

COLINTON GARDEN CLUB

www.colintongardens.org.uk

NEWSLETTER



No 113
February 2016

Coming soon...

Monday 22nd
February 8 pm

Dreghorn Loan Hall

Composting:
Old and New

Fiona Playfair

Garden Solutions
East Lothian

Thursday
18th February

Snowdrop
Tour at The
Botanics (p4)

Fertilizer Orders

Order form comes
with this newsletter
- please return to
Billy Wheelan by

Monday
22nd February

Dear CGC Members

A very happy New Year and best wishes for 2016 to all of you. Let's hope we have a good summer with a little less rain than we have had this December and January and a lot more sunshine. The damage caused by flooding in Aberdeenshire, Perthshire and the south west this year has been horrific and heart breaking for all the home owners and businesses that have been ruined.



I was still clearing up the garden after the last brown bin collection day last November and this necessitated a trip to the tip at Wester Hailes. This is always quite an enjoyable adventure and this time I had masses of hedge and tree clippings. My tiny friend from Yorkshire and I managed to heave the first one out of the car but couldn't manage to empty it into the container, A kind man offered to help and upped it in a trice.

Me: "I've got four more of these."

Him: "Well, I'm off then!"

Me: "Oh dear." Needless to say he heaved all of them in for us – thank you very much, kind man!

Our November meeting with Jim Jermyn was a huge success and he gave an excellent talk on the "Gardener's Paradise" of the Dolomites which held us all spellbound. He has an amazing amount of expertise gathered from his work experience in Germany and Italy, and when I was on holiday for a few days in Salzburg in early December, the friend I was staying with had known him when they were both working as trainees at Munich Botanic Gardens - small world!



Scenes from 'A Christmas Medley'



The Christmas Party was another great success, I think, and we had about 120 cheerful members packed into the Loan Hall. Your committee and other helpers all sprang into action like a well-oiled machine. The tables were set up and decorated in a trice, the food was prepared and laid out, the drinks dispensed by friendly bar staff and the guests all seated and looked after with smooth efficiency. The quiz was much pondered over and then came the eagerly awaited Entertainment, which thrilled the audience to the core and received thunderous applause. The set was magnificent, the actors acted, Santa Claus came down the chimney, the choir sang beautifully, the musicians played merrily, the Christmas Elf pulled the curtains with élan and the Mistress of Ceremonies held it all together perfectly. And you the audience sang the carols with great gusto making the party a very enjoyable start to the Christmas festivities. Our thanks go to everybody who participated.

This year, 2016, brings another exciting programme of talks and events. Our Member's Evening talks were much appreciated by an audience only slightly thinned by Burns Night celebrations. Rhododendrons, Allotment Development and Gingers attested the diverse interests of our members.

Our next event will be a guided tour in February to see the snowdrops and other early-flowering species at the Botanic Gardens here in Edinburgh. There is also the opportunity to have breakfast beforehand at the John Hope Gateway Restaurant and if you feel you need strengthening before the walk, their full Scottish breakfast will do the trick.

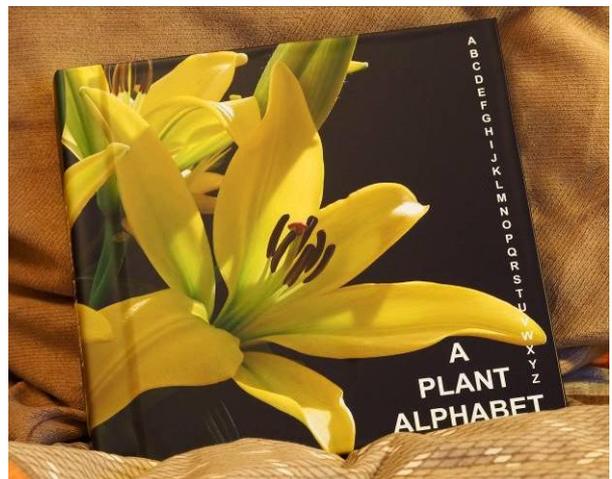
The committee looks forward to seeing you all throughout our 2016 programme of talks and events.

Elspeth

Show off your garden / plant photos in a photobook

Do your garden / plant photos languish unseen on your computer or smart phone? Why not show them to their best in a photobook? There are dozens of software applications available – Jessops (CEWE), Vanilla and Yophoto Photobooks are three that the Editor has found to be user-friendly. So, some brief pointers:

1. Download the chosen software / set up an account.
2. Decide and plan a theme (e.g. *Our Garden in 2016*). Collect your photos, process as necessary (deepen colours, sharpen), save as good quality JPGs, and place all in one folder on the computer desktop.
3. Choose the type of photobook you want (e.g. 20 x 20 cm size; glossy paper; 24 pages; hardback) and give your project a filename.
4. Within the software, import the chosen photos from your desktop photos folder. Transfer each picture to an appropriate page and add text as either complete paragraphs or captions next to the photos. You can vary number, sizes and layout of photos on each page, but aim for consistency between pages (e.g. page backgrounds, picture borders, headings, font type/size/colour). Extra pages can be added anytime.
5. You can preview pages as you go along, and the software will inform you if the sharpness of an individual picture is substandard.
6. And should you be struggling, one of your or a friend's grandchildren is sure to race to the rescue!



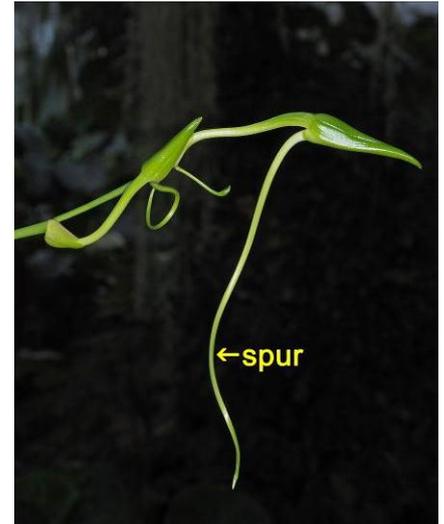
This Month at The Botanics

Darwin's Orchid, *Angraecum sesquipedale*, which is in bloom at The Botanics, has a convoluted botanical history. A specimen was sent to Charles Darwin from Madagascar in 1862 as part of his studies on insect pollination. He communicated his fascination with its very long nectary spur and the possibility of pollination during nectar collection by an insect with a correspondingly long proboscis. Indeed, he performed experiments with a narrow flexible rod to support his contention. Soon afterwards, George Campbell, 8th Duke of Argyll, wrote, "... the complexity of the whole process implies creation by a supernatural being". Another leading botanist, Alfred Russel Wallace countered this notion by showing how orchid and pollinator-moth could have co-evolved through a process of



'natural selection'. In 1903, some twenty years after Darwin's death, a subspecies of Morgan's sphinx moth from East Africa, was discovered in Madagascar. Named *Xanthopan morgani praedicta*, it anatomically fitted the pollinator role well. But it was not until 1992 that video footage was obtained of this (night-flying) moth skillfully inserting its proboscis while hovering close to the orchid flower.

In scientific endeavour, as in life, one person often receives a disproportionate share of the plaudits (and the medals) – just so with Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace in the development of the *Theory of Evolution*. Editor.



A. sesquipedale 'Glevum Star' in the Tropical Orchid House

Why not join the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society ?

The RCHS (or The Caley for short) has often been assumed to be part of the RHS. It is not. We have a remit to work for the good of Scottish horticulture in all its facets. Our main activity in the winter is meetings held on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from October to March in the Lecture Theatre of RBGE. In the summer months we organise 2 or 3 one-day visits to local gardens, and a 6-day visit to gardens further afield. In late March we hold a Spring Flower Show in RBGE for which we run two Bulb Workshop sessions to assist exhibitors. We participate in Gardening Scotland by having a stand and by members acting as volunteer helpers. "Grow and Learn" is the Caley's education project for people with complex learning needs who follow a certificated gardening course. Check our web-site www.rchs.co.uk for more information and a membership form. Elizabeth Ferro

When more is less

The Christmassy box announced: A **double** Amaryllis 'Exotic Peacock'. And indeed beautiful blooms emerged, but some of the important bits were missing. I found myself singing this old favourite:

*Where have all the stamens gone, long time passing?
Where have all the stamens gone, long time ago?
Where have all the stamens gone?
Young girls have picked them everyone.
Oh, when will they ever learn?
Oh, when will they ever learn?*

The 1950's lyrics are based on a song sung by Cossack soldiers riding off to join the Czar at the battlefield. See <http://performingsongwriter.com/pete-seeger-flowers-gone/>



Members' Exhibition of Arts, Blooms and Crafts at our AGM in April

Members are invited to exhibit the fruits of their leisure time. This year the medium is unlimited, while there should be an underlying horticultural theme

Arts, Blooms and Crafts includes oils and watercolours, photography, bulb and floral displays pottery, jewelry, needlework, and more

Prizes will be awarded and refreshments served

For advice on displaying exhibits contact Margo Gilchrist: 0131 441 7339
library@colintongardens.org.uk

Dates for your diary.....

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| Monday 22 February 2016 | 'Composting: Old and New' Fiona Playfair, Garden Solutions, East Lothian 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall |
| Monday 14 March 2016 Please note date | 'A year in the nursery' Gavin McNaughton, Macplants, Pencaitland Plants will be on sale 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall |
| Monday 25 April 2016 | Annual General Meeting 8 pm in Dreghorn Loan Hall With an exhibition of members' work and refreshments |

Outdoor Season Schedule 2016

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| Thursday 18th February | Snowdrop Outing to The Botanics Guided tour (1½ h) starting 11 am at £6 per person, with optional pre-ordered breakfast as a group (own expense) at 10 am prompt Contact Chris Tonge: 0131 662 4508; treasurer@colintongardens.org.uk |
| Likely date 23rd May | Evening Garden Event Details to follow |
| A Saturday in June | Open Gardens & Plant Sale This year we will be visiting members' gardens in the Spylaw area Please think about cuttings etc for the plant sale Contact Susan Plag: 0131 441 7936; events@colintongardens.org.uk |
| Saturday 16th July | Summer Outing A whole day outing by coach to central Fife, visiting gardens at Logie House, Falkland Palace and Glassmount House – full details later Please put your name down at the February meeting |

Newsletter Delivery

Not received your newsletter?
Contact Bob Jones
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Club Website

For details of all Club activities and contact addresses
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membership@colintongardens.org.uk