

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

Hello,

Something to brighten up a cloudy Sunday; another inspiration of irises, a perfection of peonies and other perennial delights.

### KITBITS

- Chris Hibberd's *Scilla peruviana* was featured in the last edition, she asked if anyone had come across it before. Well Judy Coulson had, she said 'I first came across it along the drive up to the house at Hestercombe. I was on a garden tour of Somerset with Kay Keeton. I then bought one from Andrew Ward when we hosted the HPS AGM down at Meadowhall. Unfortunately it died.' Oh well, you win some you lose some Judy. In my plant records there are more labelled 'DEAD' or 'DISAPPEARED' than not.
- One success I have had this year is with ginger lilies. I bought a *Hedychium densiflorum* 'Assam Orange' at one of our plant sales from Sue Stockdale a number of years ago. I always kept it (which turned into them) in pots and kept them in the greenhouse overwinter. I also have *Hedychium greenii*, which I bought at the Urban Jungle in Norfolk. They reckoned *greenii* is about the hardiest of the ginger lilies, but I decided to wait until I had enough to split before I tried open planting. Well I decided to stick a bit of both species in the ground in different spots last autumn, and both have emerged recently. I love the flower spikes and they smell, unsurprisingly, of ginger. Photo, hopefully, to follow.
- Jean Marshall suggests that Rene May's apricot iris (bought as Black Prince) and featured last time, might be 'according to David Howard's catalogue 'Lord Warden''. This catalogue sounds like a useful resource. I seem to remember getting another suggestion, but it would appear that I've deleted the email – apologies, if it was you, can you resend.
- Valerie Greaves emailed in to ask 'A friend wants to dig up and re-home a large *dracunculus vulgaris*. Is this the wrong time of year?'. Anyone know?

### IRISES

More irises to feast your eyes on:

Four iris images from Jean Marshall, first: *Iris germanica* 'Stepping Out'



***I. germanica* 'Royal Touch'**

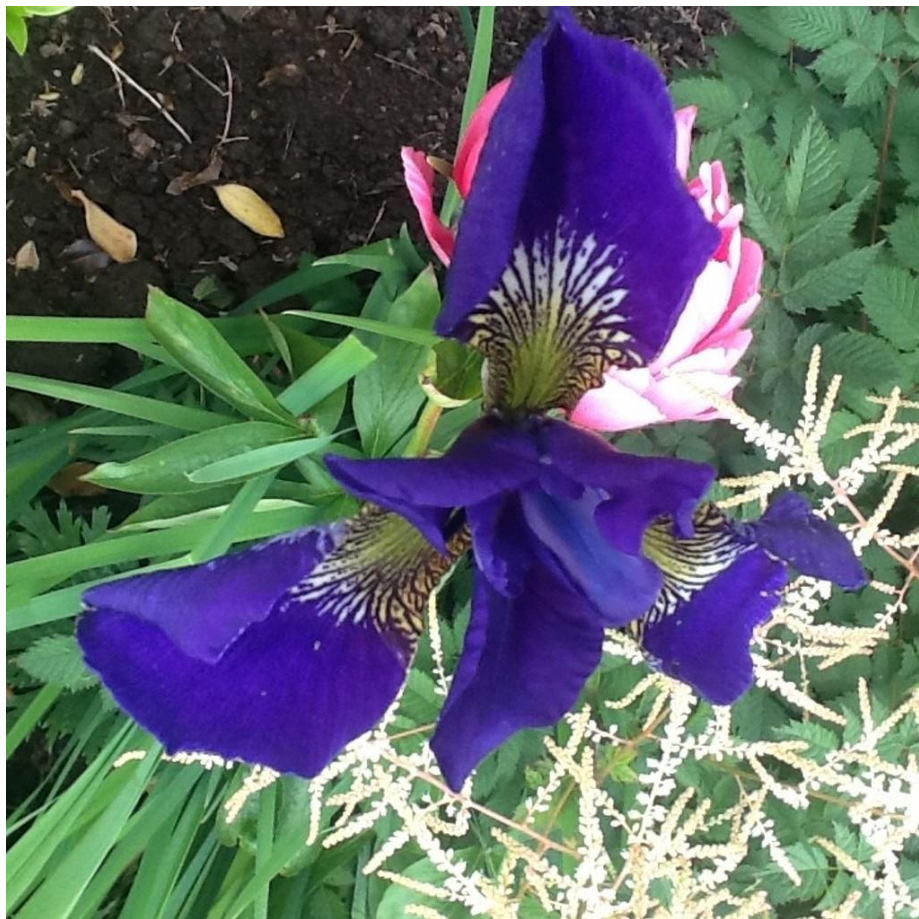


***Iris sibirica* 'Dancing Nanou'**

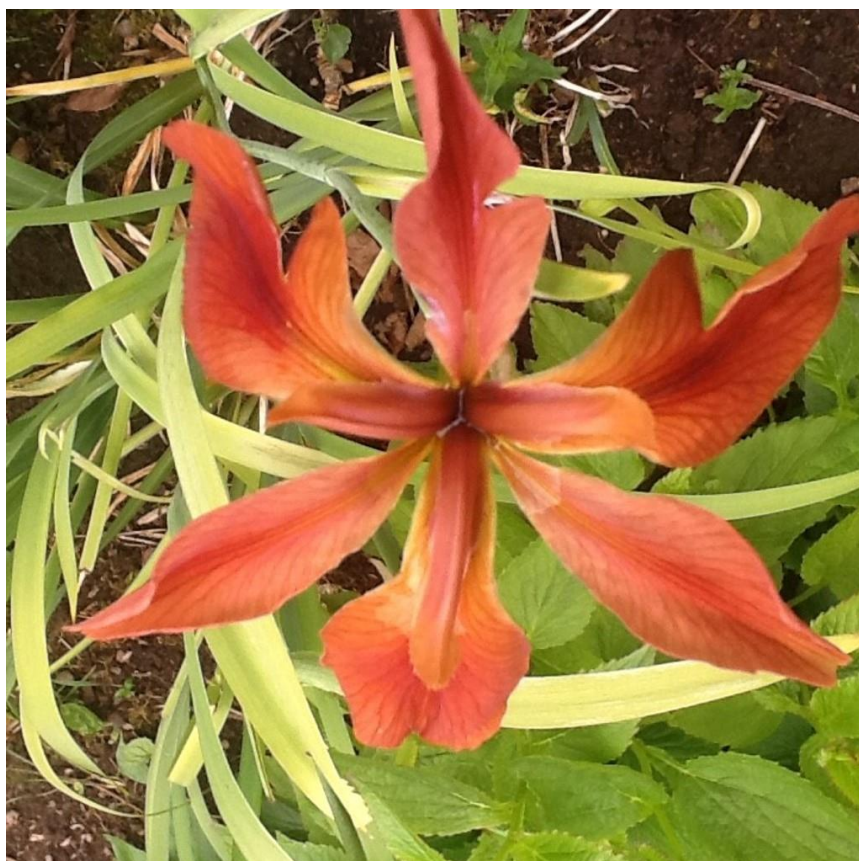




***I. sibirica* 'Shirley Pope'**



***Iris fulva***





Pam Hutchison also sent in a snap of 'a beautiful iris Dorothy Harriman gave me a couple of years ago. It's done very well, so much so that I'll have to split it - but again, I don't have a name for it!' Anyone got any suggestions?



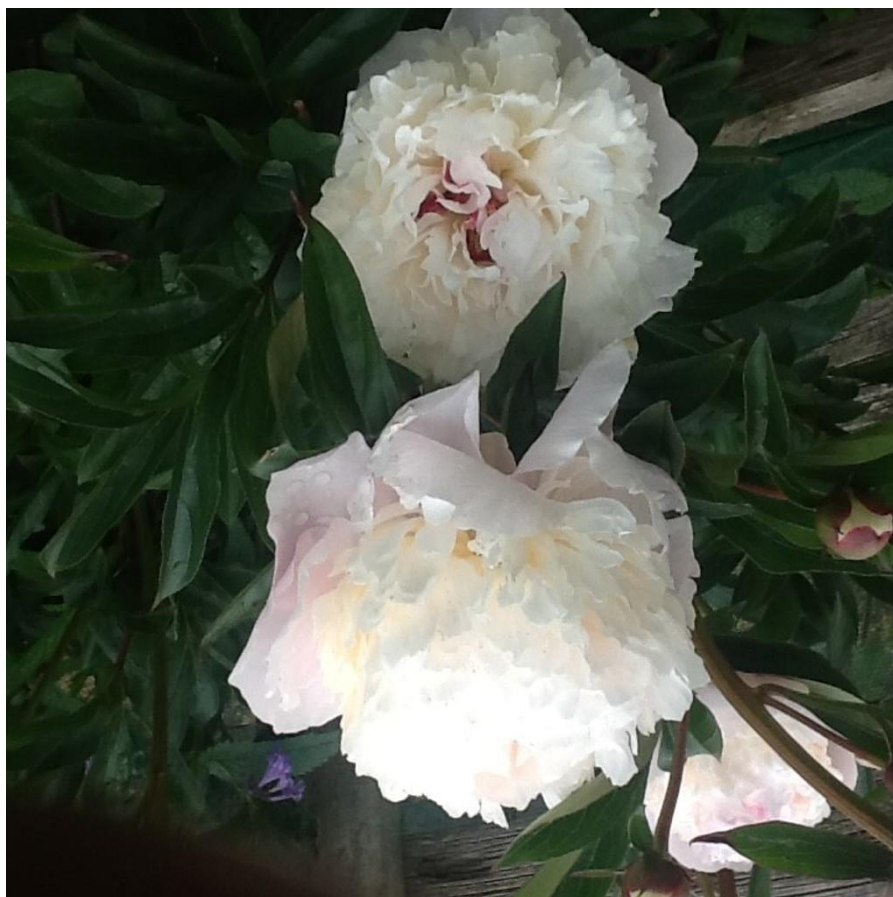
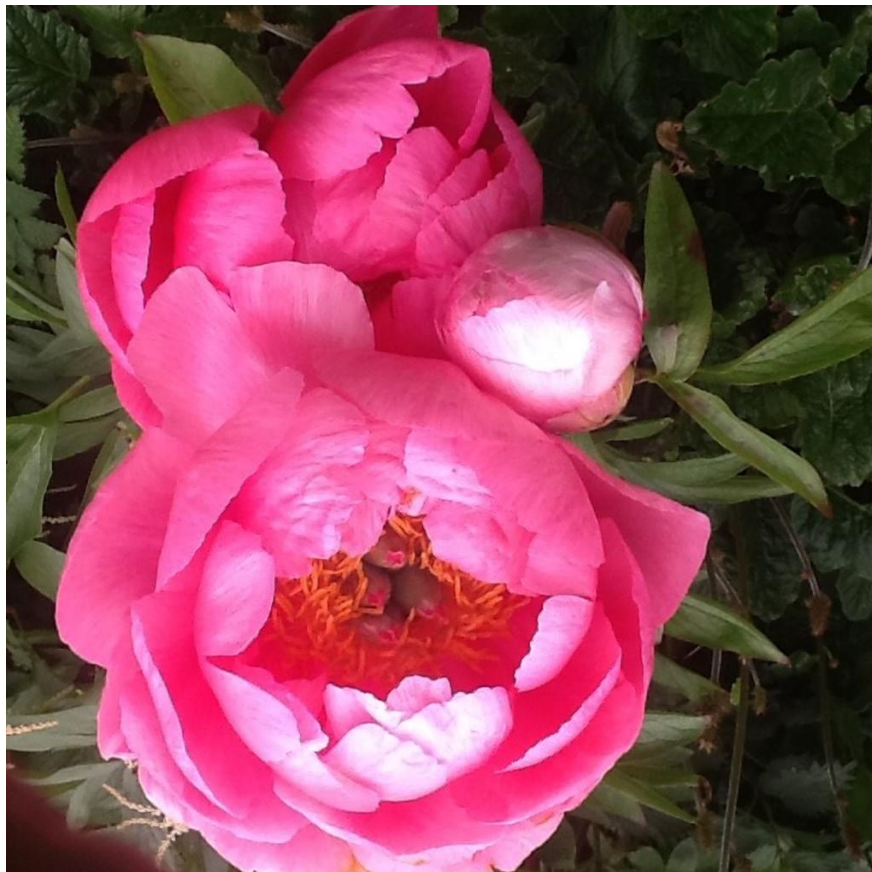
Jill Gorvett's *Iris sibirica* 'White Swirl' was introduced in 1954. She says 'We have to grow it in a bog in our desert! It never fails to delight us.'





## PEONIES

Two from Jean Marshall, she doesn't know their names, do you?



Does that white one look like the one your grandad used to grow Don?



## OTHER DELIGHTS

Julia Reed sent in two lovely photos, she says 'The rambler rose, *'Open Arms'* was bought at Handley Rose Nursery in 2012. It is smothered in blooms and buds. My penstemons didn't do well last year so I didn't cut this *P. 'Heavenly Blue'* back at all this spring and it has been the best ever.'

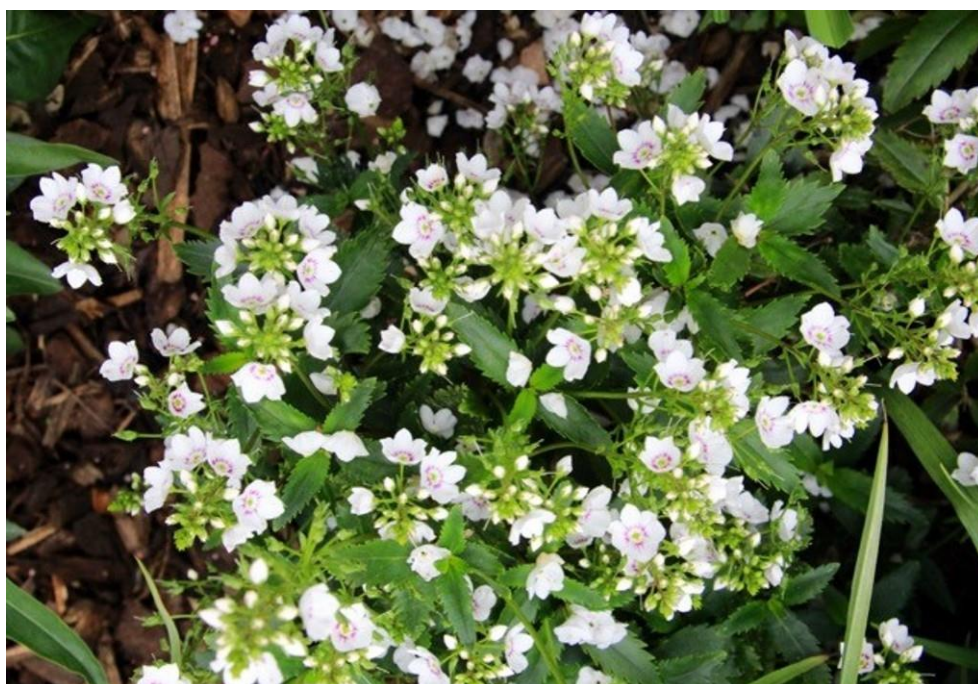




Don Witton spotted these on his walk out with Dot. He says 'I've been out walking over Kiveton pit tip - yet again!! (but not alone any more - Dot's building up the miles and ankle strength - 6 miles today). Anyway, just away from the edge of the tip there is an area which I know is a full bog in the winter months but I've never visited at this time of year. Despite the dry spring the area was still damp and as you can see, smothered in Marsh Orchids (*Dactylorhiza*). However, having looked it up, it is very variable and there are a dozen or more species and subspecies of Marsh Orchids. I suspect it's the Southern Marsh Orchid (*D. praetermissa*) but stand being corrected if anyone knows better.



Don also included a photo of an impulse buy he made a couple of summers back. He says, '*Parahebe catarractae* 'Avalanche' is closely related to hebes. It has evergreen toothed leaves, 18 inch tall with a lax habit so can be a bit wider. Hundreds of small white flowers which have a pinky purple circle in the throat are produced throughout summer. It's a summer delight and like Hebes, easy from cuttings!'





Judy Coulson sent in 'a photo of an unusual poppy I bought on an HPS Coach Trip to Kelberdale, North Yorkshire in 2010. It's called *Papaver spicatum* 'Heldrich'. It has soft grey leaves, but when it dies back after flowering, I always think I have lost it, (but it comes back the following year). Members may remember the garden overlooking a raging river going over a weir.



#### AND THE NOT SO DELIGHTFUL

Photo from Pam Hutchison, I suspect we've all got at least one of these little perishers. Pam says they are 'the bane of my life. Will they eat the cheap stuff? NO!! This one is so cheeky I thought it was going to ask me for a drink to wash the peanut hearts down! So much for squirrel proof feeders!'



This is my squirrel proof feeder, they can reach the lower feeders but can't get up to the 'arms' of the lamp post. Doesn't stop them trying though. The yucca on the left was a houseplant purchased from B & Q about 10 years ago. It was in a very large pot for the past 6, left out overwinter for the last 3, planted out last autumn. Despite being on



top of a lot of gravel, it seems to be suffering from its roots being too wet, or the transplant was just too much of a shock poor thing. I fear another one soon to be labelled DEAD.



Take care, and don't forget to share your photos by sending to [tonifrascina@outlook.com](mailto:tonifrascina@outlook.com)  
Toni