



Hello Members! **SUMMER ARRIVED ON TIME !!** Whilst it was lovely to see snowdrops and then daffodils over a long period, I can't remember such a slow, cold Spring when hardening off seed grown plants has been quite so difficult. Like me, a number of members reported running out of space as plants needed to be potted up before going to their final destination – be that the garden or the plant sale. Having spent weeks huddled in the greenhouse wondering, like the rest of us, when they might receive a little warmth and sunshine, now they crave water - that's gardening!

"Thank you so much for organising these Zoom lectures and for finding these very knowledgeable speakers"

"Just thought I would say how much I found Janet's talk on Salvias so interesting"

"The slides with their captions were so helpful and gave me a few ideas for the gaps in my garden"

MANY THANKS FOR THE TALK NOT WHAT I WAS EXPECTING MUCH BETTER"

"What a delightful talk, one of the best we have had, such a pleasant man, thank you all concerned"

That was a great talk tonight.

As we take our regular summer break from Speaker meetings, it seems a good time to look back at the last fifteen months when we were last at St Monica's. Since last September we have, so far, held 8 meetings by Zoom. Members' feedback has been phenomenal for which the Team is extremely grateful. Numbers taking part were in the high eighties or more for each of the meetings just nudging over the 100 cap for Andy McIndoe's talk in March. Overall, throughout the Zoom season, 170 members or members-in-waiting participated in at least one meeting. We upgraded the Zoom account for the April and May meetings, but numbers did not reach the hundred so we decided not to continue with the enhanced subscription for June.

Notwithstanding the inability to socialise, there have been a number of Zoom advantages. We were able to book non-local Speakers at relatively short notice and at much reduced fees – and of course there were no travel or accommodation expenses to cover. Members fed back that it was much easier to take notes at home and when Janet Buist gave us a masterclass on Salvias at the May meeting, many commented on what a joy it was to see her cuttings' demonstration, which wouldn't have been viable for all to see in the hall. So, all in all Zoom has been a success. Once we got past the first meeting, I enjoyed them too! For me the highlight was our December meeting when Richard Barnes from Northumberland not only gave an excellent talk on "The Winter Garden", but was also the inspiration for our Christmas Day plant survey.

PLANT SALE

23 June 2021

We are hoping very much to be able to hold a plant sale on 23rd June. Our Chairman, Chris Radford, has kindly agreed to it being held in her garden at 18 Grange Park, Henleaze.

We plan to be open for business between 2 and 5 pm. Any plant donations you can spare will be hugely appreciated as we would like to have lots to sell on the day. You may drop plants off on either Tuesday afternoon (22nd) between 4 and 6 pm or on Wednesday morning between 10 and 11 am. Please label your plants clearly.

As we are still easing out of lockdown, there will be no refreshments on offer on this occasion.

At the time of writing (mid-May) the rapid spread of the coronavirus Indian variant is starting to cause unease. With luck, by the time you are reading this, the situation regarding the further relaxing of lockdown will be clear. However, as has been true throughout the pandemic, plans may have to change or even be cancelled; no-one has yet worked out how to have a Zoom plant sale! Fingers crossed, we look forward to welcoming you at our first 'in person' event since March 2020.

Sue Knight

Sensational Salvias

As Janet Buist wasn't able to bring any of her Salvias to our May meeting, I thought it would be fun to offer some cuttings for sale. I am hoping that we will have just a few of each of a number of cultivars to include: *S.nemorosa* 'Caradonna', *S* 'Amigo', *S*. 'Animo', *S. x jamensis* 'Blue Merced', *S*. 'Cool Cream', *S.microphylla* 'Wine & Roses', *S. microphylla* 'Gold & Wine', *S. x jamensis* 'Nachtvlinder' as well as the annual *S. viridis* 'Blue Monday' and any others of which you have taken cuttings!



Brian's Brassica Barriers



This year I am protecting my brassicas and lettuce from slugs with home-made barriers made from plastic pots and copper tape. Use any 500ml round or rectangular food containers (eg yoghurt pots). Cut out the bottom and trim this edge with pinking shears to give a really sharp set of spikes.

Then make a vertical cut so that you will be able to remove the protector when the plant grows. Stick copper tape (eg. Doff's Slugs Be Gone) around the middle. When you place the pot over the plant gather soil around the base to anchor it. I then use a sprinkling of horticultural grit and a few ferric phosphate granules as belt and braces. It's working so far!



Well done Brian!

Next Meeting
1 SEPTEMBER
Andrew Mikoljowski
“Topical Tips for the Season”

Having entertained us with his “Pin me to the Wall” talk on climbers in 2019, who better than Andrew to share his topical tips with us. Whether by Zoom or face to face at St Monica’s, we look forward to welcoming Andrew for his return visit.

St Monica’s beckons

We have been in touch with St Monica’s and have been advised that they will be following Government guidelines with regard to external events held in their Hall. They are expecting that we will be able to return in September.

Floriade 2022

Following the article in the March Newsletter only 7 members expressed interest in joining a trip to Floriade so the Club will not be able to ask Brightwater to tailor make a tour for us. Of course, any Member wishing to go can book one of the Brightwater tours.

St George’s Flower Bank

This summer, should you find yourself travelling along the A369, the road that links the M5 Junction 19 (Gordano Services) with south-west Bristol, via Abbots Leigh and Bower Ashton, slow down near the lanes that turn off to Pill for you are driving past a Local Nature Reserve. Maybe stop if you can, though parking is limited.



Since 1990, from noticing a patch of primroses on the roadside, a group of volunteers has been tending this stretch of verge. Called *The Friends of St George’s Flower Bank*, the volunteers are dedicated to the conservation and enhancement of these road verges. The soil is poor and thus ideal for wildflowers. No seed has been sown (the A369 runs through farmland, the seed was lying dormant) though the banks are mown frequently and brambles and other undergrowth are removed. In 2007 it was declared a Local Nature Reserve by Natural England in conjunction with North Somerset Council. Ten years later, RHS ‘It’s Your Neighbourhood’ judged it OUTSTANDING, the top category. There have been many other awards.

475 plant species have been recorded as well as 477 invertebrate species, 50 species of bird, 15 species of mammals and 3 reptile/amphibian species. Details can be found on the website www.flowerbank.org.uk.

Since World War II, we have lost 97% of our lowland meadow in the UK. It is now one of the most endangered habitats in the world. How marvellous that *The Friends of St George’s Flower Bank* exists to preserve and manage this patch of rich and endangered flora.



Sue Knight

Staycationing?

Some ideas for the summer

A trip to a Rare Plant Fair would make a Grand Day Out. Please see below list of dates and locations, but check with the website first for any changes:

<https://www.rareplantfair.co.uk/news-and-articles/2021-rare-plant-fair-dates/>

June 6th	High Glanau Manor, Monmouthshire
June 13th	Waterperry Gardens, Oxfordshire
June 20th	Rodmarton Manor, Nr Tetbury, Gloucestershire
June 27th	Sculpture by the Lakes, Nr Dorchester, Dorset
July 11th	Winterbourne House and Gardens, Birmingham
July 25th	Highnam Court, Nr Gloucester
September 5th	Adwell House, near Thame
September 12th	The Bishop's Palace, Wells, Somerset
September 19th	Llanover House, near Abergavenny
September 26th	Evenley Wood Gardens, Nr Brackley, Northamptonshire

Taunton Flower Show

6th and 7th August

CASTLE GREEN

Taunton

FREE ENTRY

<https://tauntonfs.co.uk/>

Crete Hill House

Durdham Down BS9 3UW

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME

www.ngs.org.uk

Sunday 27 June 1pm to 5 pm

Pre booking available

And if you have friends visiting don't forget to take them to the University of Bristol Botanic Gardens.



www.botanic-garden.bristol.ac.uk

If you are a group of 10 or more you can arrange a guided tour. Bookings are being taken for tours from 28 June onwards.

Well, that's it from me and the Team until September. The speaker-sub-group will start work shortly arranging the 2022 programme as soon as the Covid roadmap is complete and, of course, any vital and exciting information will be passed onto you by e-mail. I hope that you will all enjoy a lovely Covid-free summer and are able to visit some interesting gardens as well as meet friends and family. In the meantime, I look forward to seeing many of you at the Plant Sale and then to hearing all about the Yorkshire holiday.

HAPPY GARDENING!

Chris Radford

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