

Oxenhope



Gardening Club News

October 2023

Welcome to the October Newsletter.

Last week I went to a very interesting talk at the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield given by Tom Stuart-Smith, who was talking about projects he has been involved in since his work on designing the gardens at the Hepworth. Tom described his contribution to the redesigning of the walled garden at Knepp Castle estate to follow rewilding principles. The Knepp estate, which had previously been intensively farmed, was rewilded in 2001 by the rewilding pioneer, Charlie Burrell. As a result of this there has been a return of many endangered species to the Knepp estate, one of which is now the largest population of purple emperor butterflies in the country. As part of this project they dumped tons of their own crushed building waste materials on the former croquet lawn to create a 3D surface of hump and hollows. The resulting varying soil conditions and different aspects now favours a wide variety of plant communities with close to 900 species planted here, chosen with global warming and sustainability in mind and for their ability to thrive with minimum water and fertility.



Knepp walled garden

Following this work at Knepp, Tom was inspired to transform his orchard in Hertfordshire into a community garden using the same principles as Knepp: a large proportion of The Orchard is made up of the Plant Library which is set out in a 1 metre grid system holding more than 1200 different varieties of mainly herbaceous plants. They are ordered into communities of plants suited to the different conditions of the sloping site. Drought tolerant plants from warmer, drier climates are at the top of the site, planted in half a foot of sharp sand making wet winters more bearable for them. The shady damp lower end of the site is home to plants that prefer the more moisture-retentive clay soil. The middle of the site is made up of plants that suit more balanced, general conditions.



Plant Library

It was a fascinating and thought-provoking talk. **Sandra**

The Growth of Bridgewater: The Speaker Will be Lisa Hudson, Horticulturalist, RHS Bridgewater.



Old greenhouses

Lisa has worked for the RHS for fifteen years; ten years at Wisley and five at Bridgewater, specialising there in propagation.

Lisa has been in charge of the propagation and glasshouses at Bridgewater, and over the past five years has been supplying plants to the garden.

Lisa will be talking about the growth of Bridgewater and how the site has changed and her role in

charge of the glasshouses and propagation.



New greenhouses

Plant of the Month: *Sternbergia lutea*:



It is at this time of year, when it is possible to get excited about choosing and planting bulbs for spring, that it is so easy to miss choosing the autumn flowering bulbs that provide colour and interest to autumn days.

One bulb that provides this and isn't often seen is *Sternbergia lutea*, or the 'Great Winter Daffodil'. This plant can form an autumn carpet of goblet-

shaped, luminous yellow flowers which can brighten up the drabest autumn day. In the wild it is found in scrub and gravelly areas, and thrives on limestone soil, but in a warm sunny position in well-drained soil, they will flower well. Planted near a protecting wall, fence or even the less shady side of a shrub or tree they will multiply over the years to form generous drifts.

Initially described as *Narcissus* some 400 years ago, they are in the family Amaryllidaceae, and are found in parts of Spain through to Asia and Iran and in larger numbers within Turkey where many botanists assume they originated. Within the genus *Sternbergia* there are seven species, but while most are restricted to alpine house conditions, ***Sternbergia lutea*** grow happily and vigorously in the garden. Stockists: Sarah Raven. Crocus.

Future speakers:

In November the speaker will be Will Thompson who will be talking about Creative Cultivation: Gardens for Nature.

Gardening news and events:

Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard: Exhibition of photographs by Razvan Chisu until October 15

Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard. Meet the Trees with John Grimshaw: Tues Oct 17 10.30-12.30

Yorkshire Arboretum, Castle Howard: Principles of Pruning with John Grimshaw Nov 2 10-3

RHS Harlow Carr: Autumn Crafts, Bath House Gallery until Oct 22

RHS Harlow Carr: National Alpine Garden Show: October 14

Tea and coffee rota

Thank you to those of you who have volunteered in the past to help with the rota. If you can help, please sign the rota sheet on the refreshment counter.



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