



HPS

HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials

Dorset Group *Hardy Times*

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

January Meeting

We are guaranteed a great start to the year when we welcome back Bob Gibbons and his incredible slides on Saturday January 25th. His talk is called **'From Orchids to Pitcher Plants - the extraordinary flora of Newfoundland'**.

Following years working in Nature Conservation Bob now owns Natural History Travel and has travelled extensively to lead tours and photograph the flora and fauna of far flung places. Author of 40 books, Bob was a visiting fellow at Southampton University.

Subscriptions

Make sure you are up to date with your National, due now. You can pay your subs, both local and National, at the January meeting via the post box or by Standing Order direct- please contact us via our email address or the Contacts page on the website. Still £5 and £8 for single/joint Dorset membership. A bargain!

January Flower Count



Look out for the display board showing the results of the member's January flower count, plus a display of some examples now out in our gardens. The results were fascinating, many

thanks to those of you who ventured out on such a gloomy day. Around a dozen people sent in lists, if you still have one for me send to diana.kitemoor@btinternet.com

Holiday and trips.

Booking is well underway, do not delay to book, or you may miss out.

AGM

Our AGM will be in February – time to re-elect your Committee for another year and we are looking for new Committee members. If you would like to know more - why not have a chat with Debbie.

National HPS AGM

In 2020 our Dorset Group will be hosting the National AGM to be held at the Allendale Centre, Wimborne. You need to get your ticket, available from National, as soon as possible. For those members offering to assist throughout the day, there will be a discount payable to them on the day to thank them for their help.

The two speakers are Keith Wiley of Devon, one of our very favourites and creator of Wildside, Devon, and Mat Reese, ex Dixter and Head Gardener of the beautiful garden at 'Malverleys' in Hampshire.

Blandford Potato Day

Do not forget this fabulous event is on Sunday January 26th 2020 at Pimperne Village Hall. DT11 8UZ. 10.30 am to 1.30 pm.

There will be unusual seed potatoes, Heritage seeds, Fruit Trees, soft fruit and so much more. Tea, cake and soup available. Admission 50p.

Dorset Alpine Garden Society Meetings

Corfe Mullen Village Hall 6.45 for 7.30

Thursday February 6th Paul Tout, Botanic Tour leader and creator of an Italian Garden.

'The Northern Adriatic. Europe's most biodiverse region.'

Snowdrop events nearby

HPS member Jane Norris, 10 Ryan Close Ferndown BH22 9TP will be open **Sat 15th /Sun 16th Feb between midday and 3.00 pm** or by appointment that week ring 01202 873176 See an impressive range of unusual and rare snowdrops packed into a small space.



Kingston Lacy daily 10 – 4 pm

Shaftesbury Snowdrop Study, Sale and Social Day Sat Feb 8th A ticketed event for lectures (John Grimshaw, Matt Bishop and Aaron Davis) and early admission to the snowdrop sale. Check out shaftesburysnowdrops.org.

Heale House, Middle Woodford, Wiltshire usually mid February, refer to their website before you go as sometimes they flood.

Abbotsbury Garden have a winter special offer until February 29th admission just £5.

Not to forget the NGS Snowdrop Open Days.

Manor Farm, Hampreston. Don't forget this will be open on the morning **Feb 22nd** (10-1pm) BEFORE our next meeting and AGM with soup and hot chocolate available in aid of Lupus, and Dorset Perennials will be selling plants, so why not make a day out of it!

Westcroft, Boscombe Village, member Lynne Miles' garden, Thursdays Jan 16th and 23rd 11 am – 4 pm

Old Vicarage, East Orchard, Shaftesbury Saturday Feb 8th 2 – 4.30 pm

Heron's Mead, Wool Sunday Feb 16th 2 – 5 pm

Lawsbrook, Shillingstone Sundays Feb 16th and 23rd, 10 am – 5 pm

East Lambrook Manor, East Lambrook, Somerset Saturday Feb 15th, 10 am – 5 pm

Elworthy Cottage, Taunton Sunday Feb 16th and Thursday 27th, 11 am – 4 pm

Plants of the month

One of nature's greatest gifts to the winter garden is that of scent. Some of our finest winter scented shrubs can look quite dull the rest of the year but with careful placing can make a huge

contribution to the garden. All the following really pack a punch.

For a larger garden the highly scented deciduous ***Lonicera Fragrantissima*** and ***Viburnum bodnantense 'Dawn'*** making large, rather plain, shrubs out of season but are ideal hosts for a less vigorous clematis such as *Clematis 'Arabella'*.

Those with smaller gardens may turn to the wonderful **Daphnes**. They are expensive, slow growing and prone to dying for no reason, but everyone can tuck one in somewhere in a sheltered spot. 'Perfume Princess', a new one, worth seeking out, has bigger flowers that grow all along the stems and a long flowering period.

The **sarcoccas** are excellent, compact, evergreen, unfussy and slow growing. There are many to choose from and I like *Sarcococca ruscifolia* 'Dragons Gate' that has longer pointed leaf than the others and red berries. Roy Lancaster collected it in Yunnan China near a temple entrance. Sarcococas grow anywhere, sun or shade and are good in a pot.

Perhaps the sweetest scent of all is the **Wintersweet, *Chimonanthus praecox***. Preferring a sheltered spot it is otherwise unfussy and has small, but stunning, almost transparent yellowish green flowers. Deciduous, it ultimately grows to 2.5 metres or more against a wall.

If you grow any of these perhaps you would be kind enough to bring a sprig to the meeting.

What **not to do in the garden this month.**

I was all set to cut down my rudbeckias to the ground and tidy the *verbena bonariense* when a delightful charm of goldfinches descended upon them, there must still be plenty of seed in them so they will stay for a few more weeks.

- Please think carefully before razing everything to the ground, concentrate on those that are soggy and collapsing.
- With such low light levels now hold off sowing seeds (apart from Chillies which need a long period of growth to succeed). Early March sown seeds soon catch up earlier sowings and give healthier, sturdier plants.

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