

Keeping in Touch, October 2021

This regular email was started at the beginning of the first lockdown back in March 2019. It was a way of us keeping in contact when we couldn't meet in person. As we are slowly heading towards getting back to normal I've decided to make this the last edition of 'Keeping In Touch'. I've really enjoyed pulling together your photos to share with members, and I've learned a great deal from the process not to mention buying some new plants and cultivars which I didn't know about. Consequently my garden now has many more beautiful asters, peonies, crocosmia and grasses than pre-covid!

South Pennine Group Talks: November, December 2021 and January 2022

First, an update on talks from Tricia.

Please note that since providing Jim Chandler with details for the Newsletter, the December talk has been cancelled. Unfortunately we could not get Greenhill Methodist Church Hall on a day that Jonathan Moseley could give his talk. As it was to have been a demonstration with plant material it wouldn't have been easy to give the talk via Zoom. Also the March talk advertised in the newsletter will be changing as Rob Potterton no longer gives talks in person so instead I have booked Ingrid Millington, Hillview Hardy Plants. To keep up to date with our programme changes, please check our South Pennine Group website, programme page: [Programme | South Pennine HPS \(webador.co.uk\)](https://webador.co.uk).

- **3rd November 2021:** Zoom talk by Samantha Hopes, Hopes Garden Plants at Halesowen ([Hopes Garden Plants - About Us](#)) Samantha is giving a Zoom on Hepaticas. If you read the information on Samantha and Nigel's website, you will see that she looked after the Hepatica Collection at Ashwood Nurseries.
- **December 2021: Meeting cancelled.**
- **5th January 2022.** I hope this will be our final zoom talk for a while! Ian Young, from Aberdeen. Ian is a leading light in the Scottish Rock Garden Club ([Scottish Rock Garden Club - Seed Exchange - SRGC Home Page](#)) and writes their 'Bulb Log'. He will be giving his 'Waves of Colour' talk which looks at sequential planting in his garden using bulbs and other plants to give long periods of changing colour and interest throughout most of the year.

Critter Query



KarineN has some very hungry caterpillars defoliating her roses. Anyone know what they are and a good organic method of control? Personally, I show no mercy to this sort of pest – pick them off and squish or put on a wall for the birds to pick up.

Your photos

DonW took these photos last month. He says:

'My allotment never looks good at this time of year - too many large untidy plants and many clumps of euphorbia foliage and not enough path space. I'm constantly hacking back to keep the paths passable. In amongst the jungle there are still some interesting specimens when I took my camera up yesterday. Having said euphorbias are currently a load of leaves my latest addition to the collection is flowering its socks off. E x arendsii is neither yellow nor red but unusually orange. I picked it up from Beth Chatto nursery early last year before lockdown. Full details (quick plug) can be found in the new HPS euphorbia booklet.'



He also has an interesting herbaceous artemisia which is 5ft+ tall. *A. lactiflora* 'Guihzou' is named after the province in China where it was wild collected.



Looking very striking is his deciduous Agapanthus with rich deep blue flowers. Agapanthus Midnight Star is the only one he grows in open ground and it's been fine for years.



Don picked this *Helenium autumnale* SALUD EMBERS ('Balsaluemb') up from our visit to Millthorpe Nursery. It's attractive but not dissimilar to one he already grows. What attracted him was that the label said 40cm, a bit of a dwarf.



ElaineB's *Kirengoshoma palmata* sits nicely next to *Euphorbia x pasteurii* in a shaded bit of her garden.



Kirengoshoma love shade, particularly damp shade. It's a bit of a martyr to slugs when its young, but once established it shrugs them off. I grew it from seed for the first time this year, you have to sow when green (i.e. now) and leave them to overwinter. The green seed is almost translucent and looks really under-ripe so I wasn't convinced they would germinate. But happily they did, but needed to be protected from slimy marauders.

TriciaF thinks this is *Eucomis* 'Leia' – one of the Aloha series. It didn't start to flower until late August and is a much smaller plant than *E. bicolor* but is providing some lovely autumn colour. She keeps them in pots, under the greenhouse staging in winter and follows RHS advice which is to repot them each spring and keep them well watered when growing and flowering. Keep dry in pots in winter.



JanetB is enjoying the delights of Geranium Orkney Pink and her lovely Eucomis



Finally, from my own garden a couple of annuals. The seed pod of a *Cobea scandens*, which looks like a small cucumber and *Eryngium leavenworthii* grown from seed. I bought the latter thinking it was a perennial, but didn't read the details properly. Its taken ages to get going, but has finally gone this lovely purple. I hope it self-seeds, can't be doing with stabbing my thumbs to bits collecting the seed.



Many thanks to the 40+ members who contributed over the past 21 months. It's been a pleasure.

See you all in February 2022 at our new venue ☺

Toni