



# Plant Heritage

CONSERVING THE DIVERSITY OF GARDEN PLANTS

## Cornwall Group Newsletter. April 2019

Spring is well underway, April showers are falling and for the first time this year temperatures have dropped below the seasonal average rather than soaring above it. I hope your gardens are looking good and plants growing well as we prepare for the coming summer.

### Annual Branch Meeting. Lost Gardens of Heligan. 29th January 2019.

No sign of the warm weather in January when we met at Heligan for the Annual Branch Meeting. It was a misty, overcast day when we met for a hot drink in the cafe before moving down to the meeting room. Many thanks to the management at Heligan for offering such a useful facility, and for their cheery efficiency as we (lets be honest, as I) got myself muddled in the process.



**Grafting practical in the meeting room .**



**Cornwall Plant Heritage at Heligan.**



**Part of the Heligan National Collection.**

The meeting went well, it is good to note that our membership numbers remain fairly stable. The financial support that we received from head office ended last year so inevitably we will become more dependent on fundraising. It is also sad to report the retirement of our secretary, Ros Smith and our collections co-ordinator, Alistair Rivers. Both of them have held their positions for many years, guided the Cornwall group through some difficult times and made an enormous contribution to cultivated plant conservation. I am immensely grateful to them for all that they have contributed to the running of the group and the support of the National Collections in the county. We are very lucky that Caroline Stone has stepped into the role of collections co-ordinator and I look forward to working with her. The post of Secretary is still vacant. The key part of the role consists of taking minutes at our committee meetings and the

distribution of this newsletter, which is now done almost entirely by e-mail. Perhaps you might consider taking it on?



*Heligan.* .



*Mature Rhododendron.*



**Maintaining the atmosphere.**

Once the business of the meeting was concluded it was a great pleasure to welcome Lucy Pitman to Cornwall. Lucy was able to fill us in about current developments at head office. The period of re-organisation following the retirement of the National Chairman and then the senior manager has been completed, a new financial plan is in place and the newly established panels are starting to work.

Following Lucy's presentation I gave a short presentation on the theoretical aspects of grafting, and we broke for lunch.

After lunch we had a chance to face the more practical issues around grafting. I hope everybody had a chance to try the grafting secateurs. I rather like them, but it will be interesting to hear what others think. Even more interesting to hear how successful they were ( 100% effective I am sure! ). With all our fingers still attached it was a delight to hear from Candy Smit about the history of Heligan and the particular problems of managing a garden open to the public with a range of very mature plants. Maintaining a proper balance between the unique atmosphere of the garden and the rejuvenation of the plants is constantly under consideration. As we were shown around the garden the expertise of the garden team was quickly apparent as they guided the restoration of this unique place.

Thanks to everybody at Heligan for making us so welcome and providing such a direct insight into the problems of conservation.

## Antony Woodland Garden. 26th March 2019.

In March we visited the National Collection of *Camellia japonica* in the Woodland Garden at Antony House. I arrived early so that I could indulge myself in a hot chocolate from the cafe which turned out to be a very good decision!



*Camellia japonica* 'Ivory Tower'.



**Antony Woodland Gardens.**



*Camellia japonica* 'Splendens'.

A bright, sunny afternoon was perfect for a stroll through the woodlands and along the riverside to the *Camellia* collection. Most of the plants are grouped in a gentle valley at

the top of the garden and we had arrived as they reached their peak. The plants are well established and it was very pleasing to see them thriving together, well maintained and well labelled. They are accompanied by a wide range of other woodland shrubs and trees, the new planting of *Magnolia* at the head of the valley was looking particularly good. The walk back to the car park was a gentle downward meander, a thing that I think we all appreciated. A lovely afternoon with good company in a lovely garden.

### **Changes on the committee.**

**As you will know, Ros Smith and Alistair Rivers retired from their committee posts at the last annual meeting after many years service. We are therefore looking for a group secretary to step into Ros's shoes. The duties are not particularly onerous and having a secretary in post would be a big help in the conservation of cultivated plants in Cornwall.**

**Ros wrote us a charming card to thank us for supporting her through the years though I feel we owe her a far greater debt of thanks for everything she has done for us. She writes:**

**"Thank you for the delicious and quite unexpected gift. I do feel that I don't deserve this as you have done all the donkey work as chairman, and Alistair previously. Computers have made such a difference since we started.**

**It was a very good day on Tuesday and I enjoyed the grafting presentation and practical immensely and I think that everyone else did too. A good venue despite the weather."**

**Alistair has filled the role of collections coordinator and also as chairman, for many years. He has used his skills to ensure that the Cornish collections are recorded completely and has overseen the move towards electronic records recently. His role has been taken over by Caroline Stone who also holds the National Collection of Double Primroses in Launceston. He writes:**

**"Thank you.**

**At the meeting held at Heligan it was great to see many members enjoying a practical session much like the ones held when I joined the group on a regular basis some 25 years ago! Over that time the branch has seen many changes both locally and nationally it will only be over time that we can be sure they are for the better but generally I have to agree that things are healthier now for our charity than 25 years ago. As many members will know I have held many positions to keep this branch alive and kicking and this year I decided that it was time to stand aside and leave the running of the branch to others. My last three years has seen John ably taking the helm and moving the branch forward which I see as a very positive move for the future.**

**May I take this opportunity to thank all the branch members past and present for then unerring support over the years. The collection holders are the back bone of the charity and they are continuing to do a fantastic job of promoting plant conservation every day they hold a collection. Finally thank you for the gift**

**I received at the meeting it was much appreciated by me and my wife!**

**I hope to see you all at meetings throughout the year and look forward to the continued growth of the branch under its new committee.**

**Best wishes Alistair and Maureen Rivers 06.04.2019."**

**I would like to thank Ros and Alistair on behalf of the whole group for their enormous contribution over the years. Words really don't express it.**

## Coming Events.

### **Cornwall Hardy Plant Society plant sale. Truro Cattle Market, Newquay Road, Truro TR1 1RH. Saturday 4th May, 10.00am - 2.00pm.**

At the start of May we will have a stand at the Cornwall Hardy Plant Society's plant sale in Truro. This is a very important event for the Cornwall group of Plant Heritage. Plant sales on the day are our largest source of income, helping us to hold a series of meetings through the year and keeping the group active. We are also able to meet a wide range of people interested in gardening and introduce them to the work of Plant Heritage.

To ensure the success of the day we need volunteers to help us man the stand, sell plants and talk to the public about Plant Heritage. Even more important, we need plants to sell. Please remember us as you propagate and split plants through the spring. Anything you can donate will be very welcome but it is always the case that a nicely turned out plant raises the most money!

Please let me know if you are able to help out on the stand, even for a short time and please (please please) bring us some plants to sell!

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A few pictures



of last year's sale



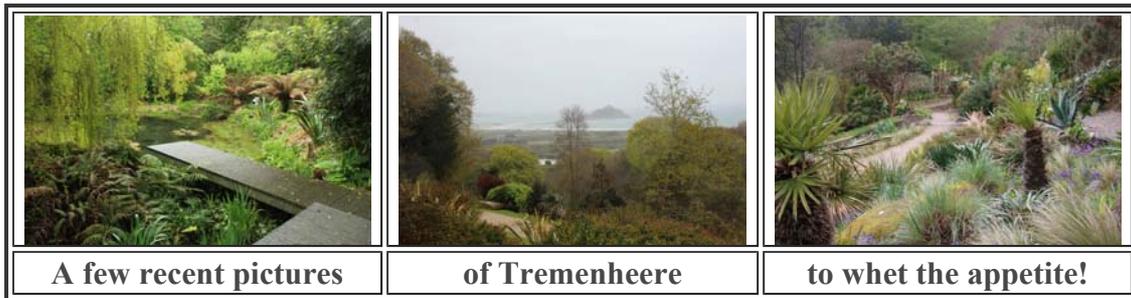
to get you in the mood.

### **Tremenheere Sculpture Garden, Penzance TR20 8YL.**

**Tuesday 11th June 2019, 2.30pm.**

In June we will be visiting Tremeneheere Sculpture Garden on the outskirts of Penzance. The garden is built on the hillside overlooking St Michael's Mount and the coast of Mounts Bay. It is an idyllic location and Neil Armstrong, the gardens creator, has amassed an astonishing collection of plants and combined them with the natural oak woodland, taking full advantage of the possibilities presented by the mild climate and favourable position.

June should be a great month for a visit as new growth expands. Following a remarkably mild winter the garden should be looking beautiful. Meet outside the cafe at 2.30pm. Thanks to Neil Armstrong for his generosity, admission with the group will be £5 per person.



Plant Nannies are very welcome at our meetings. If you are coming to the plant sale in May be sure to drop by the stand and say hello, we may also have some new plants in need of help!

**[cornwallplantheritage@gmail.com](mailto:cornwallplantheritage@gmail.com)**

#### **Cornwall Plant Heritage Website.**

Many of you will have noticed that we now have a new website, accessible through a link on the national website or directly at :

[www.cornwallplantheritage.co.uk](http://www.cornwallplantheritage.co.uk)

I would like to ensure that there are records of significant plants and plant collections in Cornwall that are freely and easily available. If collection holders would like to add more than the links in their entries any submissions are very welcome. Let me know about any errors and I will correct them.

#### **General Data Protection Regulation.**

New Data Protection Regulations came into force on 25th May. If the Cornwall Group of Plant Heritage hold your address, e-mail address or other data we use it communicate matters relating to Plant Heritage or the Cornwall Group of Plant Heritage. We will only use it for this purpose and will not provide it to other organisations.

If you wish your data to be deleted from Cornwall Plant Heritage Group records now or at any time in the future, please let the group secretary know.

This notice is issued in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

## 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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