



**HPS**  
HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

Gardening with hardy perennials



**SUSSEX GROUP  
NEWSLETTER**

**Autumn 2018**

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Photographs from the HPS Image Library  
and our Sussex members

Website [www.hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk](http://www.hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk)

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

What a challenging time we have had in our gardens this year. After a slow and cold start, sudden warmth seemed to concertina the spring plants together, and then came the heat and the drought. Our weather station here in Lindfield recorded 37 days with out rain (you can see our data on <http://lindfield-gardens.co.uk/lindfieldweather/index.htm>) and we spent more time watering than gardening: despite our best endeavours we lost some things and many were scorched and unhappy. Now in late summer things which had shrivelled up and been cut right back such as *Pulmonaria* and *Alchemilla mollis* are now showing fresh growth after the rain: but the weeds are also making a strong come back.

We have had some excellent outings this year, and of course our wonderful holiday to include the Malvern show. Despite our best intentions not to buy plants, like nearly everyone on the trip we were seduced by the wonderful and unusual offerings at the different nurseries and at the show itself. Enormous thanks to Shirley for finding such excellent places to visit and such a lovely hotel. We hope to run a holiday in 2020 (it is a very time consuming and at times frustrating process to organise and we cannot risk wearing Shirley out!). Another highlight for me was How Green Nursery, with the unexpected bonus of a super garden showcasing some of the plants on offer, and a very generous guided tour with the owner Simon.

Our foray into attending plant fairs to raise awareness of our group has had mixed success. We nearly froze at Arundel, had a good time at Sussex Prairies, lacked customers at Tilgate and Borde Hill is yet to come. We did sell some good plants, and some returning customers at Tilgate commented on how well our plants establish and grow– I suspect in part because they have been grown in real gardens rather than coddled in polytunnels, and also because of the care from real plant lovers. We made enough to cover our expenses and handed out literature, but no new recruits as yet. Many thanks to all who helped at these events and gave so generously of their time.

Looking at our garden today I was struck by how much I enjoy lovely Lobelias. Not the annuals so often found in tubs and hanging baskets, but the gorgeous perennials available.

Exotic *Lobelia tupa* (although not reliably hardy), glowing *Lobelia cardinalis* beside a pond, and the delightful range of colours in *Lobelia x speciosa* – Jim grew Compliment mixed from seed and they are stunning, flowering for a long period and also very good for cutting: however, they are thirsty plants as we found this summer.



*Lobelia tupa*



*L. cardinalis*



*L. x speciosa*  
'Compliment Mixed'

Looking forwards we have an excellent series of indoor events to come as well as a winter coach trip. I plan to continue with regular e mail updates – do let me know of any plant/garden related events I could include. May I also take this opportunity to thank not only our industrious committee, but all who cheerfully help at our events and willingly share much horticultural wisdom.

Sue

## FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

I am pleased to report that we have 172 current members.

Subscriptions are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. If you wish to pay by cheque (payable to Hardy Plant Society Sussex Group) you can bring it to any of the meetings in September, October or November. Cheques will not be cashed until January so can be post-dated to 01/01/2019. Cheques can also be posted to the Treasurer (address on the back of this newsletter) to arrive by the end of December.

Subscription prices are:

Single £12.50, or £22.50 for 2 members at the same address.

Payments made electronically must use the following bank details

Payee Sort Code: 77-25-08

Payee Account Number 03118268

It is important that you quote as a reference your surname plus your national HPS membership number.

Alternatively you can set up a standing order using internet banking, the form available at meetings or by downloading from our website <https://hardy-plant-sussex.org.uk/membership.html>

Please ensure payments are remitted promptly. If you decide not to renew your membership, please let Sue Stockwell know so that time is not wasted chasing up non-receipt.

## MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2018

### SUNDAY 25th November 2018 at 11 am

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open for coffee at 10-30 am.

There will be the Trading Stall and a Raffle.

#### Talk by Roger Parsons

*"Sweet Peas and other Lathyrus varieties"*

Roger holds the National Collection of Sweet Peas and other Lathyrus varieties and holds 1300 at his West Sussex home. There are too many varieties to hold all of them, but contact Roger if you require a special seed and he will do his utmost to help you find it.

Roger is bringing seeds for us to buy.

Website [www.rpsweetpeas.com](http://www.rpsweetpeas.com) Lunch will follow at approx 1pm.



**Lunch:** We ask you all to bring a dish, either savoury or sweet and we will sit down together and enjoy a 2-course lunch. This will be served buffet-style. Wine and soft drinks will be available on the House and there is, of course, no charge for this lunch, but booking is required for this event. Please use enclosed booking form.

## MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2019

All indoor meetings are held in the Henfield Hall, Henfield BN5 9DB. There is a large free car park adjacent to the hall. The hall is open to members at 1-30pm for all meetings unless stated otherwise. The meetings commence at 2pm.

### **SUNDAY 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 2pm**

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

#### **Talk by Steve Bustin**

*“Ellen Willmott”*

We are delighted to welcome back as our speaker Steve, who is also a member of Sussex HPS. Steve is a garden journalist and keen gardener and he explores the life and times of one of Britain’s greatest plant collectors, bulb experts and garden eccentrics Ellen Willmott. Find out how to booby-trap a daffodil, how to let someone know what you think of their garden (without uttering a word) and who you should call when arrested for shoplifting!

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.



## MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2019

### **WEDNESDAY 13th February 2019**

Outing by coach to Hillier Winter Garden, Romsey and Down House, Hampshire. We leave Hickstead Service Station RH17 5NX adjacent to A2100 accessed from southbound side of A23, at 8.30am. You may leave cars here. We leave Down House at 4pm for the homeward journey.

The Winter Garden is an RHS partner garden, so bring your RHS card First name on card applies only, see page 48 of the RHS Handbook 2018 to explain this rule further.

Cost, including entry to both gardens, coach fare and refreshments at The Down House is £36.00 for non-RHS members, £26.50 for RHS members (see note above). This also includes the coach driver's tip.

Any friends are welcome, but the cost would be £41 if non-RHS or £31.50 if they are an RHS member.

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### **SUNDAY 24th February 2019 at 2 pm**

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

#### **Talk by Dr Tim Ingram**

*"Under the Apples"*

Tim is a lifelong gardener and plant enthusiast and writes regularly in the HPS Journal, a keen member of Kent HPS and of the Alpine Garden Society he also operates a small nursery of interesting, unusual plants, and alpiners from his own garden, as well as exhibiting at the Plant Fairs Road Shows, particularly in the spring with snowdrops.

## MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2019

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.  
Tim will bring plants for sale.

Website [www.coptonash.plus.com](http://www.coptonash.plus.com)

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### **SUNDAY 24th March 2019 - AGM at 2pm**

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

followed at approx. 2.30pm by

#### **Talk by Rachel Castle**

*“Auriculas – Their History and Cultivation”*

Rachel is a busy nursery owner in Kent who greatly enjoys growing Auriculas. She regularly attends the Plant Fairs Road Shows with the most attractive and tempting stalls of wonderful plants.

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

Rachel is bringing plants for sale.

Website [www.swallowfieldsnursery.com](http://www.swallowfieldsnursery.com)



## MEETINGS PROGRAMME 2019

**SUNDAY 28th April 2019 at 2.15pm**

at The Henfield Hall, BN5 9DB, doors open at 1.30pm

**Talk by Mark Lyman**

*“Delightful Delphiniums”*

We welcome back Mark as our speaker, he gave us a wonderful talk last year, you may remember, on Snowdrops. Mark is past Chairman of Hampshire HPS and a keen grower of Delphinium, which he also displays at the large RHS shows on behalf of the Delphinium Society.

Mark will be bringing plants.

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

Seedling swap, where the following procedure applies:

1. Bring along any seedlings or tiny plants that you have left over and do not need, still in their original compost and pot or seed tray. Clearly label the pot with the plant's name, variety, if appropriate and any other information. Add your name in case of queries.
2. The Committee provides compost, plastic cups, spoons, labels and pencils for the new owners to use.
3. Help yourself to a small scoop of whatever takes your fancy, put in a cup and write your own label. Please don't take the original one. Each cupful is charged at 10p with an honesty box for the money, so bring lots of small change!



## TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

### Tuesday 28th May 2019 at 11am

Frances Druce invites us to her garden near Lindfield

Frances says, *"The garden at Copyhold Hollow muddled along in a mist of ignorance and little time for gardening for several years. Then followed attendance at Brinsbury doing the RHS General Certificate which provided a solid basis on which to grow. The topography cried out for rhododendrons, so I planted a few. Paths went in where I tended to walk which involved carrying 10 tons of sandstone gravel up the slope each winter for three years. So, the garden was not "designed" but just came into being.*

*It is in a hollow, opening out to the north, with steep slopes leading up to woodland. The area around the house is flat for those who do not care to climb the slopes and has a cottage garden feel to it. Stumpery, soft fruit and vegetable plot (grown mostly for the benefit of the wildlife!) pond and bog garden complete the site."*

### Wednesday 5th June 2019 at 11am

Carole and Ian Woodland invite us to their garden in Bexhill.

Carole says, *"Our garden is on the south coast 400 yards from the sea, with salt laden winds at times. Three feet below the surface of our garden is yellow sand, which does present challenges. In summer it does not retain moisture and in winter the sand does not retain heat.*

*Planting is a matter of seeing which plants will survive in these conditions, but in the sixteen years we have been here we have managed to build up an extensive range of plants and trees.*

*The rear garden is about 130 x 60ft and this includes a gazebo, a summerhouse, a knot garden, a seaside garden, yellow borders a hot border, a white border, herb area, two water features, a fruit-cage and a vegetable plot."*

## TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 11am

Pauline Bastick invites us to her garden in Crowborough.

*Pauline says, "A fairly large and established rear garden which I have adapted and updated since moving here six years ago. It is still work in progress as I learn to cope with the extremes of gardening conditions in Crowborough. There are flower and vegetable areas in addition to a pond and rockery. Please be aware that there are bee hives in the garden."*

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 11am

Celia Withers invites us to her garden at Flansham near Bognor Regis.

*Celia says, "Although there is still some renovation work to do, after three years of hacking back overgrown areas, the garden is better than it has been for some time! It is just under ½ acre, with mixed planting, including a number of shade beds, perennial beds in sun, some fruit bushes and a large pond much used by local wildlife."*

**TO BOOK, as usual, please contact Lesley Wembridge (her details are on the back of the newsletter).** If you are not on e-mail, you will need to send her a stamped addressed envelope, so that she can send you instructions in time for your visit. Please also remember that if you book for a friend you will need to give their name and they must be a member of HPS Sussex Group as well.

We would like to thank our very welcoming hosts this year, Janet Daly, Mary Hember, Aideen Jones and Pauline Clarke. We had lovely sunny days for each of the visits. Sadly, our visit to Jan Salter's garden in February was cancelled as it was under several inches of snow!

## TALKING PLANTS PROGRAMME 2019

If you would like to get to know more people in the Sussex HPS, then please consider volunteering to host a TP yourself. It's a great way to make lasting friends. It's not the same as a formal garden visit, just a few people round for coffee and a chat about plants and gardening. Please contact Jane Collins (details also on the back of the newsletter) if you might be interested.

Here is a picture from a previous Talking Plants visit to Pauline Clarke's garden last August.



## A NEW APPROACH TO PROLONGING GARDEN INTEREST?



When the alliums in our parterre garden had gone to seed, but were still standing well, Jim was inspired to spray the heads with shiny silver paint. They really lifted the planting for a few weeks – and it was very entertaining to hear garden visitors commenting on the unusual plants and wondering where you could buy silver alliums!

Sue.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Wednesday May 15th 2019**

We travel in our own cars to Dale Park House and Parham House.

Meet at Dale Park House BN18 0NP at 10-30am. Here we enjoy refreshments and the wonderful garden.

Afterwards we move onto Parham Gardens RH20 4HS. Here we can purchase lunch in the Cafe. Parham is an RHS Partner garden, so, if you are an RHS member it is free entry, (see page 48 in RHS handbook 2018) if not, the cost for entry this year is £9.90 (there may be an increase next year but at this stage we do not know).

The cost for this visit, if you are an RHS member, is £8.50.

If not an RHS member the price will be £18.40.

### **Chenies Manor Plant Fair. Sunday July 14th 2019**

We are planning a trip by coach to Chenies Manor near Rickmansworth, for their Plant Fair. Details of costs and timings will follow later when they have been finalised. We hope that you can join us, and also, that the coach will have room for all the plants that we will buy!



## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Sunday September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019**

Speaker: - Simon Sutcliffe Subject: - "Growing for Chelsea"

In July 2018 we visited How Green Nursery, the nursery owned and run by Simon's family, this is a wholesale nursery growing for the trade, but we were very warmly welcomed and enjoyed a most interesting morning. We were allowed to buy from an exciting selection of plants. The nursery is open three times a year for anyone to buy plants. Simon will speak to us on his Chelsea Flower Show exploits.

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

Simon will be bringing plants for you to purchase.

Website [www.howgreennursery.co.uk](http://www.howgreennursery.co.uk)

### **Sunday October 20<sup>th</sup> 2019**

Speaker: - Dr Julian Sutton. Subject: - The Botanical Gardener

We welcome Julian back to give us yet another exciting afternoon in his usual enthusiastic style, embracing portraits of plants with snippets of science attached.

Raffle, plant stall, members plant display, trading stall and tea.

Julian will bring plants for sale.

Website [www.desirableplants.com](http://www.desirableplants.com)

### **Sunday November 24<sup>th</sup> 2019. Hall open at 10-30am for coffee, meeting begins at 11am.**

Speaker: - Troy Scott Smith Subject: - "Roses at Sissinghurst, their care and cultivation"

Raffle and Trading stall

Lunch will follow at approx 1pm, following the same format for lunch as described on page 6.

## A HARDY SURPRISE

We are generally familiar with which plants are hardy and which are tender. For example, Petunias and Pelargoniums are perennial in their native land but are not hardy in the UK. But there are some familiar genera which include hardy subjects that are little known.

One of my favourites is *Begonia evansii*. Yes, that's right....*Begonia*.



The plant dies right down over winter but grows back, reliably, every Spring. It also has small offsets that look like apple pips which develop in the leaf axils during Autumn. These drop to the ground and can be left to develop or be collected up and grown in small pots for planting out the next year. One of the advantages of this is that it can be spread around in dry, rooty areas, such as, under shrubs or hedge bottoms, without the need for digging large planting holes. The specimen shown in the

photo is only 2 years old and is grown in a large pot. *Begonia evansii* alba (or its sister plant *B. evansii* which is pink) loves to grow in light shade or can even cope with dry shade.

Another *Begonia* that is hardy and suitable for a shady rockery or top of a wall is *B. sutherlandii*.

This species grows in shady woodland in South Africa. It is smaller than *B. evansii* but a treasure none the less.

Both of these plants can be found at specialist nurseries or from plant fairs.

Elaine



## WHAT IS A HARDY PLANTER?

Hardiness of Hardy Planters is described by their ability to survive adverse gardening conditions. A Hardy Planter's ability to tolerate cold, heat, drought, flooding or wind (?) are typically considered measurements of hardiness. It is also defined by their geographical location. Sussex Group can withstand less cold than, say, our President's region of Yorkshire: whilst some Hardy Planters need to be relocated to warmer climes through the winter. This could mean



travelling abroad or taking advantage of the warmer conditions provided by a heated greenhouse or conservatory. Others cope by becoming dormant throughout the winter. A warm layer of fleece is recommended for Hardy Planters where you are unsure of their cold tolerance.

Winter-Hardy Planters grow during the winter and improve the general appearance of the garden by tidying up or mulching or digging it over. Some may simply be found by the fireside planning new borders or ordering seeds and plants for next year's displays. Interaction is also very important, through meetings of HPS local groups and this 'feeding' is essential for their further growth.



So, to sum up, Hardy Planters are a lovely species and well worth investing time on.

Elaine

## FROM THE EDITORS

### Our First Newsletter

We would like to introduce ourselves to you. The new Newsletter Editors, Elaine Boot and Jo Pamplin. We have been members for only a couple of years, so be gentle with us!

Elaine has been interested in Horticulture since childhood and went on to study the subject at school, working in the industry at various places and latterly as Propagator at Standen, a National Trust property in East Grinstead.

Jo has a lovely garden in Turner's Hill and also runs her own small nursery and sells at plant fairs as JoGrows.

We both volunteer in the garden at Standen each week with particular emphasis on the propagation. The garden is kept well supplied with summer bedding and tender plants from the on-site nursery.

We enjoy visiting other gardens, large or small, to steal ideas and buy new plants.

We hope that you will enjoy our 'take' on the Newsletter and please feel free to send in any articles or photos that we might include in future issues. Meanwhile, here are pictures of Elaine's garden and the Courtyard at Standen, with some of our plants.

