



Cornwall Plant Heritage

Newsletter. December 2017

With Christmas rapidly approaching it is good to look back at a successful year and to look forward to an interesting programme of events in 2018.

Last year's visits started on a magnificently sunny day in March when we were shown around Lamorran by the garden's creator, Robert Dudley-Cooke. It is a quite remarkable place in one of the mildest parts of the county, tucked into the slope above St. Mawes. Many thanks to the Dudley-Cookes for their hospitality and to the head gardener, Jack Clutterbuck who showed us the work that is underway as the garden matures and develops.

Another beautiful spring day found us in Heligan among the Camellias and Rhododendrons and gave us an insight into the early years of the estate. Tricia and Peter Howard invited us to their Hidden Valley Garden near St Austell in June. It is a beautiful garden maintained to the highest standards, if it didn't have such a charming and relaxed atmosphere it would be quite intimidating!

We have had two fundraising Plant Sales through the year. The HPS sale in Truro went very well, thanks to all those who helped and also those who brought plants. It wasn't the best weather we could have hoped for but nobody was struck by lightning and that has to be a bonus. The Plant Sale at Tremenheere in September was well attended and the Plant Heritage stall was busy. Tremenheere is a lovely garden and constantly developing. The south facing valley looks out over Mounts Bay and is the perfect location for a day in the autumn sunshine (and once again nobody struck by lightning). Fabulous.

The New Year is coming and with it our Annual Meeting in Chacewater (details below). A wide variety of interesting speakers lined up and Liz Pridham serves an amazing lunch, I'm looking forward to it already and that's before I've eaten my way through Christmas.

On which subject, I hope you all have a Happy Christmas and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Last Meetings.

**Plant Sale. Tremenheere Sculpture Garden,
Penzance. 10th September 2017.**

A cool September day for the plant sale at Tremenheere Sculpture gardens. This year it was very well supported by the nurseries, a lot of people visited through the day and there was an atmosphere of hustle and bustle.



Hustle and bustle.



Plant Nannies.



**National Collection of
Dahlia stand.**

Cornwall Plant Heritage had a stand promoting the Plant Nannies and the day went well. A number of new Plant Nannies joined in and they have taken away plants in need of some conservation help to brighten their gardens. Welcome to you all. When you are able to propagate a piece bring it back to us and we will pass it on again. Hopefully if we work together we can keep some of the less usual plants going in Cornish gardens.

We also had a space for plant sales, thanks to everyone who brought something (or bought something). It helps raise some cash to get us through the year. Thanks to Charlie and everyone who turned up and helped out on the day and I hope you enjoyed lunch in the cafe. In retrospect I think we were probably trying to do too many things at the same time so we will bear that in mind for next year (fingers crossed we will be invited).



**Bananas in the lower
valley..**



View from the garden.



**Cycads and Agave on the
dry slopes.**

The garden at Tremenheere was looking magnificent. It houses a large range of exotic species, specialising in those that depend on the mild conditions of the slope overlooking Mounts Bay. The views from the top part of the garden are breathtaking and show off the magic of the landscape of West Penwith.

Walking along the side of the stream under the shade of the trees is one of the garden delights of the county and the undergrowth is richly embroidered with remarkable plants. The grassy valley that runs up through the centre of the garden is studded with large palm trees in a variety of unusual species and if you take a cup of tea with you, you can recline on the grass in some of the most exclusive shade to be found in a garden in the UK. It doesn't improve the flavour, but it enhances the taking of tea! Excavation for the James Turrell Skyspace at the top of the garden exposed some free draining rocky slopes that suit a wide range of succulents and is rich in members of the Proteaceae from Australia and South Africa. The Skyspace is a remarkable installation and well worth a visit to the garden in itself. An increasing range of remarkable sculptures can be found throughout the garden and there is a newly built gallery opposite the cafe.



Banksia blechnifolia..



Synandropadix vermitoxicus.



Beaufortia sparsa.

The plants add to the remarkable atmosphere in the garden. *Banksia blechnifolia* comes from western Australia, but it has settled well at the top of the garden, making a carpet of low branches that support the vertical leaves. Another member of the Protea family from Western Australia was *Beaufortia sparsa*, the scarlet-orange flowers were scattered among the wiry branches. *Synandropadix vermitoxicus* is an aroid from central South America (Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru mostly). It produces an astonishing parchment coloured Arum flower with a network of green veins in mid-summer and then dies back to a bulb through the winter. A plant appeared in the plant sale and I have never seen it offered before. This one came home with me!

Nerine meeting. 28th October 2017.



Nerine bowdenii
'Bicolour'.



Nerine sarniensis 'Chateau
Mouton'.



Nerine x versicolor
'Mansellii'.

A great pleasure to welcome members to my garden in October to see the Nerine. The plants were flowering well and looking good. *Nerine sarniensis* forms had been better a week earlier and *N. x versicolor* (a hybrid with *N. undulata*) would be at their best a week later, so strangely the date was perfect to catch both groups. The hardy forms of *N. bowdenii* share the greenhouse with them, though they could grow just as well outside.

Thanks to everyone who came, I hope you enjoyed a little splash of strident colour as the evenings close in!



Nerine sarniensis
'Dingaan'.



Nerine sarniensis 'Salmon
Supreme'.



Nerine x versicolor
'Judith'.

Next Meeting: Annual meeting and study day. Roseland House, Chacewater.

We will start the program for next year with our Annual Meeting. We will meet up over coffee and then carry it through to the business part of the day. When that has been concluded we have three short talks to take us to lunch. The Eden Project will give us an introduction to their National Collection of *Kniphofia*, the second session is still being confirmed, and then John Price will talk about the National Collection of *Camellia reticulata* cultivars at Tregothnan. Once again we are grateful to Liz Pridham for preparing lunch, there should be time for us all to chat and review the year in Cornwall Plant Heritage (and I imagine we will find other things to talk about as well).
After lunch we have three speakers (two still to confirm).
Richard Morton from Trewidden will talk about his trips to Japan and his search for the "Wilson 50" Azaleas.
The day will end at 4.00pm.

**ANNUAL MEETING
TUESDAY 30th JANUARY 2018.
10.30am - 4.00pm.
ROSELAND HOUSE, CHACEWATER, TRURO, TR4 8QB.**

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I look forward to seeing everyone again. Thanks to all who came last year for making the Annual Meeting such fun. Please let me know that you are attending this year so that we can plan the catering. Let us know any special dietary requirements, Liz is a genius and will be able to accomodate them!
Non-members are very welcome while there are spaces available, there will be a small charge to cover lunch.

Programme for 2018.

Tuesday 30th January. Annual Meeting. Roseland House, Chacewater TR4 8QB.
Tuesday 13th March. Visit to Trewidden to see the new "Wilson 50" Azalea collection.
Tuesday 3rd April, 2.30pm. Devon Plant Heritage visit to Ince Castle, Cornish members welcome.
Tuesday 17th April, 2.00pm. Visit to Caerhays.
Saturday May 5th, 10.00am - 2.00pm. HPS Plant Sale, Truro. June. Visit to Eden and the National Collection of Kniphofia.
July. Chairmans Open Evening.
September. Plant Nannies Event.
Late October. Visit to the National Collection of Lapageria at Roseland House and talk on "Madeira".
Full details should be available at the Annual Meeting and will included in Newsletters and posted online (hopefully, it is a bit awkward but we are working on it).

Plant Nannies.

The Plant Nannies exist to encourage the cultivation, propagation and dissemination of uncommon, poorly known or endangered garden plants in Cornwall.

They are organised by the Cornwall group of Plant Heritage, a national charity that seeks to encourage the conservation of garden plants through cultivation.

Who can take part?

Anyone with an interest who would like to grow a plant and assist in the Cornish conservation effort.

What does it involve?

We have a few plants available that we think deserve some care to keep them in cultivation. We give them to the Plant Nannies to look after and enjoy in their own gardens. When the plant grows and they feel able to divide or propagate a small section then they return a young plant to us and keep the original. The young plants are either given out to a new Plant Nanny or we sell them to raise money for Plant Heritage.

What does it cost?

Nothing. We hope to raise money by selling surplus plants through regular Rare Plant sales in the region.

What do we ask?

We ask for an e-mail address so that we can send you Cornwall Plant Heritage Newsletters that will inform you of coming events and plant sales.

What do we get?

With your help we can keep plants in cultivation in gardens that are in danger of disappearing. Together we can raise the profile of plants that were once better known but are now endangered and we can raise some money to support the national charity.

Hope to see you soon.

John Sirkett.

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