

Keeping in Touch, May 14th 2020

Hello again,

Hopefully this cold snap hasn't dampened your spirits or damaged any of your plants. I've got climbing beans in my coldframe which are far too tall for the frame, but I haven't dared put them out yet.

I've just realised that it should have been our plant sale this weekend. I shall miss it, I enjoy the occasion not just for the opportunity to buy plants, but also for a natter with all those who take part, chatting to our customers and of course the cakes!! The mere thought of Myra's ginger bread.....

KITBITS

KIT Online - Tricia Fraser is kindly converting the KIT emails to PDF format and putting them on line, so if you have any trouble viewing them on whatever device you use, you can see them at <http://www.southpenninehps.btck.co.uk/LockdownLife>. They aren't all on yet, but hopefully will be soon.

YOUR QUERIES ANSWERED!

Last time Charlotte Swain sent in a pic of a plant she was thinking about digging out as it doesn't seem to flower. Ah, but it does, Judy Coulson and Barbara Dygnas both suggested that it was *Crocus autumnalis*. When I emailed Charlotte to share the info, she said "Ahar, that makes sense". The leafless flowers of this plant come out in autumn after the leaves have died down, hence the common name 'naked ladies'. If you didn't know you would never connect the two as being the same plant.

Janet Boulding sent in a couple of geranium photos for identification. Tricia Fraser suggested the following:

"I think the first of Janet Boulding's geraniums is possibly *G. macrostylum*, if it has lots of small tubers underground. An alternative could be *G. albanum* but the leaves look wrong for that. Both species go dormant in summer. Her 2nd photo is of *G. maculatum* – probably album but if the flower is pale pink then it's 'Beth Chatto'."

MORE QUERIES

Elaine Blair send in this pic of her *Centaurea hypoleuca* 'John Coutts', she asks, "does anyone know why this beautiful plant is blind, or rather with flower heads that just don't open (look this one up on line, it is lovely in flower). They are like already formed seed heads. It's a good foil for the fading allium leaves behind. I bought it from a hardy plant sale so am hoping someone will know"



I had a yellow *Centaurea* which looked like that and seemed to take ages for the flowers to open out, its not just a matter of waiting is it? Anyone know?

Hugh and Judy Reid have a much beloved *Clematis montana* which they would like to know the name of, can anyone enlighten them?



PHOTOS

Magnolia Susan from Janet and Richard Lister



Elaine Blair's *Euphorbia x pasturii* 'giant' was featured a few weeks ago, now it's in bloom



Now for some lovely Azaleas, the first from David and Angela Andrews are *A. Hortulana* 'H Witte' and 'Spek's Orange' together.



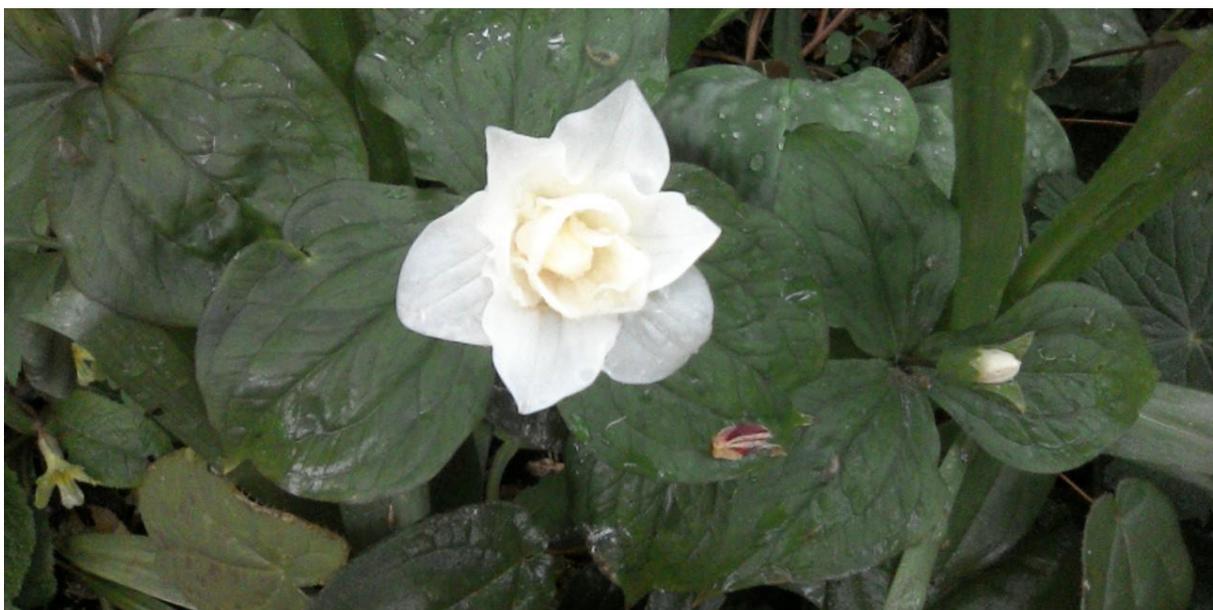
Chris Hibberd emailed in to say “We previously lived at Owler Bar which is at 250 metres, exposed and along the ridge from Holmesfield. We had a neutral clay loam. I now live at Lea, a field below Lea Rhododendron Gardens with free draining acidic sandy loam and at 120 metres. It's a completely different environment, which has been demonstrated by my *Euphorbia mellifera* which is grateful for its new spot. It has made a dramatic shrub.



Secondly, I attach a rather special Azalea bought from Lea Gardens as few years ago. It's a variety of the *A. lutea* and hasn't been propagated commercially by them. I can attach a photo but the powerful scent will have to be imagined! It has *Tulipa 'Bastia'* planted under it. I rather like the combination. “



Decie Needham offers another late trillium, *Trillium grandiflorum* fl. Pl.



Don Witton sent in another erodium towards the back end of April, but I haven't been able to fit it into a KIT until now. He says "One of the pots I currently have on the patio table for Dot to look at is *E. pelargoniflorum* which I wrote about in our Newsletter but according to the article by John Beaulieu in the HPS spring journal this plant is *E trifolium*. It's confusing as a google search has the exact same flowers to both names and the RHS uses pelagoniiflorum. Whatever its name, it's a very pretty thing.



Penny Wright's *Rosa banksiae* is looking pretty amazing, she says "This thornless yellow rambling rose, which we planted to cover the trellis hiding the veg patch about 20 years ago, is earlier than ever this year and has never had so many blooms on it. This is a view of the south side taken from the vegetable garden. It's less spectacular, but still well covered in clusters of pale yellow flowers, on the north side, seen from the kitchen window."



And finally I'll fit in Hugh and Judy Reid's rare trees. These aren't in their garden, but worthy of a place in our KIT just because they are lovely in flower. The photos were taken last year on a visit to Broomfield College open for the NGS : *Davidia involucrate*, the handkerchief tree and *Halesia carolina*, the snowdrop tree.



If you've sent any photos which haven't been featured yet, I do try and fit everything in that is flower related, but I may have missed one or two, apologies for that, my 'system' for recording

the photos is not infallible! Don't forget to mail me anything you would like to share with our other members tonifrascina@outlook.com .

Enjoy the warm weather to come.

Toni