

## Keeping in Touch, April 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

Hello all,

I hope you all had a pleasant Easter despite restrictions and no one was cautioned for being in their front garden!

### PHOTOS

We've got a bumper edition today, with lots more photos being sent in. Last time I sent out 9 photos and there were no anguished cries of 'this is too big for my system to cope with'. So I'm pushing the boat out with more. Let me know ([tonifrascina@outlook.com](mailto:tonifrascina@outlook.com)) if you have any problems with downloading.

First is a very interesting plant from Hugh and Judy Reid. This is *Lathraea clandenstina* which they saw for the first time at Dunham Massey earlier this year. It is a native wholly parasitic woodland plant. I googled this and according to Wikipedia, the underground part of this plant can weigh several kilos.



Next, from Don Witton, a colourful shade plant. He describes it as a 'garden worthy celandine with deep maroon leaves but a dubious name – *Ranunculus ficaria* 'Brazen Hussy'! Like all celandines it seeds but some seedlings aren't as dark leaved so they go on the compost heap.'





He also sent through *Bergenia 'Rosy Klose'* which has rich pink flowers. It is planted on the north side of their bungalow and rarely sees much sun but has remained fairly compact and not gone too 'leggy' in the 10 or more years he's had it.





Janet and Richard Lister sent through several pics of how they are using pots.







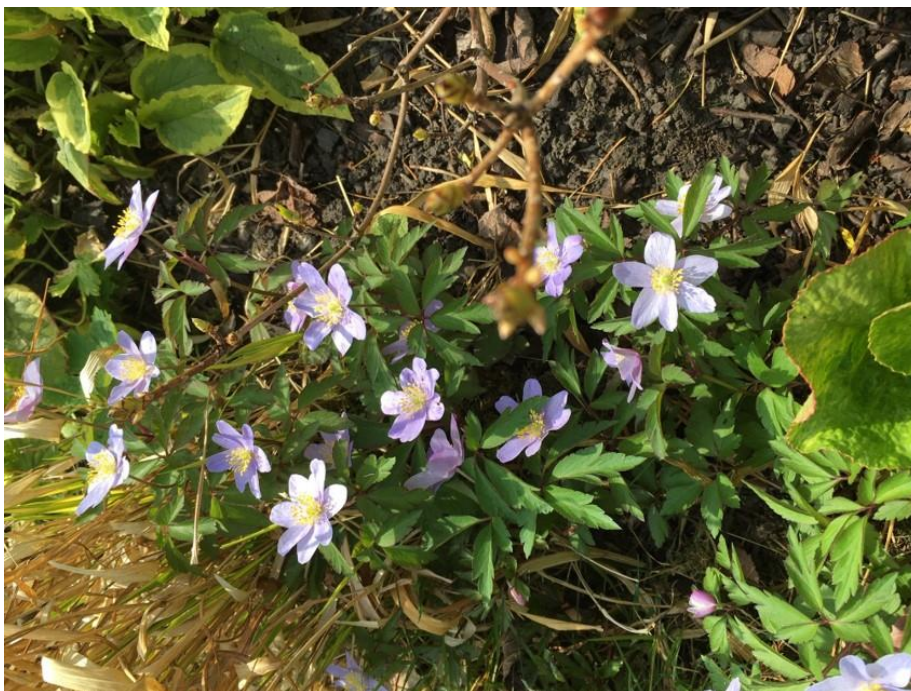
Janet says 'the grasses in tub were inspired by the visit to the vicarage garden in early March. The seat arbour Richard and I had been waiting for the rain to stop before we built and painted it , it took 4 busy days to finish so that was our exercise for this week'

Another splendid Rubus, *R. spectabilis* 'Olympic Double' from Rene May. This was grown from a cutting which Rene 'aquired' whilst pushing a friend Roger out on a walk. Roger had MND and was in a wheelchair. He loved this plant, and it is now in his wife's garden too. They call it Roger's plant.





I have two photos of *Anemone nemorosa* 'Robinsoniana'. One from Chris Hibberd, the other from Dorothy Harriman.  
Chris has a splendid display.



Dorothy said 'I have seen very small pots of 1 or 2 bulbs of this beautiful blue nemerosa anemone sell for £20+. My back garden slopes down to woodland which can be lovely, but a nuisance when the celandines and wood anemones in the wood decide to seek a home there. I have spent many hours digging out these intruders so they don't overcome the 'real' plants that I plant. Two years ago, when doing such digging out,



I noticed a rich blue wood anemone which had come up. It was exactly the same as the Robinsoniana that I had coveted at alpine shows. I dug it up and planted it in a pot on the terrace which housed a clematis. Last year there were two of them, but this year there are at least 12 – they look spectacular. I daren't move them to a 'suitable' space in my alpine trough in case I lose them altogether.'



Here's one from me, *Erythronium 'Pagoda'*. These are in a bed which faces my back door, so I see them every time I leave the house.





The final plant picture I've identified as *Euphorbia dotiae*, but I may be wrong.



Dot sent this through saying 'this is how your group chair is managing to fill the hours with my broken leg. On a fabulous warm Easter Saturday we had a picnic in isolation at the back of Don's allotment. The change of scenery from 4 walls was desperately needed. After the picnic I sat and read while Don potted around the allotment. I've never seen it looking so good in April. Pity no visitors will see it this year.'

### UNINVITED BUT WELCOME GUESTS

Linda Headford got in touch to say she tried three times to introduce *Verbena bonariensis* into her garden, but it never came back from self-seeding or the mother plant (in my experience they sometimes survive the winter). So she posted a question in a GQT forum asking for advice and the amazed responses included 'I can't get rid of them' and 'but they grow everywhere'. So she gave up. Move on several years and one appeared from nowhere, and now they 'grow everywhere'. But she loves them, as we all do.

### REFLECTIONS & MEMORIES

I was talking to a friend of mine yesterday and she was telling me about how a number of plants she loves seem to be looking much more healthy and vibrant this year and she's put it down to the wet winter. Interesting to reflect on which plants seem to have enjoyed having cold wet feet for about 5 months of the year as so many of those we want to grow require that target soil type of 'moist but well drained'. Anyone else noticed this?

David Andrews shared a lovely memory of 'a most pleasant occurrence at the Botanical Gardens a good many years ago. It was Good Friday and Angela was working so I decided to take myself off to the Botanical Gardens to photograph some plants for a project I was working on, but I didn't know that the gardens didn't open until 10.00am on the holiday. What to do! When all of a sudden up popped Arrol Winning and after I told him what I was doing he let me into the gardens where I spent over an hour wandering the gardens to my heart's content taking photographs and just enjoying the moment. So whenever we have an Easter like this weekend and the Magnolias are in blossom I hark back to that day and think of the pleasure Arrol and the gardens gave me on that day. Thank you'



## **NEXT TIME**

A bit of poetry from Don Witton, a selection of early flowering Clematis from Chris Hibberd, frits and tulips from Hugh Reid, shrubby delights from David Andrews, a gorgeous peony from Paul Forster and a bit of carrot advice from Janet Boulding.

So that's all for this edition, don't forget to send in your photos, comments, memories, reflections, advice etc. to [tonifrascina@outlook.com](mailto:tonifrascina@outlook.com)

Enjoy the sunshine

Toni