

Keeping in Touch, January 2021

Happy New Gardening Year to you all

This month has been a bit nippy so far and today's forecast is for nothing but snow, however there are still signs of life in the garden as your photos below show only too well.

Anyway, a bit of snow never really does our hardy perennials any harm, they might look a bit droopy and forlorn after a few cold nights, but we know they'll recover as soon as it warms up even just a tad. And, of course frost does wonders for the germination of some seeds and helps manage pests and diseases. The season after that really cold winter of 2010, I hardly saw a single slug in my garden. Sadly, it didn't last!

JANUARY'S ZOOM TALK

We had our first zoom talk on 6th January. Thanks to the more than 40 members who joined us for a talk on 50 Shades of Green by Razvan Chizu. Barbara Dygnas and I have summarised the talk for those of you who couldn't attend, you have a choice of how much detail you go into. Please contact Toni for the documents if you would like them.

- Talk Summary from me – a short whip through Razvan's main points
- A list of all the plants he mentioned – Barbara has painstakingly typed out the names of all the plants featured
- Barbara was really interested in that part of the talk in which Razvan looked at the function of leaves, so she's written a more detailed account of his narrative.

NEXT FEW ZOOM TALKS

Tricia Fraser has booked the following speakers for our usual meeting slot on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm:

February 3rd	Hilary Hutson will give her latest talk "Sheffield Botanical Gardens – Twelve Months of Colour"
March 3rd	Don Witton will give the talk he had prepared for last year's Lecture Day, "The Creation and Evolution of the English Herbaceous Border"
April 7th	John and Gail Summerfield provide a behind the scenes look at their Lincolnshire nursery in "The Westshores Story"

A link to each meeting will be sent out in advance.

Please do join us in February, I for one am looking forward to Hilary's tour of the Botanical Gardens, it's always fascinating to see something familiar through the eyes of another.

SPRING NEWSLETTER

If anyone has any longer articles for the spring edition of our newsletter, can you please let Jim Chandler, editor, know, j.a.chandler@shu.ac.uk. Deadline is early March.

GARDEN VISITS

For obvious reasons we haven't been able to do any garden visits since last March. Don Witton, organiser, says that once circumstances change he'll sort a couple of 'pop up' visits.

PODCASTS

Anyone a fan of podcasts? Basically, they are like radio programmes which aren't broadcast on a regular schedule, but available through a website. I noticed in the January edition of Gardener's World a link to some GW podcasts –

I've listened to one so far, one cold wet afternoon. Quite a soothing thing to do. You can find them here [Podcast - BBC Gardeners' World Magazine](#)

PLANT HUNTERS FAIR 2021

The schedule for events can be found here <http://www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk/index.htm>. I expect the early ones are likely to be cancelled, but hopefully the later ones will be able to take place.

Gardeners' Question Time

Elaine Blair needs some advice on how to deal with her Clematis cirrhosa 'Wisley Cream'. When she planted it she never expected it to climb so high as to tangle itself with her telephone wires! She says "it is such a beauty and has very attractive seed heads so I'm never sure when and if to prune it. Please can someone give me advice about it." Can anyone help?



YOUR PHOTOS

You may remember I featured a photo of mistletoe in our December KIT along with a plea from Janet Boulding for advice on how to grow it. She's been trying for **decades** to no avail. Then, whilst winter pruning her apples, this is what she found:



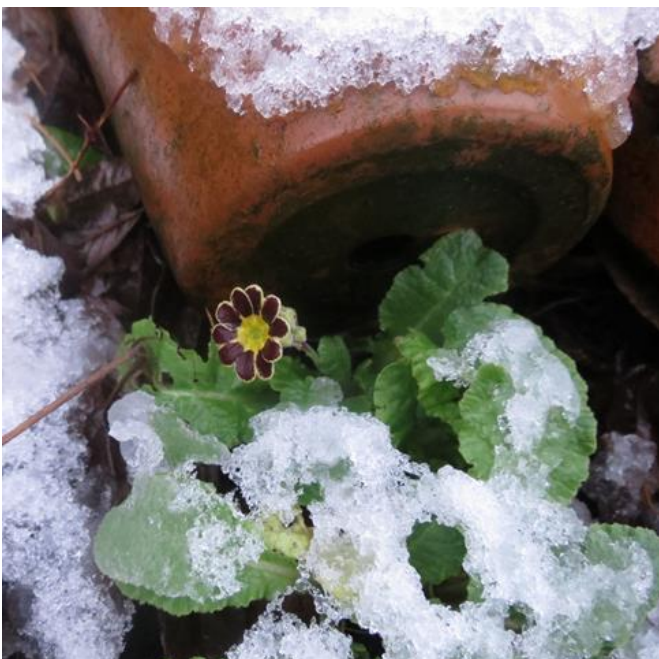
Well done Janet!

If nothing else, anyone who gardens develops patience, resilience and optimism. If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try, try, try, try try try, try, (repeat as required) again.

Judy Coulson send in some horticultural gold in the form of Narcissus 'Cedric Morris'. At £5 a bulb (Beth Chatto), its an expensive purchase. Judy says it's supposed to flower at Xmas, but was a bit early this year.

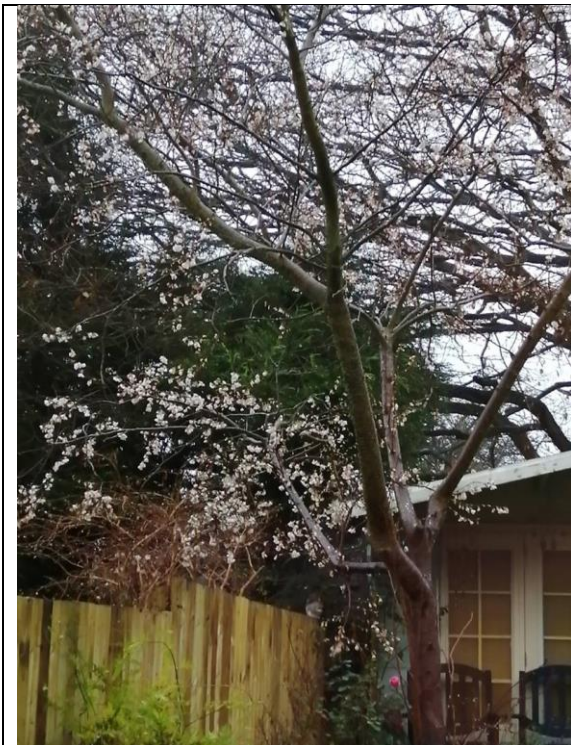


Barbara Dygnas sent in two photos, one of Primula Gold Lace poking through snow and the other of those lovely furry buds of Magnolia stellata. A sight which is full of the promise of spring.





Kathryn Barnes sent in two photos of her *Prunus subhirtella* clothed in two 'coats', blossom and snow.



Ian Greenwood send in a lovely selection of plants which he has had in flower recently:

Euonymus 'Pink Beauty' in October



Leaves of *Cyclamen coum*



Farfugium japonica 'Wavy Gravy' and *Arum pictum* 'White winter'



Paul says 'We've asked the blackbirds to put the labels back but so far they've not obliged'.

Elaine Blair's Christmas Cactus sits in a light but unheated porch. She says "This is a cutting the original of which belonged to my children's great grandfather. I inherited it in 1969. Of course cuttings have been given to family and friends over the years. When I moved here without my old one a relative gave me a cutting back." Does this qualify as a family heirloom?.



Don Witton's got lots of interest to share, including Hellebore 'Anna's Red', one of my favourites.



H. ericsmithii 'Winter Sunshine'



Yellow and green variegated evergreen *Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon' lights up a dark corner of his allotment. Apparently it is not a grass but gramineus means 'grass like'.



One of Don's favourite Euphorbias with a long season of interest (usually Feb to end of June) is E Redwing. The tips of the evergreen stems colour up red in the winter before they flower from Feb onwards. Don says, "Often, as here, a stem decides to flower early. At 18in tall it is best grown at the front of a sunny border".



And finally, *Corydalis* 'Chocolate Stars', its new leaves start to grow in autumn. Initially they are brown in colour but as the plant develops to 2+ft in spring the leaves become olive green and the flowers are blue.

