



HPS
HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

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A change of speaker!

The bad news: our Speaker for September, Nick Gilbert, has regretfully had to cancel.

The good news: James has managed to book Alan Edmondson to talk about Primulas & Auriculas (I'm thrilled because I've built an auricula theatre!). Alan is the Past President of the Primula and Auricula Society and is to be heard regularly on the BBC Radio Solent gardening programme.

What a summer! Was it a result of climate change – is it the new normal? The Met Office says: "The atmospheric patterns leading to the UK heat wave do occur in the natural cycles in the weather, but they have been unusually persistent. The jet stream has weakened and got stuck to the north of the UK, with high pressure settled over the UK and Europe. In the summer such a pattern leads to dry soils, which means that if the sunny weather continues the energy of the sun is not used up in evaporating water and the temperatures rise even more. In addition, we've seen a background of global warming due mostly to increased atmospheric greenhouse gases, with global mean temperatures rising more than 1C above pre-industrial levels, and even more so over the northern continents. The natural cycles of weather mean that we shouldn't expect heatwaves like this to happen every year but, when we do experience them, the warmer world means that there is an increased risk of even higher temperatures."

I think the fact that we had had so much winter rain saved us and it's worth leaving in plants which look as if they have died in the hope that they recover. I do wonder about my 'lawn' though.

However, we've enjoyed an extremely busy HPS summer with a wonderful holiday centred on Rutland, four coach outings (two of them to Malverleys!) and a dozen members opening their gardens and inviting us to tea to celebrate our 20th anniversary. Still two to come - on Sunday, afternoon, 30th September – Pat Osman and Diana

Guy are opening their gardens in Broomhill, just a mile or two away from Colehill Memorial Hall – details on the website www.dorsethps.org.uk

Kevin's Krafty Korner

Hope you all had a great summer as I did, and I did promise to come back to you about the trials I ran based on tips and suggestions from the various HPS speakers we had earlier in the year.

Firstly a couple of things that didn't work well-I tried potatoes grown in half soil and half barley straw, and this didn't work. Yields were 30-40% less than potatoes grown in just soil, and I was advised that the straw contains a lot of nitrogen, which stimulates foliar growth versus potato or fruit development, so I won't try that again. Also, I used tomato sauce to clean my secateurs, but a) they 'gummed up' if left for more than 3-4 hours, and b) brown sauce works better (more acidic)! Also bought native 2-spot ladybirds (adults and larvae) in early summer, but they only stayed in the garden for 3-4 days!

Secondly, what worked well-I signed up to 'Blightwatch' and got 4-5 email alerts when tomato or potato blight was due, so closed greenhouses/covered plants outside. This worked brilliantly, and for the first time a) no blight anywhere and b) I could grow very large tomatoes successfully (a bumper crop), including outside. Also the vinegar between the rows of carrots appears to have worked well, no carrot fly.

My buy of the summer (on the HPS trip to Malverleys) was Heliopsis Tuscan Sun. Aided by the hot summer, it flowered prolifically from May until now. It didn't need deadheading for 6 weeks. Also a big thank you to everyone who helped and/or came to my Open Garden on 8th July, we raised £546 for Cash for Kids.

Kevin

Photographic Competition

The final section of the photographic competition finishes at the end of September so it's your last

chance to win tea for two at Cranborne Manor Garden Centre and possibly the £30 voucher as the most popular photo of all. All the photos taken by the winners and runners up will be displayed at the November meeting and members will choose their favourite. Go on – anything horticultural – send it to dorsethps@gmail.com before the end of September.

Events Team

Changes in the Events Team again: Leonie Oldfield has joined us, jumping straight in at the deep end she drove Judy Spratley and Elaine Lofthouse to Kent to check out hotels and a dozen or so gardens for next year's holiday. Angela Edwards and Janet Riggs have stepped down, Janet to concentrate on Membership Secretary duties and Angela after many years of dealing with the hotels - we thank them both. As always, details of next year's events and activities will be distributed at the special November meeting with James Alexander Sinclair and there are still some tickets left for that. Remember – it will be a tickets only event! Tickets will be available at the next meeting and are £1.50 for Members and £5 for non Members, and this includes the usual high quality refreshments!

Topical Tips from our Experts

- *Lift, split and move perennials and shrubs while the ground is still warm. Please pot some up for our plant sales!
- *Prune summer flowering shrubs such as Lavatera, Buddleia, or Sambucus by a third to prevent wind rock.
- *Plant trees and shrubs and hedges to get them off to a good start for next year.
- *Sweep up all the fallen leaves where possible and put in plastic bags, make holes with a fork in the base of the bags and place out of sight. The worms will make light work of composting.
- *After tidying up beds and borders add a layer of mulch to allow the worms and weather to cultivate your soil through the winter.
- *Turn the compost heap.

*Sow sweet peas to over-winter in a sheltered position.

*October is still a good time to sow lawns and meadows.

*Bring your tender plants (cannas, pelargoniums, dahlias, etc.) under protection and keep them on the dry side during the winter. Cannas and dahlias are frequently left in the ground in this area but we never know how cold the winter will be, so better safe than sorry.

*Carry on harvesting all your fruit and vegetables.

*Order bulbs for spring displays.

*Thin out oxygenating plants in ponds.

*Take semi-ripe cuttings.

*Keep dead-heading.

*Recommended time to split hellebores.

Horatio's Garden

Last March, we donated £100 to Horatio's Garden.

They replied:

"Thank you so much for the very generous donation from the Hardy Plant Society to Horatio's Garden Salisbury. We're so grateful for your support. I have attached a receipt for your records.

Horatio's Garden in Salisbury goes from strength to strength. We're looking forward to Cleve West's spring visit to review the planting and we're opening as part of the NGS Open Garden Scheme on Sunday 29th April. The tulips and late Narcissi are just starting to flower. I'm sure you'll have a brilliant turn out for James Alexander-Sinclair's talk. He's very engaging and entertaining! We really appreciate your donation and thank you all sincerely at the Hardy Plant Society.

Very best wishes, Victoria Holton
Horatio's Garden"

Important Announcement

To comply with GDPR Regulations, we would remind all our members that we hold their details electronically, and protected, for the purposes of maintaining their membership of the HPS Dorset Group. There are more details on the website at dorsethps@gmail.com

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