

Spring 2009

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# Newsletters

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE PLANT HERITAGE NATIONAL OFFICE

There is a veritable air of anticipation in the office. That could be the result of some glorious sunny days recently, but possibly also the sense that Plant Heritage IS moving into a new and exciting stage.

We have had a lot of press interest recently, following on from our attendance of the Garden Media Guild horticultural press day in February. Firstly, the general public responded to the idea of holding a collection from our Top 10 genera currently missing from the scheme, with numerous phone calls asking for information packs. Secondly there has also been great interest in the "Red List" – our project to assess cultivated plant rarity – culminated most recently with an article in the Saturday Telegraph main section (21 March). Finally our new chairman Michael Alder was featured in Horticulture Week's one page "leader feature" talking about his plans for the future.

We may only be small and the task ahead of us huge but that is not going to stop us....



Genevieve  
Melbourne Webb  
Executive Officer

In February, Lady Hamilton hosted a lunch at Betchworth for Michael to meet all our Vice Presidents. It was a delightful event with lots of positive feedback from VPs, many of whom had been involved in the founding of Plant Heritage. It was also the first opportunity, in my time, that so many of them came together at one time – hence the group photo.



Lord Ridley, Lawrence Banks, Robin Compton, Lady Hamilton, Roy Lancaster, Gren Lucas, Joyce Stewart, Christopher Brickell (L to R)  
(Sir Roy Strong unable to attend)

**Places still available for 2009 June AGM in Hertfordshire - call Angela Rowney 01582 414377 for details**

**2010 AGM Date for your Diary** 14, 15 & 16 May in Longhirst Hall Hotel, Morpeth, Northumberland. Further information in 2009 autumn Journal.

# Plant Exchange

In the last three issues of 'Newslines', we have tried to provide members with a better understanding of the Plant Exchange. We have explained that:

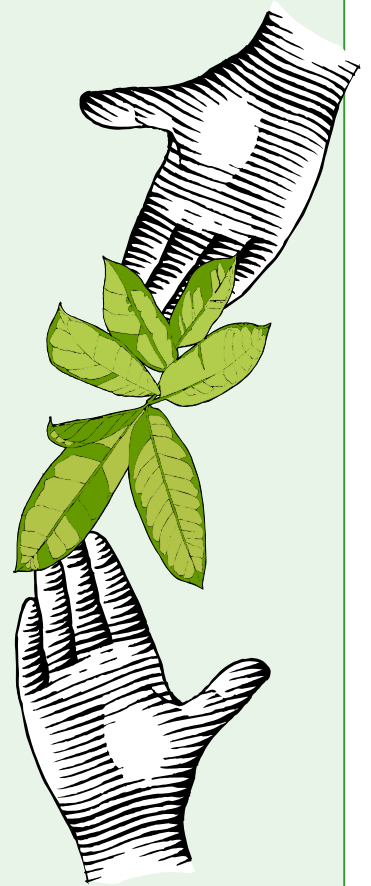
- it is a benefit for members but at the same time helps further our aims,
- the exchange is between members but organised through Groups,
- it is free but recipients do have an obligation to propagate and pass plants on.

As we write the pattern is more or less set for 2009. By now, each group taking part will know which plants they should bring to the AGM, and which they should receive. Not all bids for plants will have been successful but bidders should not give up hope. Perhaps a Collection Holder asked for the plant; more probably, demand exceeded supply. Your exchange contact has an 'oversubscribed' list, which gives details of shortages. Exchange contacts of Donor Groups frequently use this list to ask for extras; in recent years we have had well over 100 more such plants provided by the AGM date. If you are a donor, please ask if more of your plants could be used.

Finally, there is always another year. We would like you ask again for the hard to find plants you want – and of course we know where there is an unmet demand.

It is still over two months to the excitement of the physical exchange of plants. During that period there will be lots of effort devoted to nurturing the propagated specimens. To all those taking part we would like to say thank you. To those attending the AGM, do come and see us.

**Jen McGrady and Peter Allatt**



# What is in a Name?

Carrie Thomas, National Collection Holder of *Aquilegia* is looking for name for a new *Aquilegia*, currently called No 428. Send an email with your suggestions (as many as you want) by **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April** to [carrie@touchwoodplants.co.uk](mailto:carrie@touchwoodplants.co.uk) or write to Carrie Thomas, Touchwood Plants & Seeds, Touchwood, 4 Clyne Valley Cottages, Killay, Swansea, SA2 7DU

(Emails are preferred as Carrie will circulate a shortlist for a final vote in late April.)

**Suggestions so far** include: 'Dancing Princesses'; 'Pink Crinoline'; 'Peach Sorbet'; 'Angel's Delight' and 'Touchwood Pixie'.

**Aquilegias already named by Carrie** from her Touchwood collection includes: 'Flamboyant', 'Elegance', 'Sorcery', 'Sweet Dreams', 'Blue Fountain' and 'Clyne Woodside'



## Appeal for volunteers

Volunteers are our lifeline and do all sorts of things. We are very grateful for the support of all our volunteers - even if you only wash up the cups at your local group meeting, you are doing your bit to support plant conservation.



Stuart Donachie, Trustee

The Board of Trustees are currently looking for applications from within our membership to become a trustee - particularly in fundraising, marketing, PR or horticulture – please contact Genevieve for further information [info@nccpg.org.uk](mailto:info@nccpg.org.uk) or 01483 447540



Pat Huff, Trustee

At the same time, Camilla Hair, our national PR volunteer has stepped down. She has done a fantastic job increasing awareness of Plant Heritage in the past three years i.e. five lunchtime sessions of Chelsea coverage last year. If you think you could also help us, do

## The Devon Gardens Trust

County Garden Trusts work to preserve and restore garden features, architecture and landscapes and to mark their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Devon Gardens Trust have produced *A Short History 1988-2008*. This book describes the setting up of the Trust and details the people involved and their contribution over the past two decades. Perhaps of a more widespread interest, the DGT have also launched *The Journal* which is the first of an annual publication including some of the relevant academic research taking place in the County. This handsome large format journal includes an article by John Carter, (former President of the Devon NCCPG group), on *The NCCPG in Devon*. Much of the item describes the challenges and rewards of National Collections however the concluding paragraph gives the fascinating story of the Plymouth Strawberry, first seen by John Tradescant in 1627 and listed in his catalogue of 1634. However John Parkinson had already described the plant in his *Paradisus* of 1629 and the unusual plant appears intermittently through the history of plant publications.



Other articles cover the both ends of the gardening spectrum from examinations of notable estates and landscapes such as Rousdon and Langdon Court and the state of walled gardens and bath houses, to an absorbing piece on 19<sup>th</sup> Century Allotment Gardeners. At a time of high food prices allotments could contribute greatly to the family budget. They were “popular too with the farmers who rented out the allotment land, as they helped keep labourers loyal and ensured that wages could be kept at a low level.” Allotment holders grew staple crops but many were only allowed to grow potatoes and grain on half of their plot. Clare Greener, Chairman of DGT, has drawn together material from a wide range of sources to write this fascinating social history of an essential part of the life of rural Devon in the 1800s.

Both publications are available from Mrs Clare Greener, 26 Linden Road, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 8QA. The *Short History* costs £3.50 and the *Journal* £7.50, both prices include postage and packing.

## Shopping bags

The Plant Heritage shopping bags are now available to buy from your local groups (where the group has ordered some). See details in your Spring Plant Heritage journal.



## 2009 Brickell Award

This year, the Plant Conservation Committee have decided that we will not seek nominations for the Brickell Award. This is because the committee is only part way through the review of National Collections with scientific status. It would therefore be unfair to invite nominations for the award when some scientific collections would be excluded because they have not yet been reviewed.

# Fundraising and shows

Charitable Trust donations pledged during last year (Jan to Dec 08) totalled £30,450.

## Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

Tuesday 7th to Sunday 12th July

Whilst the rota for helpers in the cloakroom at Chelsea Flower Show is now full (apart from one space on Saturday 23d May), the volunteer rota for Hampton Court still has many spaces. Do let me know if you are available to help.



Press Day on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July – Toby Buckland, Gardeners' World presenter, has agreed to open PH marquee.

There will be 17 Collection Holders in this year's marquee, plus an exhibit from the students at Pershore College and a garden display celebrating the 200th anniversary of William Lobb, the plant hunter responsible for bringing back the Wellingtonia and the monkey puzzle tree. Matthew Biggs and Maggie Campbell –Culver are helping the team put this display together



Joanna Jones  
Fundraising

## Recycle your old Mobile phones

Don't forget if you have any old mobile phones floating around your home, please send FREEPOST to Greener Solutions, LON17592, Micham CR4 3UZ quoting PLANT HERITAGE on your envelope



## Credit crunch - not with our advertisers!!

The revenue earned through advertisers in the Directory and Plant Heritage Journal increased this year by a staggering £1,000!! Do take note of our wonderful advertisers, and in particular the feature of six 'B & Bs set in delightful garden settings' in the PHJ issue. What a lovely way to spend a relaxing weekend away.

## Surrey Sponsored Walk

The interest is mounting with more and more people signing up for a lovely walk through the Surrey countryside on **Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> April**. Bring the family, bring your dog, just come along and have a good fun day out. The entry form can be downloaded from the website, just send this back to Joanna Jones with your £5.00 entry fee. Jo will send through a sponsorship form and details of the walk. We just ask you to raise £20.00 per adult (or family of walkers).



## Charity Flowers

By choosing **Charity Flowers Direct** you will be giving more than just beautiful flowers as a gift. You will also be helping Plant Heritage to raise funds. **Charity Flowers Direct** is run for the benefit of charities and all the profits go to many different charities, including US!

So whether it's a Birthday, Anniversary or a present for your Mum, order from **Charity Flowers Direct**. Visit [www.charityflowers.co.uk](http://www.charityflowers.co.uk) and quote Plant Heritage's source code (which is **NCCPG**) when placing your order.



# Membership

More than 80% of our renewals fall on November 1<sup>st</sup> or February 1<sup>st</sup> and now that this time is past for another year, we are concentrating on working with Groups on member recruitment and retention. In April we are holding a workshop for membership secretaries/group chairmen and we have been preparing some background for this session. One of the most interesting statistics is that one third of new members say they have joined Plant Heritage through a 'friend', but only 14% of people who resign their membership are from this category.

**So the people you encourage to join us are more likely to remain as members.** Try to introduce us to your friends, take them along to a Plant Sale or invite them to a talk.



Gillian Spencer



Gill Groombridge

## Membership leaflets

The current membership leaflet, with up-to-date subscription rates, has a photo of a *Dahlia* 'Twynings Smartie' on the front. If you have a local event e.g. school event/local gardening club/village fair/local talk, where you could distribute a number of leaflets, or you know of someone who wants to join us please ring us on 01483 447540 and we will send you the leaflets.

*Please do not use the leaflet with the photo of the Primula auricula, as it is out of date.*



## Prize Draw for prompt payment

This year we are offering a prize draw of a £10 Gardening voucher to all members who pay their membership subscription promptly at each of the 2009 renewal dates of February, May, August, and November. Look out for details in your renewal letters.

## Become a Friend of Plant Heritage

In February, seven collections received £200 awards, funded by Brother Limited UK\*, to support a range of diverse projects such as purchasing a macro camera lens to record minute flower details or constructing raised beds to re-house the collection. Whilst £200 may sound like an insignificant amount, as many holders self fund their collections, any additional support goes a long way.

We want to carry on the National Collections Bursary scheme in 2010 so that Collection holders can again apply for funding to support their work but we have no guarantee that Brother (or anyone else) will provide sponsorship. Therefore we are asking members to consider become a **Friend** of Plant Heritage.

**Friends** donate an annual amount of £100 or more, in addition to their Membership subscription. (This can be donated quarterly by Direct Debit, as well as a single payment). We pledge that a minimum of 25% of all new Friends' donations will be used to establish the National Collection Holders Bursary scheme for 2010 and hopefully beyond.

If you would like to support the Collection Holder Bursary scheme, please call Gill or Gillian on 01483 447540 to discuss becoming a Friend

\*Whilst Brother provided the funding, Plant Heritage organised the administration of the 2009 Bursary scheme.

All Collection Holders were eligible to apply and the applications were assessed by an independent Bursary Committee of Gren Lucas and Rosie Peddle.

# Conservation

We have been lucky enough to be able to hold some Collection Holder workshops at RHS Wisley in the last few months. We started them as an attempt to provide something for collections holders, for free, and they have proved to be very successful. We have covered topics including Plant Health, CITES and CBD, Plant Breeders Rights and trials.

One of the main benefits has been the opportunity for people to network. Although the collection holders have a lot in common, they don't often meet up; and it has been fascinating listening to them talk; and trying to get them to stop!

We have had some fascinating talks and the highlight for me was definitely Neil Helyer's DVD of aphids and predators at truly amazing magnification.

I am hoping to arrange some more for next winter and a day on herbarium specimens in the summer. One of the priorities has been being able to provide the days for free to participants. We have been very lucky in that the RHS don't charge us to use the Lecture Theatre at Wisley, and that the majority of our speakers make no charge. However we still have to provide lunch and coffee and tea, which is covered by sponsorship from NFU Mutual and Brother.

So that we are able to offer these workshops around the country it would be good to find suitable free venues (need to comfortably accommodate 25-50 people and equipment, with good transport links) in the North and the Midlands. If anyone reading this has suggestions for locations or for further workshops, do let me know.

As many of you will already know, Chloe Marrable, our collections administrator took voluntary redundancy at the end of January. She would like to pass on how much she enjoyed working with everyone at Plant Heritage.



Mercy Morris  
Plant Conservation

## New Collections awarded in February meeting

### Full collection status:

**Juglandaceae** – (*Carya*, *Pterocarya*, *Juglans*, *Platycarya*); **Acer spp**; **.Staphylea spp.**; **Tilia spp.**  
Westonbirt Arboretum

**Erigeron**; **Geranium sanguineum, macrorrhizum and x cantabrigiensis**; **Aster novi-angliae**  
Dr Margaret Stone, Worcs.

**Pterocarya**  
Mr Ian Bond, Gloucs.

**Pyrus communis** (Perry pears)  
Hartpury Historic Land and Buildings Trust, Gloucs.

### The following collections were raised from provisional to full status:

**Buddleja** spp  
Paignton Zoo, Devon

**Galanthus**  
Mr Chris Sanham, West Sussex

**Dicentra**  
Mr Roger Brook, Yorkshire

### One collection holder gained scientific status:

**Leucojum**  
Mrs. Ena Gatenby, North East.

### If you are into blogging

We have changed our blog address to [plantheritage.blogspot.com/](http://plantheritage.blogspot.com/)  
- it has been a quiet year so far.