

Colinton Garden Club

www.colintongardens.org.uk

Newsletter 98

April 2012



Coming soon...

Monday 23rd
April, 8 pm

**Annual
General
Meeting**

Dreghorn Loan
Hall

Sunday 15th April
7 – 10 pm

**Celebration
Ceilidh at Suntrap**

Details at
www.suntrapgarden.org

**Order your
Spring bulbs
see page 2**

From the pen of our Chair

The weather nowadays is unpredictable. In mid March we flew to Basel, arriving in a balmy 20 degree Swiss Spring. Three days later on descending from a warm (and punctual) train in a mountain village almost high enough to qualify as a Munro, we were greeted by a foot of new snow. It was about this time that we learnt that Edinburgh was experiencing a heatwave of 23 degrees. How confusing for flora and fauna, not to mention us humans.

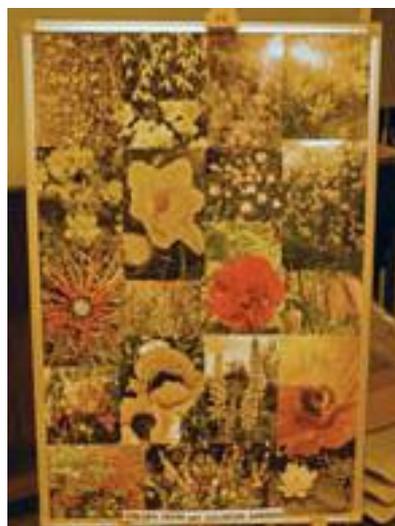
We flew to Vienna the following Monday, in blue sky and sunshine, marvelling at the snow-covered Alps. In Vienna, elegant south-facing façades were decked in flowering cherry. Then the rain came. Spring was forgotten in favour of a warm Café and Sacher Torte. Indulgence of a different kind.

Next, Budapest and temperatures in the 20's, with the panorama from the city wall of Buda, high above the Danube. Then surrendering to Conditorei Gerbaud's seductively irresistible Apfelstrudel. On our last evening we were still sitting outside at 9.30....

And so – inevitably – to Edinburgh. 10 degrees, snow on the Pentlands. This morning, as I prepared to write, it snowed. And "The Times" revealed that the temperature in Budapest was 7 degrees.

What a crazy life we lead! We would never treat our plants the way we treat ourselves. We acclimatise them, protect them from shock, give them time to settle in and take root. Yet, in spite of our care, it is the unpredictability of natural conditions – heat, cold, wind, rain, drought – which determines the environment for the survival of the fittest, as defined so aptly by Darwin: a lesson of which we are reminded when we engage with Nature, in our gardens, on the water or out amongst the hills.

What a glorious world we live in. In spite of the relatively minor frustrations arising from the vicissitudes of the weather we know the necessary days of rain will be compensated by necessary days of sun. Our gardens will survive while we humans indulge ourselves in trips to foreign places, eating Apfelstrudel.



*The
Members'
Evening in
late March
saw many
fine exhibits.
More on our
website*



From the pen of our Chair... continued

Our programme of events since the last newsletter has continued with well attended and lively meetings. Melissa Simpson spoke to us in February on "Gardens of the NTS", demonstrating by her style of delivery a high level of commitment in spite of limited resources. Apologies that her computer had an incompatibility with our projector, so the illustrations were somewhat distorted – but we got the message anyway. At the March meeting, chaired by Colin Whitehead in my absence, we enjoyed a Members' Evening, with Alasdair Ferguson speaking on "Gardens of Madeira" and Jim Murray on "Pallet Gardens". These talks were accompanied by an exhibition of Members' artistic work, which was a demonstration of talent, skill, versatility and creativity. Given such a wide range, selecting a winner was well-nigh impossible, but congratulations to Matthew Turner, Yvonne MacLean and Christine Ireland who represent all who took part. Thanks to everyone for creating a successful event.

Our annual breakfasters at the Botanics enjoyed Alan Bennell's enthusiastic updating on what's happening at the RBGE before undertaking the snowdrop walk. The RBGE suffered considerable damage in the winter storms with more than one hundred trees being uprooted and many panes of glass being smashed. The Committee voted for the Club's making a donation to the Restoration Fund, which has been gratefully acknowledged by the RBGE.

The AGM will take place on Monday 23rd April. This is when we take stock of the past year and look forward to the future. It is your opportunity to ask questions of the Committee, to make suggestions, and to register your approval (or otherwise) of the Club's affairs. Details of our various Outdoor Season events will also be presented – see page 3 of this newsletter. We will keep formalities informal, so that there is ample time for relaxed talk with a glass of wine after the proceedings.

So apart from having plenty to do, there is plenty to look forward to, good reasons to lay aside the gardening tools for a few hours in order to enjoy each other's company.

Enjoy the Spring, look forward to Summer, and throughout, Happy Gardening!

Christopher

Spring Bulb Orders

The Parker Spring Bulbs Catalogues should arrive in June. Parker's never cease to astonish with their huge variety of everyday and more exotic bulb varieties and the prices are very reasonable. Treat your garden to some new types of snowdrops, daffodils, narcissi, anemones or choose some of the really glorious species of tulip and fill in the spaces that need new or different spring flowers.

Once the arrival of the catalogues has been announced on our website and in the Newsletter, please call me (0131 441 6079). I'll add your name to my list and the catalogues will be passed around and you can place your new orders. You can also manage your order completely online – select what you want from the wholesale catalogue at www.jparkers.co.uk and then e-mail me emacgregor@gmx.net for a form, fill it in and I'll place your order with those of other members.

The bulbs arrive in September, lilies in November, and they will be distributed to you then. You pay on delivery.

Elsbeth MacGregor, Bulb Coordinator



*The mid-March warmth again!
Camelia 'Donation' in editor's garden*

RBGE Photography Competition 2012

RBGE invites you to submit printed or digital images taken within the last year in any of four associated gardens:

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Benmore Botanic Garden
Dawyck Botanic Garden
Logan Botanic Garden

There are three themes: Garden View
Plant Portrait
Wildlife in the Garden

See www.rbge.org.uk/whats-on/photo-comp for entry details

Closing date: 31 May 2012

Outdoor Season Schedule 2012	
Monday 14th May 6.30 - 8 pm	<p>Evening Open Garden</p> <p>Hosted by Isobel and John Lodge at Suntrap Garden 43 Gogarbank, Edinburgh, EH12 9BY</p> <p>Members to arrange own transport / car sharing – parking available</p>
Sunday 27th May 10.30 am - 4.30 pm	<p>Suntrap Annual Open Day</p> <p>Enjoy a walk round the Garden and appreciate the work of the stalwart Volunteers who have looked after the Garden throughout the stormy Winter. Have a rest and a cup of tea, then visit the Potting Shed for plant sales</p>
Monday 18th June	<p>Mini-outing to Lauriston Castle</p> <p>Lauriston is a 16th Century tower house with a 19th Century extension overlooking the Firth of Forth. The grounds, laid out by WH Playfair in 1840, contain the Japanese Friendship Garden</p> <p>This guided tour is limited to 20 members (sharing own transport). Cost £5 payable at the door (includes cup of tea / coffee). List available at AGM to reserve places or contact Christine Ireland, 0131 445 2266, dungavel@btopenworld.com</p> <p>Please meet at 11.00 am at the castle</p>
Saturday 23rd June 10 am - 12 noon	<p>Open Gardens and Plant Sale</p> <p>Members are invited to visit three gardens in the Bonaly area</p> <p>A Jim and Maureen Heardman, 14 Bonaly Road B Christopher and Elisabeth Davies, 7 West Carnethy Avenue C to be arranged</p> <p>The Plant Sale will take place at the Davies' house, where coffee and tea will be served. Items for sale should if possible be delivered by 9 am or by previous arrangement with a committee member.</p> <p>Please label with name of plant and any particular growing conditions</p>
Saturday 14th July	<p>Summer Outing</p> <p>The Scottish Plant Hunters Garden in Pitlochry is the main attraction of this year's full day outing. The overall plan for the garden is to complement the existing mature trees with planting consisting of collections from 18 of the most notable collectors. The garden is situated on a sloping site with access to main areas of the garden via solid ramped footpaths.</p> <p>See www.plantexplorers.com for further information</p> <p>We will have coffee or tea on arrival. Lunch / picnic arrangements will be announced later. It is intended to visit another garden in the vicinity – probably 'Easter Meikle Fardle'</p> <p>Cost of £20 includes travel, morning coffee / tea and admissions. To reserve places, on first come, first served basis, contact Christopher Davies, 0131 441 2152, Davieschr@aol.com</p> <p>The coach will leave Westgarth Avenue at 9 am prompt Return by approx. 5.30 pm</p>

