

Keeping in Touch, 31st March 2020

Well it's the last day of March, the clocks moved forward last Sunday but temperatures took a giant leap backwards. We even saw a bit of snow up here between Oughtibridge and Wharnccliffe Side. However that doesn't seem to stop our members' gardens from producing some lovely spring sights.

PHOTOS

Pam Hodgson sent through this message and pic.

Hi all, just saying "Hello", from the Camelia & I. It has been flowering for more than 2 weeks now and a joy to see everyday.

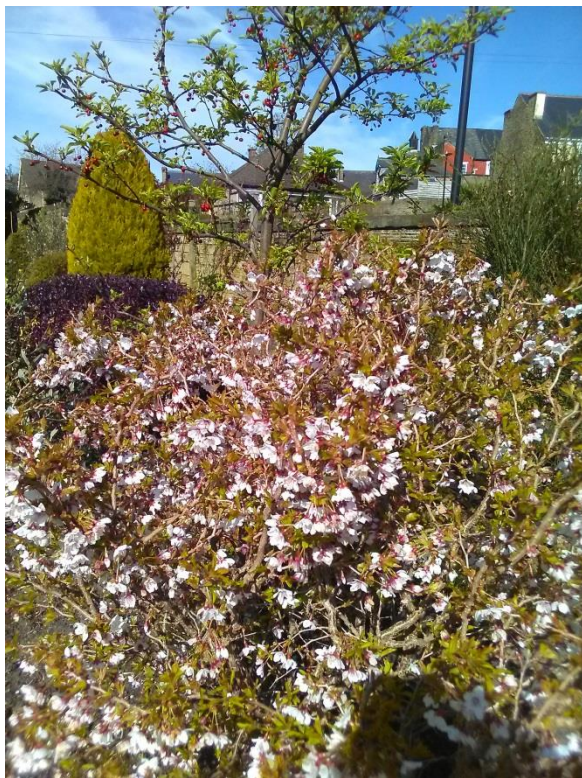


The message in pink blossom certainly brought a smile to my face.

Barbara Dygnas sent through her photo of 'essential supplies' which arrived recently – not loo rolls, flour, pasta, tinned tomatoes etc. but Cyclamen coum 'Ruby Star', Hepatica nobilis blue form and Trillium luteum (not yet flowering).

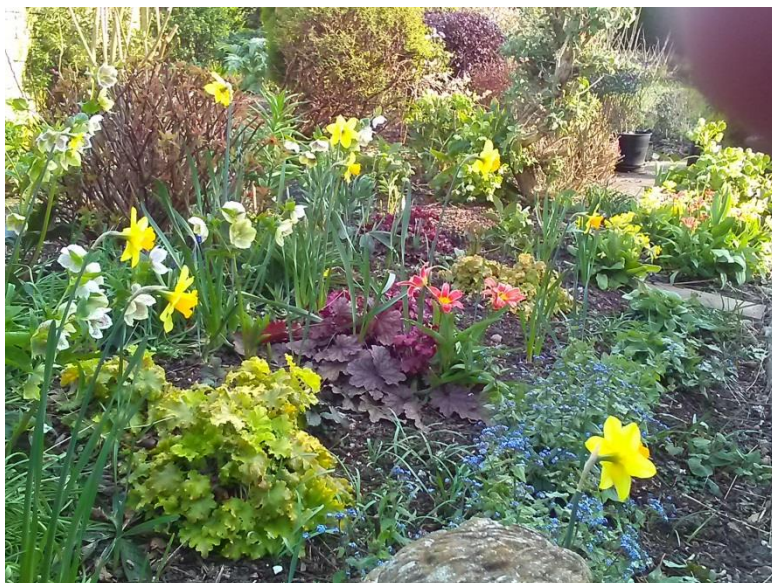


Frank Abel sent through a couple of photos from his garden, the first a lovely dwarf Japanese cherry, *Prunus incisa* Kojo-no-mai, bought from Chatsworth and in its third season. Behind it is a young crab apple bought from Felley Priory. The malus is in new leaf with a few of the berry-like apples from last season still on its branches. Apparently it has a mass of them from autumn till now.

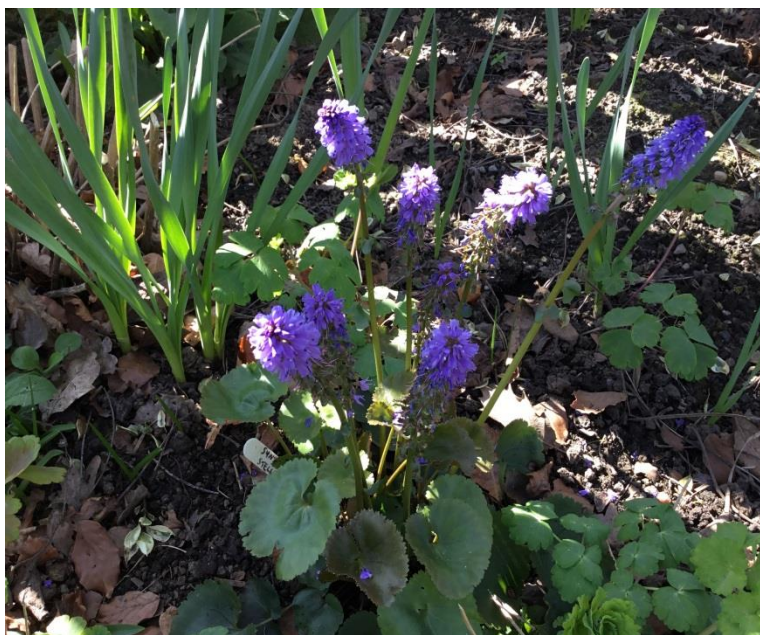


I have a crab apple which carried its orange fruit until February, when our two local pheasants (both called Donald, as in Donald Pheasants) found them. It was great fun watching these two bouncing around on branches in a very ungainly fashion swallowing crab apples whole.

Frank's second photo shows a lovely combination of daffs, forget me nots, early tulips and heuchera. Looks like the party is in full swing in Frank's garden.



Pam Hutchinson sent through this unusual plant, *Synthyris missurica* subsp. *stellata*. She bought it last year from Millthorpe Nurseries, and although was quite doubtful whether it would be successful, it seems quite happy in her garden and has been in flower since mid February. It's in semi shade during the summer months. A useful addition to the late winter border Pam.



HINTS AND TIPS

I have it on good authority that Lily beetles are already cavorting in the Frittilaria, so keep your eyes open for these little red beasties. Pretty much every stage of this beetle chomps through the leaves of lilies and frits. You might be able to see the orange-red, sausage-shaped eggs on the undersides of leaves, they are easily disposed of. Young larvae are rotund and usually hidden under their own black excrement, how lovely. They graze on the underside of leaves leaving brown dried up patches. Older larvae eat entire leaves starting at the tips and working back towards the stem and the red adult beetle eats leaves, petals AND seed pods. If you can catch 'em, show them no mercy.

LAWN CARE

David Andrews sent in this picture of his well-manicured lawn. When the world gets back to normal David, do you want to borrow my new mower? It doesn't do stripes, and is heavier than a pair of scissors, but I bet it's easier on the back.



That's all for today, don't forget to send a pic of anything in your garden which is beautiful, disastrous or funny or any hints and tips you think are worth sharing. Send them directly to tonifrasicna@outlook.com.

Here's hoping the warm weather returns along with a little more calm in the supermarkets.

NEXT TIME

A puzzling plant from Don Witton, a perfect pairing from Elaine Blaire and a list of nurseries which were due to show at Harrogate next month. The news for the nursery trade is grim, so if you are in need of a bit of retail therapy, buy online where you can.

Keep well

Toni