time of year, full of ideas for your own garden.



TALK IN THE GARDEN ROOM
Tuesday 24th April, 7.30pm.
"India - a two-way trade, the treasures of the plant hunters and the establishment of European gardens in the sub-continent" by garden historian, Christine Stones (pictured).

Tickets £8 or £18 to include a hot supper in the Café before the talk. Cash bar.
BOOKING ESSENTIAL 01725 517248



PLEASE VISIT WWW.CRANBORNEGARDENCENTRE.CO.UK FOR MORE EVENTS
CRANBORNE GARDEN CENTRE, CRANBORNE, DORSET, BH21 5PP

I am afraid the second advert did not arrive in time to be published for this Meeting. For only £5 would you like to advertise to over 200 very keen gardeners, plus all the visitors who attend our Meetings, plus anyone who may look at our website? Mary Payne is our next speaker and we are expecting a full house! Please contact us via the website if you are interested.