

The University of Oxford

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# Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum

Friends'  
newsletter

Spring /  
Summer 2017



**Twenty Five Years**

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# OBGA News

## Staff attend the PlantNet meeting at Cambridge

By Kate Pritchard

PlantNetwork is a national network of botanic and heritage gardens and arboreta. It promotes botanical collections in Britain and Ireland as a national resource for research, conservation and education. PlantNetwork organises a series of forum groups for specialist interests, ranging from plant records to tree collections. Cambridge University Botanic Garden and Oxford University Botanic Garden have re-established the Glasshouse Collections Forum group and the first meeting was held at Cambridge in December.

Thanks to the support given by the Friends, Lucinda Lachelin and I were both able to attend. The focus for this meeting was to rationalise glasshouse collections from the perspective of their use as public and educational resources. A number of presentations were given: Dr Paul Kessler, Director of Hortus Botanicus Leiden spoke on the process and consequences of rationalising collections on a national scale in the Netherlands. Dr Sam Brockington, Curator of the Cambridge Botanic Garden gave a presentation on the role of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) in collection rationalisation. I spoke on the approach we have taken here at Oxford to focus our living collections on use in learning, research, conservation and public engagement.

It was a very productive meeting and an invaluable opportunity to meet with colleagues from other glasshouse collections. We were also able to source new species for our glasshouse collections at Oxford and discuss future collaborations. We are hoping to host the next Glasshouse Collections Forum group meeting here at Oxford.

## A new search tool at the Garden

In December an exciting new search functionality was added to the Botanic Garden website which allows the public to search the plant collections at the Botanic Garden and Arboretum. This marks an important landmark in one of our key objectives, which is to enhance the educational accessibility of the collections for the general public.

Both the Garden and Arboretum collections are now fully searchable online, through the BRAHMS (Botanic Records and Herbarium Management System). This site allows anyone to view which plants are growing across our three collections (Gardens, Glasshouses & Arboretum), highlights some

of our core collections (e.g. carnivorous plants, euphorbias and conifers), and even plots the localities of certain taxa. Whilst all living plant records are now viewable, only a limited number of individual taxa are mapped with associated images - specifically the Botanic Garden tree collection.

In time, the tree collection at the Arboretum will be plotted and mapped and their associated images will be linked to the living plant records. Linking the OBGA and Herbarium database is also imminent, which will provide a comprehensive online resource of botanical collections held by the University of Oxford.

We would like to extend our thanks to Stephen Harris, Denis Filer and Andrew Liddell (Department of Plant Sciences) for facilitating this project and providing all the technical support.

To visit and use our new collection search function, visit: <http://herbaria.plants.ox.ac.uk/bol/obga>

## Greater Water-parsnips (*Sium latifolium*) at Oxford Botanic Garden

The Greater Water-parsnip (*Sium latifolium*) is a native perennial plant found in ditches and the margins of slow-moving rivers and streams. It is a tall herbaceous plant of the Carrot family (Apiaceae) bearing umbels of white flowers in late summer. Once common in Oxfordshire and many other parts of the country, it has suffered a serious decline in recent decades due to changes in land-use among other factors. As a result it is listed as a Priority Species under the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Seed was collected in 2014 from a small population at Wytham Ditches, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This seed was sown immediately at the Botanic Garden and several hundred plants were raised and grown on at the garden. This autumn, staff from the Garden planted out over sixty specimens on a cleared area of stream bank at Wytham Ditches. A similar planting will be made this spring and the plants will be monitored through the year to establish the best planting time and position. Help and information for this conservation project has been provided by the Oxfordshire Flora Group and the staff at the Food Animal Initiative (FAI) who manage the site at Wytham.

## Autumn Plant Sciences Lectures

The Autumn Plant Sciences Lectures ran this year in October and November as part of our yearly Public Education Programme. The lectures were well attended by members of

# From the Director

by Professor  
Simon Hiscock



Christmas Fair

the Friends, staff from the Botanic Garden and college gardens, local students, and members of local charities. Topics ranged from species discovery, succulent plants surviving in the harshest of environments, to pitcher plants specially adapted to act as nitrogen-catching shrew toilets, complete with videos and beautiful botanical illustrations. Guests enjoyed lively question and answer sessions following the talks, and we are grateful to those who tested our speakers with such excellent points of enquiry. Speakers included the recently appointed Head of Science and Public Engagement at the Botanic Garden and Arboretum, Dr Thorogood, who dazzled his audience with a beautiful presentation, and engaging videos of the bizarre variations in the world of *Nepenthes*. The evening lectures continue throughout January and February with the Winter Lecture Series, including talks by authors Victoria Summerley and Richard Mabey, and will provide well-needed break in the dark evenings before the spring arrives.

I am delighted to introduce Dr Chris Thorogood, who joined OBG in January as our Head of Science and Public Engagement. Chris brings a wealth of talent to the Garden as a plant scientist, artist, science communicator and educator - and he also has six years' experience in industry with Mars and Britvic. You can find out more about Chris in conversation with Richard Mayou on p6. With Chris now leading development of our public education and engagement programme you can look forward to many more activities and events at OBG in 2017.

During the autumn and winter months there was much activity at the Garden and Arboretum around education and public engagement. The education team give a full account of their exciting schools and family friendly activities on p9. There were also two major new events that proved incredibly popular and are set to become part of our new annual events calendar. The first Apple Day and Autumn Fair (see p5) was held at the Arboretum on October 23rd to coincide with national Apple day (October 20th). A warm and sunny autumn day drew in a crowd of over 2000 people, making this the most popular event at the Arboretum for some time - a date for this year's Apple Day and Autumn Fair will be announced in the next newsletter.

The weekend of 4-5 December saw the Botanic Garden hold its first ever Christmas Fair. This was also a big hit as around 1000 Christmas shoppers per day explored a large heated marquee (beautifully decorated by the Friends) housing 30 stalls selling gifts ranging from elegant hats and scarves to bee homes and novelty party tricks and games. The event was a collaboration between the Botanic Garden and a professional event organizer Emmanuelle Bergne. With years of experience running Craft Fairs in London, most notably at the Chelsea Physic Garden, Emmanuelle was able to call in the services of a network of high end designers and crafts people, including: dagny.d handmade scarves and handbags, Cagnino luxury brushed cotton and bamboo wraps and throws, Isabee dressing up clothes for children, Spice N' Easy artisan chutneys and pickles, and Pinksters Gin. Novelty gifts

by Boy Gift Girl Gift were incredibly popular with their amazing flashing teeth bringing great amusement to Botanic Garden staff, both young and not so young!

Refreshments, including mulled wine and minced pies, were provided by Tangerine Dream in the Conservatory, and beer came from the InnFormal Brewery in Berkshire - their Alice in Wonderland Steam Punk Mild being the best seller. This went down especially well with the roast chestnuts served up by a traditional Trafalgar Square vendor. There was entertainment too from the ever popular Horns of Plenty, who also performed at the Apple Day and Autumn Fair, the Oxford Silver Band, Magdalen College School flute quintet, and Francis Buoa Drumming School.

Complementing the beautiful festive set-up in the marquee was the Botanic Garden shop and Friends stall, selling gingerbreads, handmade Christmas decorations and wreaths, which took over the Exhibition Room together with Oxford Florilegium, the group of talented botanical artists who draw and paint the plants of the Garden and Arboretum.

Given that we only started planning the Christmas Fair in September it was a truly amazing feat to get everything in place by the beginning of December. This was made possible by great team work and collaboration between Botanic Garden staff, Olivia Singh and Valerie Parslow in particular, the Friends, led by Maura Allen, Marc Dabic of Tangerine Dream and Emmanuelle, who runs a very tight ship. With more time to plan for this year's Fair we are anticipating more stalls, more varied refreshments, and more entertainment so as to make the 2017 Fair even better.

2017 will also be an important year for beginning to plan for the 400th Anniversary with the announcement of a major fundraising appeal by the Friends and continued fundraising activity by the Development Office's Oxford Thinking team. Crucial to these activities will be our Head of Development, Fiona Gourley who explains her role and fundraising activities to date on p11.

Enjoy a packed year of new events and a renaissance of the Public Education Programme.

## Spring Fair

**Sunday 9th April 11.00am - 4.00pm, Harcourt Arboretum**

Come along to experience live music, delicious food, local craft stalls and fairground games in the beautiful setting of Harcourt Arboretum. Enjoy the beautiful display of bulbs and get expert advice on adding colour to your spring garden. Meet the new Arboretum pigs, have a go at our prize trial and make something to take home - something for all the family.

- The event is free with an entrance ticket (adults £5, concessions £3.50, children FREE)

# Jamie Todd's year at the Botanic Garden

Jamie Todd is currently following the Botanic Garden's one-year traineeship programme, a key step on the path to working in professional horticulture. The traineeship involves botanical theory and practical training sessions with Garden and Plant Sciences staff, as well as working on projects in the garden and glasshouses. Jamie studied Illustration at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He has worked as a freelance Illustrator and in several Museums and Art Galleries in London. He volunteered at a local Horticultural Therapy project for three years and began to develop a new career as a horticulturist. He has gained experience at London's Chelsea Physic Garden, The Royal College of Physicians Garden and the Chelsea Flower Show, and was awarded Top RHS Student at Regent's Park Capel Manor College upon completing his Level 2 Diploma in Horticulture.

I arrived at the Botanic Garden on 1st June last year, immediately after helping plant The Winton Beauty of Mathematics show garden, designed by Nick Bailey, at the Chelsea Flower Show. The Botanic Garden had undergone a transformation since my previous visits in February and March, then the Order Beds and the Merton border were full of promise, and bulbs and the *Cornus mas* gave tantalising glimpses of what would later become a riot of colour.

The majority of the traineeship is spent building practical skills to enable us to work as professional horticulturalists in collections, splitting our time equally between the Glass and Hardy. As well as general upkeep and maintenance tasks in the garden, we are trained in specific skills relevant to working in a botanical collection. This training has ranged from workshops on propagation and pruning techniques, to talks about climate management and the responsibilities involved in acquiring plants for a collection. Alongside the practical horticulture, we benefit from a series of eye-opening teaching sessions run by Dr Stephen Harris, both in the Garden and at the University Plant Sciences Department.

There have been the opportunities throughout my year to explore other gardens and areas of horticulture. Visits to Merton and Worcester University College Gardens proved fascinating, seeing how these spaces are managed and how they contrast the collections at the Botanic Garden. As trainees, we have also been fortunate to attend

meetings of two RHS committees. The RHS Woody Plants Committee met at Harcourt Arboretum in September and whilst there we spoke to Roy Lancaster who gave us valuable advice about studying local flora.

As Trainees, we have three, week-long placements at Harcourt Arboretum over the course of our year at the University. My first visit to the Arboretum was in late June. The meadows were full of flowers and I had the opportunity to climb with ropes for the first time. Although a little nervous at first it was amazing to reach the top of the canopy and get an aerial view of the site. In late November the Arboretum could not have looked more different. The gardens retained the last vestiges of autumn colour, and the *Liquidambar styraciflua* still shone between the muted tones of the conifers.

It was a very cold week, most mornings were well below freezing but luckily we had jobs that kept us warm. The autumn was a time for clearing and we helped to remove *Rhododendron ponticum* from the Serpentine Ride. We also had a great day thinning out *Betula pendula* to make room for slower growing species, joined by an amazing team of Arboretum volunteers.

It has been fascinating to see the influence of time working across all three of the living collections: Glass, Hardy and Arboretum.

I am now nearing the end of my amazing year as a Horticultural Trainee at the Garden; it has been an inspiring time, working with a wonderful team of dedicated horticulturalists. Things have gone full circle: last spring, I came for my interview and now we are preparing for what is to come next.



Jamie Todd

# Apple Day and Autumn Fair at the Arboretum

By Tegan Bennett,  
Education & Outreach Officer

October 23rd saw the first Apple Day and Autumn Fair at Harcourt Arboretum. There had been discussions about putting on more events at the Arboretum and this summer we decided to take the plunge with an event to coincide with our popular autumn colour season and national Apple Day (21st October). It was decided that this event would showcase, not only the Arboretum, but also local crafts, music and food and drink.

It was great to see so many people flocking to the Arboretum and the visitors on the day were certainly not disappointed by what was on offer. The Oxfordshire Woodturners Club drew a crowd with their lathe demonstrations and beautifully made items for sale and at the Oxford Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers tent visitors could watch spinning and weaving and have a go at making their own bracelet from wool. Helen Porter showed the visitors how to weave baskets with a unique flare. Jason Stevenson's well laid out stall showcased his range of beautifully carved sticks made from locally coppiced wood and the visitors were able to enjoy and purchase some of the beautiful prints and cards produced by the Oxford Florilegium. There were information stalls from local groups too, such as the RSPB and the Oxfordshire Bee Keepers Association.

Visitors were kept entertained through the day with a series of music and talks. First came the flamboyant Horns Of Plenty

who brought the day to life with their catchy music. There were two vibrant sets from Oxford Drum Troupe whose big sounds and energetic rhythms could be heard throughout the event. When these bands were not playing the visitors could enjoy music from the Hurdy Gurdy Man. There was a talk from Dr Barrie Juniper who brought his apple expertise to the event, answering visitors' questions and giving an interesting talk about his Wytham orchard and the history of the apple.

Food stalls meant that visitors could stay all day and enjoy refreshments from local food providers underneath the trees. Supreme Sausages brought along a range of different flavored sausages, Coopers of Oxford provided a hog roast using their local raised pigs and the Souvlaki Brothers Greek food van was a popular addition. The Friends' stall sold hot drinks and homemade cakes. The alcohol was provided by Tutts Clumps Cider and the InnFormal Brewery.

There was plenty for our younger visitors too. Apple- and autumn-themed crafts and apple fairground games including 'net an apple' and an apple shy were available in our red and white striped circus tent run by the Education Team and supported by our wonderful volunteers. Alice Wilby volunteered her time and her own resources to come along to do face painting on the day.

The day proved to be a triumph. In fact, it was more of a hit than we even expected.

We had estimated 500 visitors but with over 2,000 people flooding through the gates, this was four times more than anticipated. The ticket office took nearly £5000 and the stall holders were very happy with the turnout. The great success of the day means that we plan on turning it into an annual event and are already busy planning the second Apple Day and Autumn Fair which will take place on 22nd October. We hope to see you all there.



Horns of Plenty



Autumn sunlight at the first Apple Day and Autumn Fair

# Lunch with Chris Thorogood

By Richard Mayou

Chris Thorogood started as the new *Head of Science and Public Engagement* on January 3rd and a fortnight later we had lunch at Nuffield College to talk about his previous interests and his hopes for the Garden and Arboretum. It was immediately evident that Chris is an enthusiast for plants and, indeed, all natural history. For as long as he can remember he has been passionate about finding, identifying and drawing and painting plants, especially unusual ones. He was brought up in East Anglia in family of keen gardeners, with a grandmother who taught him much about natural history and a father who is a capable artist. From earliest childhood he had his own garden patch and liked to grow unusual plants. On frequent family garden visits and foreign holidays he particularly sought out carnivorous, parasitic and other strange plants which he drew and later painted in oils. His parents and teachers encouraged and taught him and he exhibited paintings locally which he sold at a local shop.

Bristol was the obvious choice of University as having the only course in Botany at the time. Chris was soon enthused by Simon Hiscock's annual Plant identification Course for students in the Algarve. He eventually



Dr Chris Thorogood, the newly appointed Head of Science and Public Engagement for the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum.

joined Simon as a teacher and organiser and in 2014 they published the first *Field Guide to plants of the Algarve* based on 10 years of Bristol experience. On graduation he won a scholarship to undertake PhD research supervised by Simon. Inevitably, the subject was concerned with a parasitic plant, *Orobancha minor*, Common broomrape. He showed for the first time the importance of host specificity in the formation of new species of parasitic plants. His resultant thesis, illustrated with his own pen and ink drawings, won both a Faculty prize and the Linnaean Society's Irene Manton Prize for best thesis in Botany in 2010. This work is a significant contribution to knowledge of poorly understood issues and has practical implications for agriculture.

In addition to his research he collaborated closely with Nick Wray, Curator of the Bristol Botanic garden, and their Friends and exhibited his paintings. He also made large three dimensional models of plants as tools for their public engagement programme, including a life size replica of *Rafflesia*, the world's largest flower. During his time as a graduate student, he travelled and painted, still enjoying bizarre plants, in Borneo, Malaysia, South Africa and the Mediterranean. He published an illustrated scholarly book on *Nepenthes of Malaysia* in 2010. Art has always remained central to Chris's fascination with rare and bizarre plants. He has drawn them in pen and ink for his academic work but particularly likes to capture botanically accurate illustrations of plant in their natural splendour in oil paint. He finds the depth and solidity of oils more satisfying than watercolour.

After a year of post-doctoral work the lack of funding for research posts meant a move in 2010 to work in industry. Chris joined Mars to work in product development and process engineering, where he travelled extensively, and believes he benefited greatly from their renowned management training. In 2015 he moved to a similar post at Britvic in chemical engineering. In his spare time he wrote the Algarve field guide with Simon



Chris's oil painting of a Desert pea (*Swainsona formosa*)

and last year he produced the well-reviewed *Field guide to the wild flowers of the Western Mediterranean*, published by Kew. This includes 900 of his own line drawings and makes use of new knowledge, including much only previously available in Spanish. Another book illustrated by reproductions of many of his oil paintings is well advanced. He hopes his books and art will inspire others to explore, appreciate and to conserve the extraordinary plants that captivate him.

His new post is an opportunity to return full time to his main passions and his portmanteau title indicates his two main responsibilities. As Head of Science he intends be a collaborator in projects but most importantly he wants greatly to expand



Chris's oil painting of *Arisaema nepenthoides* in the Himalayas

# News from the Arboretum

By Ben Jones, Curator  
Harcourt Arboretum

the role of plant and other scientists in the Garden and Arboretum so as to help achieve OBG's aim to be a world ranking university botanic garden and incidentally to generate extra income. As a Head of Public Engagement his task to revive, expand and publicise a major programme of public education so as to put OBG at the centre of University and Oxford life as well as having a national reputation. As well as more talks, study days, practical sessions and publications this will mean a transformation of the use of electronic communications. He is also very keen to be very fully involved in teaching. As he has said in a message in our eBulletin he believes working with the Friends is fundamental to achieving success.

Other tasks involve projects with other members of staff, several of which have been funded by the Friends. He is working with Tom Price to plan the reconstruction the rock garden as an area for the dramatic display of the Eastern Mediterranean plants including those originally explored in the 18th century by Professor Sibthorp and sumptuously illustrated in the *Flora Graeca*. Another project is working with Kate Pritchard to develop the collections of carnivorous plants and those symbiotic with ants as a resource for Plant Sciences teaching and research. He is also collaborating with graphic designer Pia Östlund and Stephen Harris on interpretation of the newly laid out order beds in the walled garden.

Chris's enthusiasm for plants and for inspiring others was conspicuous throughout our talk. He is very pleased to be back in a university, working once more on what he is most enthusiastic about and again collaborating with Simon Hiscock. However he repeatedly said that six years working in industry have given an extra range of experience and expertise which will help him in his new job. His passion and skills complement those of other garden staff in a manner which he feels will enable both multiple collaborations and the development new themes in the overall vision for a University Botanic Garden for the 21st century. It was very good to hear him emphasise his belief in the importance of the Friends in achieving success. On parting, I felt enthused and that Chris had the skills as well as the passion and drive to help OBG achieve its exciting and very demanding ambitions. We can look forward to working with him and seeing him at Friends' and OBG occasions.

This winter, the main focus of our work is planting. Although the benefits and impact of planting trees may not be fully realised for many years to come, this doesn't detract from the pleasure and excitement of seeing new accessions established across the site. Thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers alike, several sections of the Serpentine Ride are now ready and prepared for new displays of *Rhododendron*, *Azalea* and *Camellia*, to name but a few. There are two main components to our planting this year: wild-sourced material obtained from collecting trips to Japan, Taiwan, Chile, Vietnam and North America, and with great support from the Friends, the nursery-sourced plants. Important as it is to have conservation-critical species safeguarded in *ex-situ* living collections, it is also important to have the landscape enhanced by strong horticultural displays. Over the coming weeks, areas previously cleared on the Serpentine Ride will be replanted with a really exciting palette of plants from Millais Nurseries. These will include species and hardy hybrids of *Rhododendron*, *Azaleodendron*, *Azalea*, *Magnolia* and *Camellia*.



*Azaleodendron* hybrid



*Rhododendron sinogrande*

# West Coast of America Seed Collecting Trip, September 2016

By Ben Jones,  
Curator Harcourt  
Arboretum



The full collecting team: eight climbers plus Andy Bower of USFS and Michael Way of the Millennium Seed Bank.

In September 2016, I travelled to the West Coast of America to collect seed material from a selection of native tree species. Pre-scouted collecting sites across the states of

Washington, Oregon and California were visited over the course of two weeks, to target tree species which had been selected on particular criteria, such as their conservation

status. The goal of the trip was to collect seeds from approximately twenty trees in a given population to ensure genetic variation was well represented. The seed would then be shared between participating parties for the purposes of conservation and research.

The seed collecting trip was a collaborative effort undertaken by colleagues from Wakehurst Place, the Millennium Seed Bank (Kew), the US Forest Service, and the University of Oxford (Harcourt Arboretum). My role was to assist the trip in general and to climb the trees to access the seed cone crops, which were mostly at the very tops of the trees. At ground level the collections were recorded, data taken, and herbarium samples produced. The cones were then packaged ready for shipment back to the UK, where the seeds would be extracted and prepared for storage at the Millennium Seed Bank, or propagated for planting in collections such as Harcourt Arboretum as part of our *ex situ* conservation programme.

## Alison Quantrell's botanical excursion in Japan

By Alison Quantrell,  
Botanical  
Horticulturalist

As a mum of three small children, international travel is not something I thought I would be doing last year. There are so many reasons why not to go to Japan for two and a half weeks of fieldwork, such as missing the birthday of your youngest son, or missing your wedding anniversary! I am so glad I didn't think about these reasons when I applied to go.

In the summer last year Tom and Ben, curators of the Garden and Arboretum opened up the opportunity for another member of staff to join them on their planned fieldwork trip in September. Historically these sorts of trips have not been made available to all staff; there is a significant investment on the part of the department to both fund the opportunity, and to cover the time of the staff member whilst they are gone. The project in Japan is to conserve and assess bioquality through botanical surveying and seed collection. The remit of this particular trip was to collect seed and data of *Betula chichibuensis* (an endemic of the forests around Chichibu) from a known and already visited site, and to investigate a new, previously unvisited population of *Betula chichibuensis*. Part of the assessment was to conduct rapid botanical surveys

of the surrounding forest to put the seed collections in to context.

We travelled to Tokyo in mid-September, and whilst acclimatizing to the time difference made our way to Chichibu, a large town two hours to the northwest of Tokyo city. In the first two days we made some excellent collections of *Clerodendrum trichotomum*, *Zanthoxylum piperitum* and *Pterostyrax hispida*. These had sufficient quality and quantity to be banked with the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place, for long term storage and conservation. This area of Japan is a temperate rainforest region. This makes it beautiful, lush and green, but incredibly wet. It rained for the whole of the first week, and just to ensure we were really wet, the tail end of Typhoon Malakas came through as well.

One of the highlights of the first week was a 45 minute monorail ride (the only means of accessing the incredibly steep mountain at this point), and a two hour trek to a known population of *Pteridophyllum racemosum*, a very pretty member of the Papaveraceae (Poppy) family. The tiny population was clinging to the side of a damp, mossy bank, and in its entirety was about 3 m long by 1 m.

All the individuals were very happy and obviously reproducing, but unfortunately we had missed the window for collecting the seed. Also in the first week was a visit to the new *Betula chichibuensis* site. We could not collect anything else from here due to permit restrictions except for data that were relevant to the population itself.

In week two we were joined by Kirsty Shaw of the BGCI (Botanic Gardens Conservation International). Kirsty was responsible for generating the global IUCN conservation red list for the genus *Betula*, and so has a particular interest in the work we are doing on *Betula chichibuensis*. With her help we made a very good seed collection of the known *Betula chichibuensis* population, which will be sent to the MSB, and took in the breathtaking views. It is amazing to think that these trips took place in Victorian times with none of the mod cons we took with us (GPS, Sat phone, decent waterproofs), and camping along the way. We had it very easy in comparison!

My trip to Japan is one that will stay with me forever. I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity to go, and I will now be much better able to germinate and grow on these plants at the Botanic Garden, having seen them grow in their natural habitat.



# Education news



Forest School - playing in the leaves

## The Arboretum

### Forest School visits to Harcourt Arboretum

Tegan Bennett successfully completed 8 months of training as a Forest School Leader. This enabled us to start our first Forest School sessions in September on our new Forest School site at Harcourt Arboretum. The site is located on Windmill Hill, in an area of mature mixed woodland.

Forest School is not a lesson in the traditional sense. Instead it is a process. Through regular contact with a woodland environment and Forest School activities, children have the chance to learn about the environment and their impact on it, overcome challenges, build confidence and have fun. The Forest School has been set up to further the work of Harcourt Arboretum which aims to promote an interest in the natural world, ecology, conservation and to encourage as many children as possible to have the chance to enjoy our collections.

We offered six free sessions to all local schools and Harwell School was picked. 17 six and seven year olds visited the Arboretum every week, whatever the weather, to enjoy activities such as den building, cooking over a fire, bug hunting and tree identification. Each Forest School session is planned to take the groups learning requirements into consideration and tailored to ensure each session is a valuable experience for all participants. It was wonderful to be able to watch the children develop confidence in their own abilities, work together and get to know the site. They loved coming to Forest School and there were even some tears when the last session came to an end!

Forest School will now form a key part of our offer to schools at the Arboretum and we are hoping that groups will sign up to our Forest School programme from February 2017. We are grateful to the Friends for funding the training which means that we can offer this new opportunity to our young visitors.

## The Garden

### Robins, Worms and Wreaths!

It has been an eventful and varied Autumn and Winter season in the garden for our Education officers Vicki Yates and Ruth Jordan.

We have welcomed many school and community groups to the garden in the last few months to take part in different educational workshops and public events. We often start our school workshops in the conservatory and had many of our sessions enlivened by the presence of the very chirpy and inquisitive robin who practically took up residence over the autumn. Although we were definitely upstaged at times by the robin's singing and hopping all over our resources, it is great to be able to have a job that enables us to be so in touch with nature and has proved to be an amusing diversion for students, teachers and education officers alike.

One of the many things that is great about our jobs is the range of visitors we can encourage into the garden, from babies to groups of adult learners. Our Under Fives sessions have been a joy and are well supported by parents, grandparents and child-minders - accompanied by their babies and toddlers as well of course! At our '5 Senses' event in September we shared stories and songs, made rainbow-coloured sunglasses and salt dough gardens and tasted different fruits and vegetables. Budding young gardeners enjoyed digging up buried vegetables and helped us to look after the flower beds by giving them a good watering.



Making sunglasses with coloured lenses

We are building up our resources for our Under Fives events and have recently acquired some beautiful log slices from the Arboretum that can be used as stepping stones, building blocks, wildlife habitats or in any other way that a child can imagine! The new Events Lawn has proved a popular

location for Family Friendly events with enough space for families both to take part in the activities provided and to play and picnic well away from the river bank.

At our 'Wonderful Wildlife' event in the October half term holiday, aimed at school aged children, we were lucky enough to be joined by Anthony Roach, an invertebrate expert from Earthwatch. He is helping to set up a national earthworm survey to monitor the health of soil in various locations and habitats. During our event, Anthony made two test pits in the garden, one in a grassed area and one in an area of worked soil. We are happy to report that both test pits were well supplied with worms of different types and ages, indicating good soil health. Lots of children were keen to carry out their own test back at home and report their findings to the survey. If anyone wishes to take part themselves, please find lots of helpful information on how to carry out this relatively easy survey at [www.earthwormwatch.org](http://www.earthwormwatch.org). We hope that Anthony will be returning to the garden on Wednesday 12th April if you want to see him in action.



Making edible spiders - tasty!



Anthony digging a test pit

As well as worm hunting we enjoyed making wildlife homes, edible spiders and food chain medals. Vicki also brought in her pet stick insect which proved a big hit with visitors old and young. The enthusiasm of the children who attend our events is infectious, making them happy, busy occasions. It is great seeing children appreciating and getting excited by the environment around them at such a young age.

Our last Family Friendly event of 2016 was our 'Recycled Christmas' workshop in December, which despite the cold, drizzly weather was well attended by many well wrapped up families. Adults and children alike enjoyed making Christmas wreaths and woodland creatures from natural materials harvested from the Arboretum and the garden and we used recycled paper and foil cups to make paperchains and silver bell

decorations. We sold warming refreshments and homemade cakes at the event and were pleased to be able to donate the proceeds to Maggie's - a local cancer support charity based at the Churchill hospital. We all ended the day liberally sprinkled with glitter and feeling very festive!

We would not be able to carry out our public events on such a scale if it was not for the fantastic support of the wonderful volunteers who help us so ably and enthusiastically. The volunteers come from all backgrounds and can offer as much time as they wish during the year across the University museums. There are clerical and research opportunities as well as chances to help at family events. We are always impressed by our volunteers' creativity, range of knowledge and ability to engage with and inspire families who visit. If you feel you would like to volunteer

at the Garden, Arboretum or in any of the University museums, visit [www.museums.ox.ac.uk/volunteers](http://www.museums.ox.ac.uk/volunteers). We very much look forward to all the family events planned for 2017 - it is great to see the children enjoying all the garden has to offer.

As Education officers, we have also had the opportunity to represent the Garden and Arboretum at Oxford University Freshers' week, encouraging new students to visit both sites and to sign up to the Volunteer service if they wish. A lot of students enjoy their free access to the garden, using it to help them with their studies or to relax, especially around exam time. Some more intrepid students also enjoy cycling up to the Arboretum to take a stroll among the meadows and woods. We hope that all of the new students (some of whom looked absolutely terrified back in October!) have settled in well to their University life and studies.

Brookes students also enjoy free access to the Garden and Arboretum and we were pleased to welcome groups of Post Graduate Certificate of Education students from Brookes in January. These students are training to be primary school teachers and visited us to learn how they can use some of the many cultural resources that Oxford offers to enhance their teaching. We hope that we might see some of these students again in the future as successful teachers bringing their own classes to visit us.

### Future Plans

We are currently working on new 'Maths in the Garden' workshops for primary age children and 'Plants for Everyone' trail available to all visitors from the ticket office. We hope to see you soon.



Making Christmas wreaths and recycled decorations

# Update from the Gardens and Museums Development Team

## Introduction

I first visited the Botanic Garden and Arboretum with my mother and daughter in the summer of 2015 before my interview for Head of Development for the Gardens & Museums. We all really enjoyed both sites although we could see the challenges - we were desperate for a cup of tea and more information about the plants! As the Botanic Garden so appealed to three generations, I knew it would be an exciting and exceptional place to work so I was thrilled to be appointed. In October 2016 I joined Oxford from the University of Bath, where I raised funds for a new arts building, and have over 25 years' broad experience in fundraising, marketing and PR in the education and cultural sectors and professional services. Significantly for the OBGA, I've managed membership organisations at Sadler Wells, Wiltshire Music Centre, Theatre Royal Bath and the Science Museum. So I really value the dedication and enthusiasm of Friends' groups and I enjoy working with volunteers to nurture their support and engagement with their institution. As the Friends of the Botanic Garden spans "town and gown", it has given me a valuable insight into the life of the city as well as the links to the University and beyond. I was proud to join the Friends before starting the job and I have been impressed by the wonderful people I have met ever since.

## The Gardens and Museums Development Team

Mine is a new role to grow philanthropic income for the Gardens and Arboretum, and the Pitt Rivers, Natural History and History of Science Museums from major donors, individual giving, trusts and legacies. My team is now in place: Heidi Kurtz returned from maternity leave in April 2016 (she had a little girl, Hannah, who is now nearly two years old) and Catherine House, who ran the Friends of Ashmolean, joined us in June. I focus mainly on the Garden and Museum of Natural History, Heidi focuses on the Pitt Rivers and History of Science and Catherine spans all four organisations, particularly with trust applications. We can draw upon the impressive resources of the University Development Office. For example they helped us with the first mailing to alumni, with visits from potential major donors and research into trusts. And there has been an inspiring story on the Oxford Thinking website about the Friends' support for the Garden with a photo of Richard Mayou looking most distinguished.

## Funding Horticultural Trainees This Year

One example of our fundraising success is for Horticultural Trainees. These one year placements are really important for the Botanic Garden because of the Garden staff's mission to teach and train future horticulturalists and because the trainees undertake crucial maintenance in the Garden. So it is a mutually beneficial relationship. The Friends have funded trainees in past, as have generous individual donors. Each trainee costs £25,000 and the Garden needs at least two per year. However it is an ongoing challenge to find £50,000 per year from the limited OBGA budget. So this year, besides gratefully receiving a significant donation from one generous and anonymous Friend and securing two trust grants, we sent out the Garden's first direct mail appeal to University alumni and others who like gardening. We were pleased to receive 177 donations worth £42,000, including gifts from Germany and Australia as well as a number of Friends. Some of you who are alumni may have received the letter from Simon Hiscock with a lovely bookmark featuring red clover from the Herbarium Collection. And if you donated to the appeal, thank you very much! The Garden staff are delighted that there is now enough money to employ two trainees this year and we are delighted to have recruited Jamie Todd and Neil Alderson. We will invite the supporters to meet them at a spring event.

## Horticultural Trainees for the next three years - a race-horse syndicate idea

Looking ahead, the Garden really needs three Horticultural Trainees each year, including one for the Arboretum, and to secure the funding for three years so staff can plan ahead. This would cost £225,000 which the Botanic Garden simply has not got.

**So I would like to ask you directly: wouldn't it be fantastic if three generous people amongst the Friends could make a gift to support one trainee a year for three years? Or, like a racing syndicate where several people own a leg of a race-horse, could four people come together to support the arms and legs of one Horticultural Trainee per year for three years? If 12 people could do this, it would provide enough funding to support three trainees for three years.**

## Other Major Projects

As we head towards the Garden's 400th anniversary, Simon has an ambitious vision for the Botanic Garden to become the leading University garden in Britain. Exciting plans are evolving to transform the facilities for plants and people (back to the need for a proper café and better information!); to safeguard and advance research and education by endowing posts; and to raise the Garden's national and international profile through international collaborations, conservation projects and expansion of the collections. My major priority is to engage major donors, foundations and companies to invest in the OBGA and support this vision.

However there are lots of smaller scale opportunities to get involved including supporting projects to improve the infrastructure for the Arboretum - such as a play area or tree house; improving the paths in the arboretum to make them more wheelchair and buggy friendly; more botanic and literary trails in both the gardens and arboretum; enhancing the collections to make both sites world-class, and upgrading the exhibition room to show images from the University's Herbarium. Lots to do and lots to inspire!

Of course donations of any value are extremely important to us and can be made on line, by phone or post or via the Friends. And with tax efficient giving, it means that that your donation can be worth almost double to the OBGA what it costs you. So if you would like to know more about how you can help, now and in the future, please get in touch and I'd be happy to have a coffee and chat. My contact details are below:

Fiona Gourley, Head of Development  
Gardens & Museums

Tel: 01865 616998

E: [fiona.gourley@devoff.ox.ac.uk](mailto:fiona.gourley@devoff.ox.ac.uk)

<https://www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/botanic-garden>



# Friends Section News



## Appeal for New Seats around the Fountain

The fountain pool with its four handsome seats and four impressively planted urns is the centre of the Walled Garden where visitors meet and relax. Sadly they have decayed. It had been hoped that they could be repaired but the makers have very recently told the Garden they are beyond rescue. They are very keen to have replacements for the summer season when the garden will be looking the best ever. Once again have been asked The Friends to help. We have agreed to pay for new hard standing around the pool which will ensure that the new seats have a much longer life and just had time to prepare the Appeal included in this Newsletter.

We do hope you will be able to respond to an urgent need.

## Chairman of the Friends

Richard Mayou, Chairman of the Friends since 2005, will retire as Chairman and Director on 1 May. Richard has spent most



Richard Mayou

of his adult life in and around Oxford. He was an undergraduate at St John's and returned to Oxford in 1973. He was Professor of Psychiatry at Oxford University and a Fellow of Nuffield College. He is currently Chairman of the Nuffield College Art Committee, helping to create a major collection of contemporary art. He has greatly enjoyed creating gardens and is very pleased to have been asked to open his present garden for the NGS.

Richard's late wife, Ann, gave him membership to the newly founded Friends as a birthday present; she often said that it was her most successful present. As a member of the Visitors, the University Committee responsible for the Garden and Arboretum, from 1999 to 2013, Richard was asked to join the Council of the Friends. Shortly after, he took over from Joanna Matthews, acting Chairman, after the retirement of Bill Pack. Almost immediately he was asked to lead a Friends campaign for the successful purchase of Palmer's Leys in 2006. He was also very involved in administrative changes. He completed the incorporation of the Friends' Council (as it was then) as a limited charitable company, which had been initiated by Joanna, and was involved in appointing the first paid administrator and our first professionally qualified Treasurer, Martin Lamaison. Richard has been responsible for our communications in the Newsletter and for our electronic Bulletin. During his time as Chairman, the Friends have grown in the number of members, in fundraising ambition and in professional administration. He will be greatly missed by all those who have worked with him and we thank him for setting the Friends on such a firm footing.

We are very pleased to announce that Sarah Taylor will take over from Richard as Chairman. Sarah has been active in the Friends for over 20 years, in Council, in fundraising and at events. She has been a Director since the charity's incorporation in 2005 and recruited both Martin Lamaison and Maura Allen to the Board. In addition, she is a member of the Visitors of OBG. Sarah studied biochemistry at Oxford and then worked as a fund manager for Phillips and Drew and UBS. Since 2000, she and her husband have restored the Tudor house at Rycote, near Thame, and have created a new garden there, which the Friends have been able to witness over the years. Her other charity involvements include Chairman of the League

of Friends of Thame Community Hospital, Vice Chairman of the Thames and Chilterns branch of the Historic Houses Association and The Oxfordshire Victoria County History Trust, of which she is a Trustee. Sarah is currently the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire.

**Anna Nasmyth**



Sarah Taylor

## Places still available for

**Friday 24th March 11.00 am**

## Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

This is an unparalleled opportunity to be given an in depth tour of these world renowned gardens by Head Gardener, Fran Clifton, or horticulturalist and botanist, Barry Clarke.

- **Members £27.00, Guests £22.00**
  - **To book online please visit <http://www.oxforduniversitystores.co.uk/product-catalogue/botanic-garden-harcourt-arboretum>.**
- If you wish to book by post please send a cheque with the number of tickets you require, including your telephone number, address, and email address to the Friends administrator at Oxford Botanic Garden, Rose Lane, OX1 4AZ.**

## Don't forget your membership card..

when you come to visit the Garden and Arboretum. Our ticket office staff do not have access to the membership database and can't let you in free of charge if you don't have your membership card!

**Please also note the Garden and Arboretum are closed Monday mornings until 12.00 noon (exc. June, July and August)**

# Events

## Forthcoming Events

### First Friday of the Month

#### Coffee Mornings

Friends' coffee mornings are on the first Friday of every month (except January and August) and are an opportunity for Friends to get together and usually about 40 people attend. All coffee mornings begin 10.30am in the Garden's Conservatory followed by a tour at 11.00am. No fee and no booking required, just turn up. The next dates are:

April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th



Monday May 1st, 5.00 - 7.00am

#### May Morning in the Botanic Garden

May 1st falling on the May Bank Holiday is a rare treat. Come and celebrate in comfort on this magical morning and hear the singing of the Magdalen College choristers welcome in the new spring. As the music floats across the crowds of 20,000 on Magdalen Bridge you can watch the sun rise and enjoy the calm of our beautiful garden.

While you wait for the singing and the bells to begin we will entertain you with the Morris men and women from Cry Havoc dancing traditional Oxfordshire dances. Keep warm with hot drinks (included in the ticket price) before the singing and your complimentary croissant afterwards. Warm bacon or cheese baguettes will be available to purchase before the singing.

- Tickets: Friends £12, Guests £16, children 15 & under £5
- Entry by 5.30am via the Rose Lane Gate

Wednesday 28th June  
6.00-8.00pm

#### Friends' Summer Garden Party at the Botanic Garden

Join us to view the latest improvements to the Garden and for sparkling wine and cake. We will say farewell our outgoing Chairman, Richard Mayou, and will thank him for devoting years of work to building the Friends. You can also take this opportunity to meet Sarah Taylor who will be taking over the role from May 1st.

Guests are welcome and free, so please, introduce your friends to the Friends and to the Garden on this most enjoyable evening.

- There is no charge but donations will be very welcome. Please let us know on the booking form if you can come.

Wednesday 12th July

#### The Friends Opera *The Barber of Seville* at New College Oxford

By Giovanni Paisiello  
Sung in English by New Chamber Opera and The Band of Instruments

5.00pm Performance talk by Prof. Michael Burden, Director of New Chamber Opera

6.30pm opera performance in the Wardens Garden (open from 6.00pm)

The comic opera *The Barber of Seville* was first performed in 1783, predating the Rossini version and was enormously popular all over Europe for many years. The entertaining story is of the Count Almaviva who is in love with Rosina and his efforts to woo her from the clutches of her guardian Dr Bartolo.

The opera will be performed in the lovely surroundings of the Wardens Garden at New College, or in the chapel if wet. There will be a 75 minute interval for picnicking in the cloisters.

- Tickets £44 to include a welcoming glass of sparkling wine in the cloister garden . £3 for the pre performance talk.
- Tickets : use the enclosed booking form.



Saturday 26th August

#### Soul in the Summer

'Straight out of the Crate', a young soul band will sing soul classics while you picnic and dance the evening away in the meadow at Harcourt Arboretum.

Saturday 23rd September

#### The Big Walk

Explore the area between the Arboretum and the Garden starting either end with a map highlighting the attractions on the way. The Friends will see you off and welcome you at both venues with a well-stocked Tea Tent.

Sunday 22 October

#### Autumn and Apple Day at the Arboretum

Saturday and Sunday  
2nd/3rd December

#### Christmas Fair at the Botanic Garden

# Garden Visits

By Harriet Bretherton, Pauline Coombes,  
Jane Annett and Diana Naumann

Welcome to the 2017 spring and summer programme. Visits tend to get booked up quickly so to avoid disappointment please make your booking as soon as possible, either through the accompanying booking form or by visiting the website: [www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/visits-and-events-0](http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/visits-and-events-0). If you have any queries, contact the Friends' Administrator, [friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk](mailto:friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk) 01865 286690.

Sunday 7th May, 3.00pm

## Private visit to Mill Barn Garden

Mill Barn, Mill Lane, Weston Turville,  
Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5RG

By kind permission of Valerie and Richard Lapthorne

A real treasure trove seldom open to visitors, this thirty year old family garden has evolved from a derelict farmyard, through football pitch, Wendy House, tennis court, pond and every successful and unsuccessful garden trend since. And now, like good red wine and its owners, it is maturing very nicely. The owners, Valerie and Richard and their gardener, will be on hand to explain the garden's development and answer any questions. Refreshments included.

- Friends £15, guest £20
- Maximum 50



Mill Barn Garden

Sunday 7th May, 3.00pm

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- Refreshments included
- Friends £15, guest £20
- Maximum 50

Thursday 18th May

## Double private visit to Gothic House followed by The Priory Garden

11.00am

Gothic House, Church Street, Charlbury,  
Oxon OX7 3PP

By kind permission of Mr & Mrs Andrew Lawson

Gothic House garden, though only a 1/3 of an acre, is a 'small is beautiful' treasure. Andrew Lawson, will give an introductory talk about his work as gardener and photographer. A new area of 14 planted squares replaces lawn. Other features include false perspective, pleached lime walk, trellis, terracotta containers. New wildlife pond and wild area to support butterflies. Briony Lawson's Artweek exhibition open for your visit. Refreshments included.

2.00pm

The Priory Garden, Church Street,  
Charlbury, Oxon OX7 3PX

By kind permission of Dr D El Kabir & Colleagues

The Priory Garden is 1 1/2 acres of formal terraced topiary gardens with Italianate features. Foliage colour schemes, shrubs, parterres with fragrant plants, old roses, water features, sculpture and inscriptions aim to produce a poetic, wistful atmosphere. Formal vegetable and herb garden. 3 acre arboretum with wildlife garden and pond, borders the Evenlode River. Refreshments not provided.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 35

Wednesday 24th May

## Double visit to Coton Manor followed by Holdenby House

11.00am

Coton Manor, Coton, Northampton NN6 8RQ

By kind permission of Ian and Susan Pasley-Tyler

Coton Manor's owner, Ian Pasley-Tyler, will introduce this exciting garden which is about to burst into full, but wonderfully, fresh colour. The main players will be irises, lupins, alliums, nepeta, euphorbias, peonies, salvias, clematis and early roses. As the bluebells in the wood fade, the adjacent wildflower meadow starts to come into its own. The Water Garden is at its best and the borders begin to look abundant. Refreshments on arrival. Lunch is not included. Bring a picnic or there is a café at Coton Manor.



Coton Manor

2.30pm

Holdenby House, Holdenby, Northampton  
NN6 8DJ

By kind permission of James and Karen Lowther

Holdenby House, originally an Elizabethan palace, was restored in 1870. We will be given a tour of the house and then visit the 20 acre Grade 1 listed garden which includes an Elizabethan garden designed by Rosemary Verey, using plants only available in 1580, a pond garden, herbaceous borders, King Charles's walk and a delightful walled kitchen garden with the original. Victorian greenhouses. Refreshments included at the end of the visit.

- Friends £30, guests £35
- Maximum 50

Tuesday 6th June, 2.30pm

## Private visit to Appleton Manor

Appleton Manor, Eaton Road, Appleton,  
Oxon OX13 5LW

By kind permission of Mr and Mrs Jeffreys

Appleton Manor, originally a Norman Hall, dates from the 12th century. Over the years it has had as many alterations as owners. In 2001, its current owners began work on the garden with the renowned designer, Arne Maynard. It has been an ongoing project for both ever since. Features range from topiary shapes and pleached crab apples to a kitchen garden with beautifully restored antique glasshouse. All are set around the manor (not open) and moat. The owner or head gardener will introduce the garden and take us round. Refreshments included.

- Friends £16, guests £21
- Maximum No limit

**Friday 9th June**

**Private double visit to Rooksnest followed by The Old Rectory**

10.30am

Rooksnest, Ermin Street, Lambourn Woodlands RG17 7SB

By kind permission of Dame Theresa Sackler

Rooksnest is an exceptionally fine traditional English garden mostly designed by Arabella Lennox Boyd. There will be a short presentation about the garden's history. Its 10 acres feature glorious rose and herbaceous borders, a pond, herb and organic vegetable garden with glasshouses along with many fine specimen trees and shrubs. Orchard and terraces recently renovated and replanted. A visit not to be missed. Refreshments included.

2.30pm

The Old Rectory, Farnborough, Wantage, Oxon OX12 8NX

By kind permission of Mr and Mrs Michael Todhunter

The Old Rectory owners will welcome us with an introductory talk. Their garden features rare and interesting plants in a series of immaculately tended garden rooms, including herbaceous borders, arboretum, rose, pool and vegetable gardens. With stunning views across the countryside, it is the perfect setting for this 1749 rectory (not open), once the home of John Betjeman, in memory of whom John Piper created a window in the nearby church, which should be open. Some steep slopes. Refreshments included.

- Friends £20, guests £25
- Maximum 40



The Old Rectory

**Thursday 15th June, 2.30pm**

**Private visit to the garden at Manor House and tour of Dorchester Abbey**

Manor House, Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames OX10 7HZ

By kind permission of Simon and Margaret Broadbent

The owners will introduce this beautiful 2 acre garden set around a Georgian house and medieval abbey. A spacious lawn leads to

a riverside copse of towering poplars. There is a terrace with a rose and vine covered pergola around a lily pond, with colourful borders, small orchard and vegetable garden. The visit will include a guided tour of Dorchester Abbey and refreshments.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 36

**Thursday 22nd June, 2.30pm**

**Private visit to Tythrop Park**

Kingsey, Bucks HP17 8LT

By kind permission of Nick and Chrissie Wheeler

Seldom open to the public, Tythrop Park's 10 acres of gardens surround a Grade 1 listed manor house (not open). In recent years the grounds have undergone major changes and now blend traditional styles with more contemporary planting. Features include an intricate Parterre, deep mixed borders, large greenhouse, walled garden, kitchen/cut flower garden, meadows, many old trees and shrubs. The tour will be led by Head Gardener, Phil Kusmishko. Tea, coffee and cake will be provided.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 40

**Friday 30th June**

**Private double visit to Westwell Manor followed by The Old Vicarage**

10.30am

Westwell, Nr Burford, Oxon OX18 4JT

By kind permission of Mr Thomas Gibson

Westwell Manor (not open) is surrounded by 6 acres of glorious garden. The Head Gardener will talk about its many delights followed by a tour through the knot garden, potager, herbaceous borders with shrub roses, the topiary, earth works, auricula ladder, rills, the water and moonlight gardens. Refreshments not provided.

2.30pm

Main Road, Bledington, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 6UX

By kind permission of Sue and Tony Windsor

The Old Vicarage (not open), dating from 1843, is surrounded by a 1½ acre garden. The owners will introduce their garden which, planted for year round interest, features borders and beds filled with hardy perennials, an informal rose garden with over 300 David Austin roses, a small pond and vegetable patch. Also a paddock with trees, shrubs and herbaceous border. Plants for sale. Tea and cake included.

- Friends £30, guests £35
- Maximum 40

**Thursday 6th July, 2.00pm**

**Private visit to Longstock Park Water Garden**

Longstock Park Water Garden, Longstock Park, Stockbridge, Hampshire SO20 6EH

By kind permission of John Lewis Partnership

The International Waterlily Society considers Longstock Park Water Garden 'the finest water garden in the world'. Created by John Spedan Lewis in the 1940s as a place to reflect and relax, the crystal clear River Test flows through the garden. Owned and managed by Waitrose, a garden team member will give us an introductory talk. The garden hosts plants from around the world, including over forty species of waterlilies many of which will be flowering when we visit. Refreshments not included. The Longstock Café, farm shop and nursery only 1/2 mile away. The nursery includes national collections of Buddlejias, Clematis viticella, and the Gilchrist Collection of Penstemons. Plants for sale at the nursery.

- Friends £15, guests £20
- Maximum 50

**Sunday 23rd July, 2.30pm**

**Upper Slaughter Manor, the Gardens and the Feller Needlework Collection**

Upper Slaughter, Nr Cheltenham, Glos GL54 2JG

A rare opportunity to privately visit this Elizabethan Manor House with its Jacobean porch and late 14th early 15th century two-vaulted crypt. Examples from the Feller Needlework Collection will be on view. The manor house is set in grounds of 22 acres and the extensive Gardens include a rose garden with a reconstructed 18th century folly and a lake plus a self-guided nature trail. Tea/coffee and a slice of cake included.

- Friends £30, guests £35
- Maximum 30



Upper Slaughter Manor

Richard Holdsworth

# The Bobarts Patron Group

By Helen Potts  
and Jennie Turner

We begin in March at The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.. We will have a tour of the building, whose design and form represent a harmonious blending of traditional Oxford and Islamic styles. Professor Hugh Dickinson will then take us around the garden. In April we go to two gardens in Horton-cum-Studley. The first is a delightful informal garden with many spring bulbs, primulas, anemones, less usual hellebores and dogwoods. A short walk will take us to a splendid mature ½ acre garden belonging to Bobarts members, which includes a gravel area, mixed borders, potager, alpine troughs, bog area and pond.

In May we visit one of the great Cotswold gardens. Upton Wold gardens originally designed by Hal Moggridge and developed by the current owners. They combine a magnificent location, a firm structure of hedges and skilled planting. The kitchen garden, separated from Ian Bond's National Collection of Walnuts by a tall and windowed hornbeam hedge is awash with irises.

In June we have another all day visit with lunch to The Old Rectory and to West Woodhay House, near Newbury. The Old

Rectory has deep herbaceous borders providing all year interest, unusual trees and fabulous down land views. After lunch we go next door to West Woodhay House with wide lawns reaching down to enchanting waterways, rose gardens and arboretum and a walled productive kitchen garden.

The 2017 Bobarts Day will be a return to Oxford Botanic Garden. Professor Simon Hiscock, Director, Tom Price, Gardens Curator and Kate Prichard, Glasshouse Curator will welcome us for a reception and tour of the Garden.

Other visits are being planned for the second half of the year including an overnight visit to four beautiful gardens near Hereford, also taking in the gardens, Mappi Mundi and chained books at Hereford Cathedral.

To find out more about becoming a member of the Bobarts Group please email [friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk](mailto:friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk)



Perrycroft Garden, Herefordshire



## Calendar

### March

Saturday 19th March, 2.30pm  
**Visit to Abbotswood**

Thursday 23rd March  
**Winter Lecture: Caroline Holmes**

Friday 24th March, 11.00am  
**Visit to Sir Harold Hillier Gardens**

### April

Saturday 1st April, 10.00am and 12.00pm  
**Visits to Magdalen College**

Friday 7th April, 10.30am  
**Coffee Morning**

Saturday 29th April, 11.00am and 2.30pm  
**Visits to Towersey Manor and Turn End**

### May

Monday 1st May, 5.00-7.00am  
**May Morning**

Friday 5th May, 10.30am  
**Coffee Morning**

Sunday 7th May, 3.00pm  
**Visit to Mill Barn Garden**

Thursday 18th May, 11.00am and 2.00pm  
**Visits to Gothic House and The Priory Garden**

Wednesday 24th May, 2.30pm  
**Visits to Coton Manor and Holdenby House**

### June

Friday 2nd June, 10.30am  
**Coffee Morning**

Tuesday 6th June, 2.30pm  
**Visit to Appleton Manor**

Friday 9th June, 10.30am and 2.30pm  
**Visits to Rooksnest, Lambourn and Old Rectory, Farnborough**

Thursday 15th June, 2.30pm  
**Visit to Manor House and Dorchester Abbey**

Thursday 22nd June, 2.30pm  
**Visit to Tythrop Manor**

Wednesday 28th June, 6.00-8.00pm  
**Friends' Summer Party**

Friday 30th June, 10.30am and 2.30pm  
**Visits to Westwell Manor and Old Vicarage, Bledington**

### July

Friday 7th July, 10.30am  
**Coffee Morning**

Thursday 6th July, 2.00pm  
**Visit to Longstock Park Water Garden**

Wednesday 12th July  
**New College Opera**

Sunday 23rd July, 2.30pm  
**Visit to Upper Slaughter Manor**

Saturday 23rd September  
**The Big Walk**

#### The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden and Harcourt Arboretum

Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ

All Friends' enquiries, including those about Friends' events, should be made to the Friends' Administrator



Tel: 01865 286690

E-mail: [friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk](mailto:friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk)

Web: [www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk](http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk)

The Friends Office is staffed on weekdays. This Newsletter was edited by Simon Hiscock and Sally Jeffery with help from Richard Mayou, Diana Naumann and Carol Maxwell. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Board of the Friends or the Visitors Of Oxford Botanic Garden.