



Plant Heritage



**Surrey Group  
Newsletter 2022**

# Your Chair's Welcome



What an interesting year we have had! After COVID, I know we all hoped for a return to normality and instead, we have been faced with another most extraordinary twelve months.

The year (our accounting year starts the 1st November. Please excuse me, I'm afraid the accountant in me still confuses accounting years with calendar years!) started very strongly. Although the numbers turning up to our meetings are still well below pre-pandemic levels, those that have attended have been most generous in their spend at our wonderful plant sales, raffles and refreshments. We have purchased new IT equipment so that we can more easily adapt to hybrid meetings which are simultaneously broadcasted on Zoom. Despite a

few setbacks, mainly with microphones, I think the new system has worked remarkably well. The new PC and projector has made life much more simple and (hopefully) the days of the projector cutting out for no good reason are behind us.

The (horticultural) year started very well and our takings at the Plant Fairs at Denbies have remained remarkably robust. In May, we had a most successful sale and raised more than any of us on the Committee can remember, and even our August takings were high. However, our drive-side sales have not done so well. A triple-whammy of drought, a hosepipe ban and the economic situation has made it much harder to raise cash from plants. All our takings for the year are significantly reduced, although as I write this, we do not have any final figures. I know that my own sales are down over 50% on last year. This reduction of spend on plants is being felt across the whole industry and I am sure that next year may well prove even more challenging. However, how amazing it is that even now our bank balance, although not as full as last year, is surprisingly high. The hard work, and this year it has really been hard just keeping plants alive, has paid

off. A huge vote of thanks needs to be given to all those who grow and supply the plants for our sales, especially to Wendy and Claire. The numbers of plants that they manage to propagate, grow-on and get to sales is just astounding and the quality just gets better and better. Between the three of us, we produce the output of a small nursery. I think for the last Denbies Plant Fair, Wendy, Claire and I produced some 24 crates - that is about 6 really full hatch-back car loads!

However, please don't feel that there is not a part for everybody to play. You do not have to be producing crates and crates of plants for our sales just a handful of well grown plants is really helpful too. If you would like to help, anything that is well grown and preferably in flower will sell. Do feel really free to contact myself or anybody on the Committee and we would be only too happy to advise you and would be most grateful for any help.

As I look towards next year I think things may become tougher, not just for us, but for all charities. But it's not a time to be disheartened. Instead, it is time to count our blessings! How lucky we are to have our plants and gardens to escape in to. How lucky we are that with our propagation skills, a packet of seeds

and some plant material, we are able to create hundreds of new plants. How lucky we are that we have a group of friends who we can share knowledge with, who will appreciate our efforts and encourage us to grow, grow, grow!

As always, my thanks go out to all those people in the group who are so active and generous with their time, knowledge and often their own money! Thank you so much to the rest of the Committee, each plays a vital role in the running of our group. Thank you also to our other active volunteers helping at plant fairs and shows both for the group and nationally. Thanks to everyone at Central Office who make so many of our national endeavours possible. Thanks to all the contributors to this year's Newsletter and thank you to you all who are reading this, even if you do not help directly, your financial support as members is essential and very much appreciated.

Well, I best sign out (my Editor does not like the opening statement to be too long!)

Wishing you all very happy growing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial letter and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

# A Surrey Group Year in Photos



At RHS Chelsea Flower Show



Above: *Pelargonium*  
'Hollywood Star'  
(Plant Guardian worthy)



Above: *Pelargonium*  
'Royal Surprise'  
(Plant Guardian worthy)



At the RHS Wisley Plant Society Show



Above: A stunning display of *Prunus* blossom in Suzy Hughes' garden



**Above:** Another successful Plant Fair at Denbies Wine Estate



**Above:** Martin Einchcomb begins his 'behind-the-scenes' tour of the Hampton Court Palace glasshouses and nursery areas



**Above:** Lantana cultivar at Hampton Court Palace



**Above:** A Lemon of royal provenance at Hampton Court Palace



**Above:** After a productive Propagation Morning at Wendy's in April

# Another Great Plant Mistake

## Japanese knotweed

Surrey Group Committee Member **Dr Sue Davidson** takes a look at another problematic plant

Short of a topic for your dinner party conversation? Japanese knotweed (JK) could be the answer. Even dinner guests who wouldn't recognise a daffodil will have heard of it.

Try the JK TRUE/FALSE quiz and then read on:



1. By law, you have to remove JK if you find it in your garden. **FALSE** (but see 4)
2. It can grow through concrete. **FALSE** (it can grow through tiny gaps and expansion joints but not solid blocks)
3. It has an even bigger effect on your mortgage than the Government. **PROBABLY** (time will tell!)
4. You can be prosecuted if you let JK escape from your garden into a neighbour's. **TRUE**
5. Its other names include 'Donkey Rhubarb' and 'Hancock's Curse'. **TRUE** (Hancock had a nursery near a JK find but was blameless) The scientific name is *Fallopia japonica* (apparently named after the Italian anatomist who discovered fallopian tubes!)
6. JK is an even bigger problem in Japan **FALSE** (see below)  
In Japan, it has to compete with other vigorous plants such as *Miscanthus* and bamboo and it also has natural predators in its native country.

Even if you got 6 out of 6, read on to enhance your JK knowledge.

Japanese Knotweed is widespread across Europe, Asia, New Zealand and the Americas. It's a plant that has its origins on the slopes of volcanos where other plants can't survive. If a plant can manage this it's not surprising that our efforts to eradicate in the UK aren't always successful.

### How do you recognise it?

JK appears from the ground in April or May looking a bit like asparagus. It is quite handsome. The stems are green with red speckles and have regular nodes similar to bamboo. It's a fast grower. The thick, hollow stems can grow up to 10cm (3.9 inches) per day, eventually reaching a height of around 3m. In summer, it has elongated clusters of creamy white flowers. Over winter the stems die off but the crown remains viable. (If you want to try cooking with it the spring shoots are apparently good in stir fries!)

### How did it get to the UK?

The Bavarian plant hunter Phillipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866) takes the blame for introducing JK. He was a physician who was appointed surgeon general of the Dutch East Indies. But in 1823 he was transferred to Deshima, a 2.2 acre artificial island in Japan's Nagasaki River. Japan was completely closed to the outside world at this time but Siebold used

his connections to collect specimens from a large area. But then he had a problem. There was an 'unfortunate incident' when he was found in possession of a prohibited map. He was promptly sent back to Bavaria, but he took some 2000 specimens with him, including the JK. He worked with Leiden University Botanical Gardens and set up his own commercial nursery nearby. JK was a roaring success and in 1847 it won a gold medal from the Society of Agriculture & Horticulture in Utrecht. In 1850 he sent a sample to Kew and propagation began. Many influential gardeners, including Gertrude Jekyll, had JK in their planting schemes.



*Japanese knotweed in bloom*



Interestingly, all the Japanese knotweed plants in Europe are clones of a single, female individual plant – in fact, they're thought to be genetically identical copies of the specimen that arrived at Kew in 1850.

JK has never been grown from seed as all the male flowers are infertile. Its remarkable ability to survive and spread is due to its underground rhizomes. These can remain dormant for many years. A piece as small as 1cm left in waste soil is enough for a plant to regrow. Finding even one stem growing the garden can knock 15% off the value of a property or lose you your mortgage.

## So how can you get rid of it?

Inevitably there are many commercial companies specialising in JK removal at a price. Control options include:

**Digging it up.** You need to dig to a depth of 5m! All the soil from the site has to be removed as well as the plant. The soil and the plant are controlled waste and are very costly to dispose of. Eradicating it from construction sites can cost well over £2,000 per square metre. The Environment Agency have tight controls and contaminated soil has to be buried 5m deep unless wrapped in geotextiles!

**Glyphosate.** Possible, but needs to



be done cautiously and over a prolonged period. If the top of the plant is killed off there is no way to get the rhizomes to take the glyphosate. Dormant underground buds will reactivate and continue to spread. Injecting glyphosate in to individual stems is possible, but time consuming to say the least.

**Biological controls** offer hope for the future; Aphalara itadori (a small sap-sucking insect) that is native in Japan, is effective, but so far, it has failed to become established in the UK in the numbers needed. The fungal leaf-spot pathogen *Mycosphaerella polygoni-cuspidati*, is a potential biocontrol agent. The aim is to develop a mycoherbicide, a product which would be applied in much the same way as an herbicide but has a fungus rather than a chemical compound as the active ingredient. Fingers crossed for the future.

## Is JK good for anything?

JK is used in Japan and China as a traditional medicine for conditions from Athlete's Foot to Gonorrhoea! Interesting combination! In the west Resveratrol, a substance derived from JK and sources such as the skins of black grapes, is available to buy over the internet and in health food stores. It has been claimed to be beneficial in most diseases, including some cancers, diabetes

and heart disease. However, it is not part of mainstream medicine. To go back to the dinner party where we started, a widely known health food chain sells a Resveratrol supplement. Their suggestion is that one capsule 'supplies more Resveratrol than you would receive from a typical bottle of red wine – without the calories or alcohol!'

Personally, I will stick to the wine, but maybe not a whole bottle.



*The young shoots as they emerge*



# *Journey Through a Designer's Garden*

Surrey Group member **Jānis Raubiška** shows us round his newly-planted garden where the plants take centre stage, providing year-round colour and interest



I am pleased to share this journey round my own garden which I created in 2022 with sustainability at its heart.

As we were planning a major home improvement project, I took the opportunity to completely re-design the garden and started drawing-up plans in 2021.

To make the best use of space, three 'rooms' were created, each with a different planting style and purpose. These different rooms provide succession, year-round interest and colour.

I wanted to design the garden with a sustainable, 'green' approach so that meant significantly reducing the size of the lawn, incorporating a 7,500

litre capacity rainwater harvesting tank and creating green roofs on all garden buildings (amongst other eco features). Because the modern living space of the house links indoors with outdoors and provides year-round views into the garden, I wanted to use plants that provide a dramatic change as the seasons progress. I have followed the 'right plant in the right place' principle in an experimental way to test the boundaries, experiment with planting combinations and horticultural techniques.



Plants with strong, vibrant colours make the *Jewels Amphitheatre* a highlight of mid to late summer. A romantic rose corner is a lovely spot



to linger in early summer and leafy textures and soft pastels surround a shady outdoor entertaining space.

Mostly dedicated to propagation in spring, the glasshouse bursts with home-grown produce later in the season. A 'grow your own' area of the garden is still a work in progress but will eventually have a collection of soft and top fruit.

Although it's still at a very early stage, I have started to put together new Plant Heritage National Plant Collection.

Jānis' Garden will be open to raise funds for the National Garden Scheme on 23 July and 20 August 2023.

# A Group Visit to Pyford Court

Although Surrey Group member **Stacey Baird** wrote about the Plant Heritage National Plant Collection of Wisteria at Pyford Court in the 2020 Newsletter, we couldn't resist sharing these photos from our group visit in May this year



A view of the magnificent pergola



*Wisteria floribunda* 'Kimono'



*Wisteria floribunda* f. *rosea*



*Wisteria floribunda* f. *pleniflora*



*Wisteria floribunda* 'Alba'



*Wisteria floribunda* 'Honbeni'

# Community Gardening

Surrey Group Committee Member **Claire Davitt** tells us how she turned her passion for plants into a “dream job”



I discovered Plant Heritage after visiting their stand at a Plant Society event held at Wisley nearly ten years ago. I joined up and have been hooked ever since.

I was amazed that not only was there a charity dedicated to conserving cultivated plants, but that you could actually get hold of these rare plants on the endangered plant list and become a Plant Guardian. Being a Plant Guardian means members can take part in active conservation without having to hold a National Collection. This is great for a keen collector like myself as I love growing a wide range of plants. I propagate a range of plants annually and sell them outside my home to raise funds for the charity.

As one of the oldest plant conservation charities in the world, the organisation is steeped in history and it's members, along with the national collection holders have a wealth of horticultural knowledge. During my first few years of working with the Surrey group, I was

encouraged to complete the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Horticulture. Once I had completed my exams, I felt confident enough to make the move and change my career direction into horticulture. I started volunteering for the Community Outreach team at Wisley a few days a month. After a position became available, I was interviewed and took the chance to make the change.

Since starting my role as a Community Outreach Worker for the Royal Horticultural Society back in 2021, I have always enjoyed seeing how different people connect with plants. My focus when working with groups is to bring to life the importance and the enjoyment of growing plants. Surrounding yourself with plants and gardening has been proven to be beneficial for both physical and mental health. Plants release phytoncides which help to reduce your blood pressure and help to lower your pulse rate. Another benefit of working with soil, is we inhale tiny particles of the

micro-organisms contained within it, this helps to boost our mood. I also feel it is important to stress that all plants are important, whether they are simple houseplants, shrubs or trees.

Over the past year, I have been working alongside a local NHS Link Worker based at the Parkview Centre for the Community on the Sheerwater Estate near Woking. By working alongside GP's, Woking Borough Council and Freedom Leisure, the NHS have been working to promote healthy lifestyles. The key audience are local women over 50, to have social interaction and enable them to partake in local activities and events. Over many years, the link workers have worked with local people and have successfully helped isolated women get out into the local community. They came forward to the RHS Communities team and

expressed an interest in gardening as a group. After initially engaging with the group to find out about their interests and skills, we decided that practical gardening sessions would be created to promote nature and well-being.

Throughout the year, we have delivered a range of practical workshops, which have been designed to empower and inform the community around horticultural and sustainable gardening techniques. Starting these sessions with seed sowing, we moved onto transplanting seedlings and planting up 'meals in a pot'. Subsequent talks included making compost, the wellbeing effects of houseplants and growing exotic plants. My overall aims of the project were to help the group to gain horticultural knowledge and skills, building on the women's confidence and



encouraging community social action. We have had positive feedback from the group who would like to do more with the RHS in the Sheerwater area.

In early August, I organised the last of our current sessions with the group. This session was a celebration of what the women had achieved throughout the year. We were blown away by the vast variety of produce and flowers this group have grown. They showed us all the plants they have grown with us along with all the other plants they have at home and in their gardens in the Sheerwater area. Vegetables including tomatoes, potatoes,



courgettes and a few we had not seen before, including bitter gourds and bangladeshi gourds.

In the future, we are also hoping to liaise with the Herbarium Team to help champion our local growers by pressing and preserving plant material from the plants they have grown in Sheerwater. The Herbarium Team would like to display and exhibit these plant samples to show how community gardens have been a feature of Surrey gardening history.

Here are some feedback comments from the women involved in the project;

*"I have learnt about rare species and how to grow and take care of them"*

*"At the age of 63, I've grown seeds for the first time - I thought my Nasturtium was going to die and I saved it!"*





# A Passion for Orchids

Sussex Group members **Gill** and **David Mathers** are on an Orchid Odyssey and they want to share the passion with us

Orchids, with their colourful vibrant flowers, bring a hint of the exotic that can cheer up the darkest of days. You can understand the Victorian passion for collecting them and paying thousands of pounds for rare specimens. The complexities of growing these plants only adds to the sense of wonder when you succeed.

Our journey into orchids began as a hobby with a small collection of Paphiopedilum, sometimes known as Asian slipper orchids. Gradually expanding to fill a whole conservatory, this passion took on a new direction three years ago when we had the opportunity to work with a highly experienced grower, Jim Durrant. Finding a site with dedicated glasshouses and state-of-the-art growing conditions, including full automation and carbon-neutral heating, provided the impetus to start The Mathers Foundation, a not-for-profit charity to conserve and research orchid species and hybrids.

The Eric Young Orchid Foundation based in Jersey was an inspiration for what we wanted to replicate in West Sussex; the initial collection



started with the arrival in July 2019 of 1,600 Oncidium, Miltoniopsis and Cymbidium hybrids from Jersey. The collection expanded significantly over the next two years with arrivals of both species and hybrids from Ecuador, Colombia and from some established UK collections including Burnham Nurseries in Devon and the Eden Project in Cornwall.

Recently we have also acquired Ian Butterfield's unique collection of Pleiones gathered over 50 years, which comprises both species from India, Bhutan and China and



*Cymbidium 'Mont Neron'*

innovative breeding of new lines of hybrids. In time we intend to apply for a restoration of its status as a Plant Heritage National Plant Collection.

Many *Oncidium* species come from South America and there are both cool-growing and warm-growing varieties. All ours are cool-growing varieties that were mainly previously

classified as *Odontoglossum*.

The species are epiphytic and generally grow in the cloud forests of the Andes above 1,000m and one of the challenges in the UK is replicating the conditions that the orchids like. We keep the glasshouses cool with a minimum night-time temperature of 12°C and maximum daytime temperature of 18°C. Ventilation is provided by fans and screens keep the light dappled as strong sunlight can damage the flowers. Humidity needs to be high but watering is done sparingly only when the pots start to dry. Our *Miltoniopsis*, *Cymbidium* and *Pleiones* all require slightly different conditions so each is housed separately to ensure the most beneficial growing environment.

*Oncidium* hybrids date to the Victorian days when hybridisation experiments succeeded in producing new crosses



*Oncidiums in the Nursery*

for the first time. The number of orchid nurseries selling both orchids and hybrids grew rapidly in the early 20th century, with many rare orchids selling for huge sums at auction.

Hybrids were recorded in an RHS register and a “stud-book” established to record all known crosses. In addition to crosses between species, intergeneric crosses also occurred and now a number of our hybrids are part of the Oncidium Alliance, which includes many related genera.

After the Second World War the number of orchid nurseries breeding and selling plants declined and now only a few dedicated UK nurseries still exist. Finding and collecting some of the historic Oncidium hybrids is one of our goals as these are part of our British orchid history. Conservation of orchids in their



natural habitat is critical to their survival and while orchids are present in every continent, except Antarctica, the threats to their existence are ever present with deforestation and climate change together with illegal collecting being just some of the dangers they face. We are proud to support an orchid conservation reserve, La Reserva Orquídeas, in Antioquia, Colombia, which is preserving 200 hectares of natural rainforest and has Oncidium species growing in the wild. Understanding the species and their natural habitat and sharing our passion will hopefully inspire a new generation of orchid lovers to enjoy these beautiful plants.



We were delighted to attain National Collection status for our Oncidium collection in 2021 and have been busy since then referencing and labelling our whole collection.

# Defy the Drought

Surrey Group Committee members share their top tips on how to cope with the extraordinarily hot summer we had

## Virginia Lloyd-Owen

Apart from the usual bucket kept by the sink, my top tip is to top-dress your pots with good-sized shingle; Large enough stones to be able move off after the hot spell without too much fuss but small enough not to crush the roots.

The stones will help keep the soil under them moist and cool.

## David Ford


My biggest regret this Summer was not having my micro irrigation system running fully; If you want to keep containers and borders irrigated and don't mind messing about with pipes and drippers, it's an excellent investment and currently not covered by the hose-pipe ban legislation.

## Wendy Bentall

Stand your pots in trays of water. The easiest (and 'greenest') are those supermarket fruit and vegetable packing trays. Beware using packaging that's had meat in it though as the foxes (or the resident dog) will be after them!

## Sue Davidson

I put a tiny amount of washing-up liquid in the watering can to break the surface tension on dry soil; It reduces 'run-off'.



**Wendy Bentall**

If you're going away for a few days, stand your pots in water in a children's paddling pool in a shady spot.

**Anne Mathieson**

My tip would be the same as David's - I did it for many years at my previous house but haven't got it set up at this one (six years on). Shame on me! Maybe tonight's job!

However, I have taken to washing up by hand and throwing the waste water on needy plants.

**Claire Davitt**

I find using trays to stand the plants/pots in the best idea. The plants then take up all the water they need. When I go off on holiday, I put my deck and house plants in trays and leave the plants sitting in a few centimetres of water. It stops the compost from getting really dried out in hot weather.

Having a really good soak helps them from drying out. I also put plants in the shade to help keep them cooler.

**Wendy Bentall**

Group your potted plants together so they can protect each other and you're not walking around with the hose between pots.

# Photographic Competition 2022: “Winter”

There were fewer entries in our Annual Photographic Competition last year but the quality of the photography remains amazing.

The theme for this year’s Photographic Competition is “**Winter**”.

The Competition is open to all members of the Surrey Group.

Members can submit only one photograph each and prints must be no larger than A4.

We really don’t mind if you do a bit of digital fiddling with your image; after all, we are Plant Heritage, not purists!

Entries will be displayed and judged by members at the AGM in February 2023.

The winner will receive a £15 Garden Gift Token and get to hold the *Rachel Thomson Crystal Bowl* for the year.

Entries may be reproduced in Surrey Group Newsletters.

Last year’s entries on the theme of “*Weather*” are reproduced below and opposite.

Gillian Spencer’s winning photograph from 2021 features on the front cover of this Newsletter.

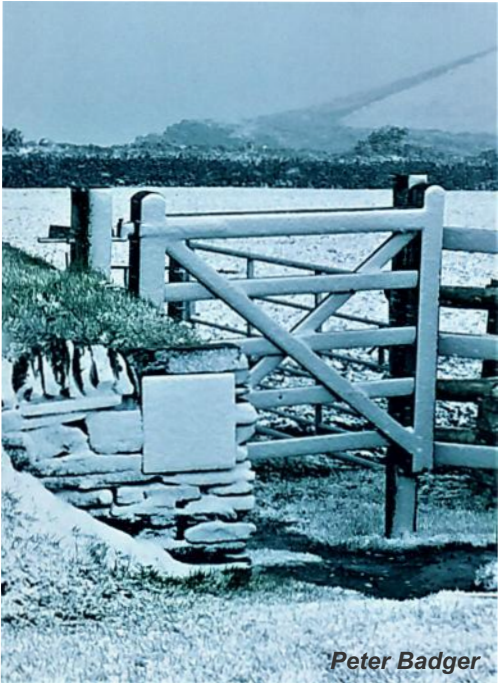
**Good Luck!**



David Ford



*Wendy Bentall*



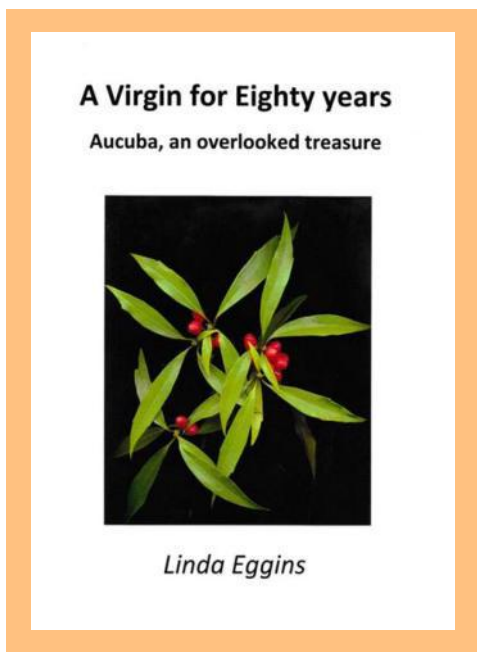
*Peter Badger*



*Marian Badger*

# **A Book Review; “A Virgin for Eighty Years Acuba, an overlooked treasure”**

Surrey Group Vice Chair **Wendy Bentall** was coaxed into reviewing this book about Acuba, despite not being a fan of the species.



The good folk of Plant Heritage encouraged me to read this book by Linda Eggins about Aucuba, “an overlooked treasure” despite me saying that I didn’t like them. The early History of Japan and the plant hunters makes for fascinating reading. But then the book moves onto the main feast, the Aucubas themselves.

First introduced into the UK in 1783, and known as the gold plant because of the golden speckles on the leaves. There are around 35 different cultivars all carefully researched and described, but try as I might to love them, I simply don’t. Would I ever grow them? Well, *if* I had a dark, dry shady area in my garden where absolutely nothing else would grow, then maybe... The one exception being *Aucuba japonica* ‘Salicifolia’, this has thin leaves, and provided there is a male Aucuba lurking in the neighbourhood, (bees and pollen can travel quite a distance), then it will produce lots of lovely red berries in the winter. Hillier Arboretum has a fine example grown as a standard which is perhaps the way forward for Aucubas.

And the book’s curious title? That refers to the fact that for 80 years, Aucubas were grown without producing berries until eventually the male plants were brought back to Europe from Japan.



# Dates for your Diary 2023/24

## 2023

### Thursday 9 February

#### **Surrey Group AGM and Two Short Talks**

Our AGM, presentation of the Flower of the Month/Meeting competition Prize, Photographic Competition judging and prize-giving and short talks from **two RHS Students**. Plus the Surrey Group *Annual Bring & Share Feast!*

### Thursday 9 March

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Mark Tuson**

Mark is Team Leader (Welcome and Riverside) at RHS Wisley. He will talk about his experience of propagating, planting, growing and maintaining the three Heather National Collections held at RHS Wisley; Erica, Calluna and Daboecia.

### Thursday 13 April

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Matthew Biggs – ‘George Forrest and Ernest Wilson: In Search of Special Plants’**

Garden writer, broadcaster and R4 *Gardener’s Question Time* regular, **Mathew Biggs** will reveal the adventures of arguably, two of the greatest plant hunters of all time and some of the significant plants they brought back from their expeditions.

### Sunday 30 April

#### **Plant Fair at Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking RH5 6AA**

Specialist nurseries plus our own plant stall. If you could possibly help, either by providing plants to sell, setting up, breaking down or running the stand, please contact [surreyph@gmail.com](mailto:surreyph@gmail.com).  
Sales to the public 10:00 to 14:00

### August Date TBA

#### **Help Propagate the Pelargonium Collection at RHS Wisley**

**Christopher Young**, Glass House Team Leader, would love some help propagating one of the National Collections of Pelargoniums (ex. Fibrex collection) which RHS Wisley now holds.

### Sunday 20 August

#### **Plant Fair at Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking RH5 6AA**

Specialist nurseries plus our own plant stall. If you could possibly help, either by providing plants to sell, setting up, breaking down or running the stand, please contact [surreyph@gmail.com](mailto:surreyph@gmail.com).  
Sales to the public 10:00 to 14:00

# Dates for your Diary 2023/24

## 2023

### Thursday 14 September

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Alistair Griffiths – Biodiversity and Sustainability**

RHS Director of Science, **Alistair Griffiths** will talk about his work with the RHS and the importance of biodiversity and sustainability in modern horticulture.

### Thursday 12 October

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Jane Lindsay – Growing Climbers**

Expert tips from **Jane Lindsay** of Tynings Plants about growing climbers and the three Plant Heritage National Plant Collections held by herself and Toni at the nursery; Jasminum, Mandevilla spp. & cvs and Thunbergia spp. & cvs.

### Thursday 9 November

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Neil G Miller – ‘The Secrets of Hever Castle Gardens’**

(Postponed from 12 November 2020 & 9 September 2021)

Head Gardener at Hever Castle, **Neil Miller** began his career as an insurance broker before following his passion for plants. He loves to share his enthusiasm and knowledge with others and will talk to us about the

award-winning gardens at Hever Castle and a ‘good piece on roses’. Neil is a lively and engaging speaker and this talk has been long time coming! It’s not to be missed.

## 2024

### Thursday 8 February

#### **Surrey Group AGM & more**

Our AGM, presentation of the Flower of the Month/Meeting Competition Prize, Photographic Competition judging and prize-giving and more.

Plus the Surrey Group *Annual Bring & Share Feast!*

### Thursday 14 March

Surrey Group Talk

#### **Tony Kirkham – Trees, A Cut Above The Rest**

(Postponed from 13 October 2022)

A topical talk about trees and issues concerning them. **Tony Kirkham**, retired Head of Arboretum, Gardens and Horticultural Services at Kew Gardens talks all things trees. From plant collecting, propagation of rare species to tree planting and pruning. It promises to be a lively and enjoyable evening with one of our country’s foremost arboriculturists.

# Surrey Group Talks

**Talks start at 19:30 - Doors open at 19:00**

All Talks include a Plant Sale, a Raffle and our *Flower of the Meeting* Competition. Refreshments are provided at a nominal cost.

A suggested donation of £5 for non-members is requested at the door. All meetings are free to members and everyone is welcome.

Venue: St Andrew's Church Hall, Churchgate House, Downside Bridge Road, Cobham KT11 3EJ.

For full details of all events, please refer to the Surrey Group Events page on the Plant Heritage website.

## Surrey Group Committee

### Chair

#### David Ford

23 Shirley Avenue  
Old Coulsdon  
CR5 1QZ  
drofd@btinternet.com  
0208 645 5185

### Vice Chair

#### Wendy Bentall

wendybentall@gmail.com  
01276 858 256

### Hon. Treasurer

#### Anne Mathieson

amath@globalnet.co.uk  
07768 476 720

### National Plant

#### Collections

#### Coordinator

#### Anne Clifford

anneclifford666@gmail.com  
07908 285 204

### Sue Davidson

drsdavidson@btinternet.com  
07968 980 249

### Publicity

#### Claire Davitt

clairebiggs@yahoo.co.uk  
07769 650 493

### Membership

#### Rhona Frayne

rhona.frayne@btoopenworld.com  
01483 282 501

### Nina Gardner

ninagardner@hotmail.com

### Virginia Lloyd-Owen

vlloyd3owen@googlemail.com  
01483 730 241

### Secretary (Minutes)

#### Jean Mills

jean.mills2@ntlworld.com

### Plant Fairs

#### Gillian Spencer

gillian.spencer@dial.pipex.com  
01483 503 180

### Plant Exchange

#### Coordinator

#### Debbie Steer

deborah.steer@tiscali.co.uk  
07930 507 732

### Jane Sutton

janesutton7@aol.com  
01306 884 349

### All Committee

#### Members:

surreyph@gmail.com

### Non-Committee:

#### Communications, Trips & Visits

#### Suzy Hughes

suzyhughes0@gmail.com

### Newsletter Editor

#### (Layout)

#### David England

lavenderday@btinternet.com  
07743 272 707



*Photo: David England*