



HPS
HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

March 2019 Issue 137
dorsethps@gmail.com
www.dorsethps.org.uk

Gardening with hardy perennials

On Saturday, 23rd March, local photographer **Mike Webber** will be speaking about **Botanic Gardens from the Arctic to the Tropics**. Doors open at 2 pm as usual.

HPS Kent Holiday

Don't forget the balance of your holiday is due by the end of March – you could pay at the meeting, or use BACS to pay into our bank account. Elaine has sent a reminder with the details.

The Savill Garden

At the meeting you could also book tickets for our coach outing to Savill Gardens on Saturday, 18th May. "The Savill Garden is a tranquil place to discover rare plants from around the world, arranged in stunning seasonal displays."

At the following meeting, in **April**, we are planning a **Seedling Swap**. Simply bring along any surplus seedlings or cuttings and swap for someone else's little treasures. If you have nothing to swap, come and choose something you fancy in return for a small donation to HPS funds.

The speaker for that April meeting will be **Katherine Crouch**. Ten years ago Katherine won the BBC Gardener of the Decade competition and has since been designing gardens all over the South West. Her talk is entitled **Plants That Should Be Better Known**.

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 11th May. We would like your help too, selling plants or selling teas – it's fun! Please email Jane (as above)

Fergus Garrett

Tickets for our Celebrity Talk, in October, will be on sale at this meeting. They will be priced at £2.50 for members and £8.00 for non-members, to include refreshments which will be served, prior to the Talk, from when the doors open at 2pm. You can book your ticket by contacting us using our email address, via our website, or at any of our events until all the tickets are sold.

Amaryllis/Hippeastrum



Isn't it gorgeous? They don't last in flower like an orchid, but my goodness they pack a punch. This one is on the compost heap now. I don't struggle to keep them from year to year as they cost so little as fresh bulbs.

Knoll Gardens

2019 will be a very special year at Knoll. It is 25 years since Neil Lucas arrived in the garden and the year will see a series of celebratory events including a new autumnal Festival of Grasses when the garden is at its annual peak. Should be fantastic! It's a great time to join the Friends of Knoll Gardens Foundation.

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. Spread some chicken pellets around.
- Sow annuals - cosmos, African marigolds, morning glory, etc.

- Harden off sweet peas.
- Gladiolas can be set up on compost and rooted a few at a time to give a longer flowering season.
- Carefully split large clumps of snowdrops and replant, try not to damage the roots
- 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.
- Re-seed lawns damaged by last summer's drought – pre-chit seed as described by Ray Broughton (mix grass seed with slightly damp compost in a plastic bag, wait till the seeds start to shoot - about 3 days, then use in the normal way.

Kevin's Krafty Korner

I've potted up my begonia tubers, planted my beans and peas, started leeks etc in the greenhouse, salad items too, and starting to trim off all my over-wintered perennials - geraniums, fuchsia, chrysanthemums, strawberries. As lily shoots are starting to come through, just disturb all the top of the soil around them. This will kill off 80% of the over-wintering lily beetle eggs.

Kevin

The continuing battle against Slugs

Ferric phosphate-based pellets are now recommended as more wildlife-friendly than metaldehyde pellets, which are being withdrawn in the summer. RHS says that doubts have been raised about even these and recommend "an integrated approach to control, using multiple methods at the same time. Reduce slug havens in winter, trap slugs in April, plant out strong transplants, and hoe in dry, windy weather to expose slugs and snails to drying and predators." (Or throw them on to a busy road!) Amazingly, there's going to be a Slug and Snail Display at RHS

Gardens from 9th March to 19th April. This is to look at what slugs and snails bring to our gardens and the work the RHS is doing to gain a better understanding that could help find sustainable ways to control them. Whatever next?!

And there are more new plants pests, as if we hadn't got enough. String cottony scale (*Takahashia japonica*) has been found on a magnolia in Berkshire, it can be removed with a stiff brush and is merely unsightly. A more serious discovery is the spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) discovered in Kent, which tunnels into pine trees and spruce.

Donations from Surplus Funds

We have been thanked by all the charities supported. However we wanted to share the response from Holton Lee: "Your donation is supporting two participants to continue on the Flourish wellbeing programme. Both participants were socially isolated before attending Flourish and are benefiting from being a part of the supportive Flourish community and engaging in weekly horticultural and craft activities"

The Answer Lies in the Soil

Farming Today recently ran a programme on soil degradation - the decline in soil condition caused by its poor management, usually for agricultural purposes. It is a very serious environmental problem. Soils are a fundamental natural resource, and are the basis for all terrestrial life. Avoiding soil degradation is crucial to our well-being and one of the answers is to try not to disturb the soil too much by digging - in other words, no more double-digging and mulch, mulch, mulch! (So much better for the back!)

Keep on looking at our website – all sorts of horticultural activities are listed on the Calendar of Events www.dorsethps.org.uk


Cranborne
THE GARDEN ROOM

**TALK IN
THE GARDEN ROOM**
Tuesday 30th April 7.30pm

'Honeybees, bumblebees & solitary bees - their differences & the roles they play in pollinating different flowering plants' by Brigit Strawbridge. Tickets £8.50. Supper available in The Café before the talk.
Booking essential 01725 517248.



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



TREHANE

NURSERY

Annual Sale begins Saturday 30th March

Many Camellias reduced by 50%, including large specimen plants

Sale continues Sunday 31st March and then 6 days a week through April
Weekdays 8.30am to 4.30pm; Saturdays 10.00am to 4.00pm

01202 873490 www.trehanenursery.co.uk

Trehane Nursery, Stapehill Road, Wimborne BH21 7ND