



Oxenhope

Gardening Club News

February 2026

Welcome to February's newsletter and the start of the 2026 Gardening Club programme.

Welcome to the 2026 Gardening Club season of garden talk and visits which we hope you will enjoy. There are some speakers names you will recognise and some that are new to the club. Two speakers that are new to the club are Camilla Anderson, who will be our guest speaker in March and Daniele Altieri, our speaker in June. We've also arranged garden visits to three gardens this year, which we hope you will also enjoy.

Camilla is based in Derbyshire, is independent researcher in Garden History with an MA in Garden History and is passionate about the history of gardens. She is also the editor of Visit Gardens, a website for garden visitors.



Daniele Altieri is an Italian garden designer and horticulturist based in Staplehurst, Kent. He has worked in some prestigious gardens in the UK, Japan and Italy, including Smallhythe Place, Sutton Place and Sissinghurst. He has also worked as a garden designer in Hokkaido, Japan and in Sicily, at the foot of the Volcano Etna.

February's Speaker: John Grimshaw. Bulbs: Larger and Later: The Bulbs of Summer and Autumn.



Dr John Grimshaw, botanist, gardener and author and as many of our members will know, he was, until recently the Director of the Yorkshire Arboretum. He has since left to take up the post of Editor-in-Chief for both *Trees and Shrubs Online* and *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* for RBG Kew. John has been interested in plants all his life, as both gardener and botanist, and has a first-class degree in botany and doctorate in African forest ecology from Oxford University.

Plant of the Month. *Lopezia Racemosa*. Mosquito Flower.



This month I've featured an unusual and fascinating plant which I had never seen before and thought it was worth sharing with members. It has curious spidery, vibrant bright pink flowers which give the plant its name – the petals vaguely resembling a (very large and attractive!) mosquito on the wing. These are followed by ornamental berries. It's a good annual plant for adding colour to the front of borders, containers or the cutting garden. It is very easy to grow in a well-drained soil in either full sun and partial shade and will flower in only a couple of months from seed. It can be sown directly into garden soil after the last frosts and should germinate after 7 to 21 days: it will then flower throughout the summer. The seeds can be bought from Chiltern Seeds and Plant World Seeds.



In its native habitat in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panamá, it grows in a variety of habitats, from oak-pine forests to grasslands, along streams and in moist ravines. In the local traditional medicine, the plant is used in a number of cures ranging from stomach ache, to nausea, to bathing a mother and baby after childbirth. It is known that the methanolic fractions isolated from the leaves and flowers of the plant showed antibacterial and antifungal

activities, supporting its use in traditional medicine.

Elsewhere it's documented that pigs and burros eat it!

AGM. February's meeting will start with the AGM and, as always, we would welcome new members to the committee so please think about joining us – we need you!

We will be collecting subscriptions for the year, so you can either pay the subscriptions via BACs or by cheque for £30 with your name, email address and phone number written on the back. The bank details you need to subscribe to the club are as follows:

Bank account name: Oxenhope Gardening Club

Sort code: 20-45-14

Account Number: 10698709

Reference: your name

We would also welcome volunteers to help with teas and coffees!

Gardening Events: Snowdrop Walks.

Burton Agnes Hall: Friday, 13 February, 2026 - 10:30am

Fountains Abbey Ripon: Visit in early Feb to see them looking at their best. Open daily 10am-4pm,

Goldsborough Hall: 22 Feb is a special Snowdrop Sunday, when there will be plant sales, head gardener talks and refreshments served in the Orangery. £7.50 per adult, children free.

Burton Agnes Driffield: Burton Agnes's Snowdrops in the Woodland runs until 1 March and garden admission fees apply, but it is free for Historic Houses members,

Harewood House: until March 23. Follow and search for snowdrops with the trail sheet, which includes fascinating facts, including the difference between native and non-native species. Free to Harewood members and complimentary with a valid day ticket.

Wentworth Woodhouse: Snowdrop Festival (27 Feb – 1 Mar) with creative workshops, gardener talks and drop-in activities.

Here are the dates and details of the next meetings. If anyone wishes to have a print- out of the programme details, we can provide them.

February 19th	John Grimshaw: Bulbs: Bulbs of Summer and Autumn.
March 19th	Camilla Anderson: East India Company & their English gardens
April 16th	Kevin Pratt: Woody Plants That Merit Attention
May 15th	Visit to NGS Scapegoat Gardens Golcar, Huddersfield
May 21st	Plant sale
June 18th	Daniele Altieri: Mystery, Surprise & Illusion
July	Garden visit to Hooton Walled Garden, Rotherham
August 11th	Visit to Jacqueline Iddon Garden & Nursery Bretheton, Leyland
September 17th	Razvan Chisu:
October 15th	Ben Preston: Plants, People, Propagation
November 19th	Samantha Hopes:

The Gardening Club programme of speakers is held in the Community Hall in Oxenholme every 3rd Thursday of the month, February - November at 7.30 pm: details can be found on the club website: www.oxenholmegardeningclub.co.uk