

# The Scottish Rock Garden Club

## Discussion Weekend Show

In Grantown on Spey

12 10 19



## A WONDERFUL WEEKEND

The weather in Granttown on Spey could not have been kinder to us. Admittedly, on the way north the A9 was challenging with heavy downpours and lots of spray from other traffic. I left Dunblane in sunshine, met the rain at Perth, saw rainbows while passing through Drumochter Pass and arrived in Granttown in sunshine. Our venue was the well loved Grant Arms Hotel which sits in the centre of Granttown. I can remember a winter's day in that same street waiting for the cars in the 1970 RAC Rally [or was it the Snowman Rally?] to arrive. I left Inverness in crisp frosty but dry weather and found some snow in Granttown. The rally cars were hours late because of the heavy snowfall in the forest stage of the race north of the town. The contestants arrived eventually in dribs and drabs. The race was abandoned in Granttown and the cars and contestants made a sedate journey to Glasgow [I think] for the next stage. Scottish weather can be unpredictable.

The Show Secretary Matt Topsfield had everything set up by the time I arrived. I was not late it was just that everyone else was early. The benches were already filled with plants. It is a while since I exhibited plants at our shows but guilt prompted me to do my bit. I expressed my disappointment that more people hadn't supported the summer event in Dunblane so I took as many plants as I could to the Discussion Weekend Show. Several other members had the same idea resulting in a good show with many interesting plants. Stan de Prato outdid us all with his Tardis full of entries, including the small 6 pan class. Stan seems to have a plant for every class. This time he was determined that every class in the show would have at least one entry. He was successful. As you will see in the pictures Stan brought many Gentians and autumn foliage plants that the room was filled with colour. My contribution was mainly Cyclamen, some in flower and others for foliage effect. Roma Fiddes brought several wonderful Cyclamen including her Forrest Medal winning Cyclamen mirabile. Anne Wright and Jean Wyllie ensured that competition in the bulb and Cyclamen classes was very keen. Nick Boss whose style of gardening with nature staged many pans accompanied by copious and interesting notes on cultivation.

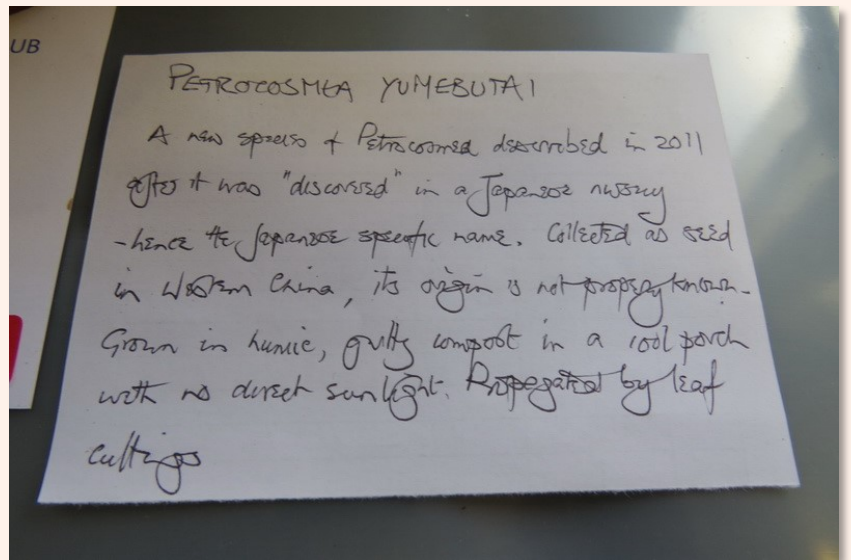




**STAN'S SUCCESS**

Stan de Prato won Classes 1, 2 & 3. after that there was no catching him. The result was that he took home most of the trophies! His success is well deserved and the club owes him a debt of gratitude for the unstinting support which he gives to our shows.

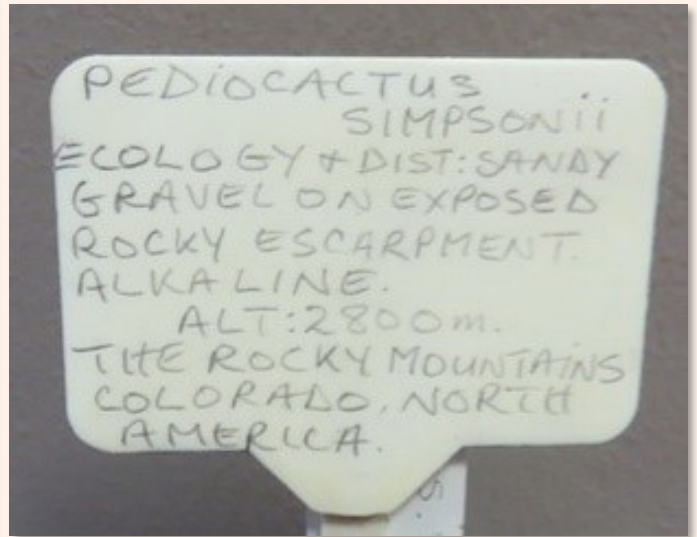




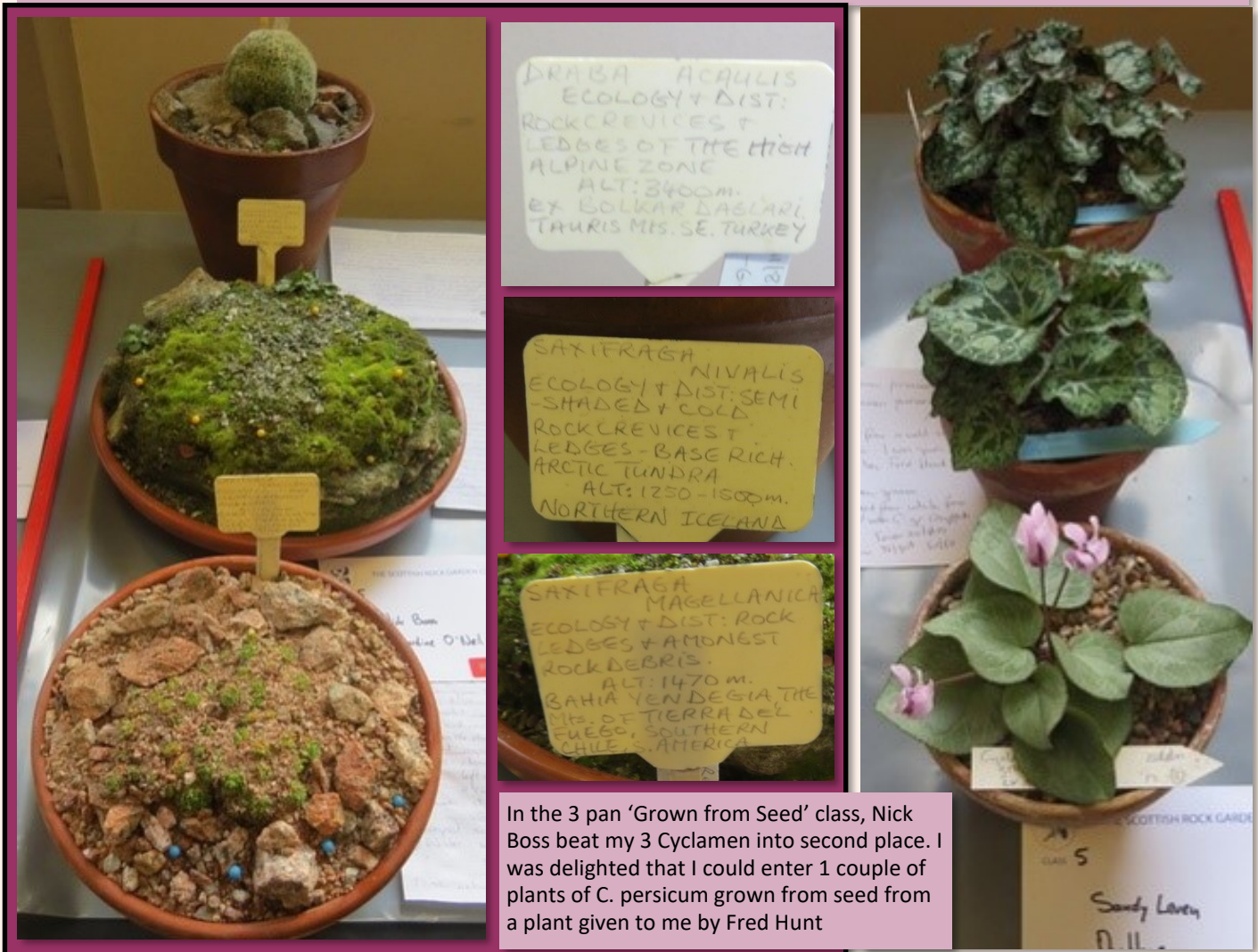
### Petrocosmeas were popular show plants

Stan had Petrocosmea 'Keystone Barn Swallow' in his 6 pan entry and P. minor in the 3 pan. Carole & Ian Bainbridge showed Petrocosma x 'yumebutai' in the New or Rare class. P. cryptica was described as a species in 2011 after having been in cultivation for a few years. There are several clones of P. cryptica which form a splendid symmetrical rosettes. P. c. yumebutai was introduced from Japan and is named for the Japanese garden centre in which it was found, 'Yumebutai', which I looked up. The epithet 'Yumebutai' would seem to refer to a wonderful complex of conference centre hotel memorial in Awaji, Hyōgo, built near the epicentre of the 1995 Great Hanshin Awaji earthquake. One of the most distinctive features in the complex is the **Hyakudanen** ("hundred stepped gardens"), a group of 100 flower beds (small square gardens) on an incline, arranged in grids spread over several levels. The picture below is taken from Google. It is an unique way to garden on a slope, reminiscent of terraced paddy fields. It must be a very interesting place to visit





Pediocactus simpsonii is native to Colorado and other western states along the Rocky Mountains of the USA. It is one of the most cold-hardy species cactus species and is found as high as 3500 m. Plants can be found growing in a variety of habitats, prairie grassland, rocky steppes, sagebrush, pinyon-juniper woodland and montane coniferous forest. It is frequently concealed under larger vegetation and can be camouflaged under plant litter and grasses. During winter dormancy it may actually shrink below the ground surface. Interestingly, the flowers are generally pink on the eastern slope and yellowish on the western slope plants. It is one the ball cacti known as 'horse cripplers' because a mature specimen will fit into the hoof of a horse which is unfortunate enough to stand on it. Many of the Rocky cacti are ferociously spined like P. simpsonii. We looked for it in Colorado and Arizona but did not find it.



DRABA ACAULIS  
 ECOLOGY + DIST: ROCK CREVICES + LEDGES OF THE HIGH ALPINE ZONE  
 ALT: 3400m.  
 BY BOLKAR DASCAR TAURIS MTS. SE. TURKEY

SAXIFRAGA NIVALIS  
 ECOLOGY + DIST: SEMI-SHADED + COLD ROCK CREVICES + LEDGES - BASE RICH. ARCTIC TUNDRA  
 ALT: 1250-1500m.  
 NORTHERN ICELAND

SAXIFRAGA MAGELLANICA  
 ECOLOGY + DIST: ROCK LEDGES + AMONGST ROCK DEBRIS.  
 ALT: 1470 m.  
 BAHIA VENDEGIA, THE ILS. DE TIERRA DEL FUEGO, SOUTHERN CHILE - AMERICA

In the 3 pan 'Grown from Seed' class, Nick Boss beat my 3 Cyclamen into second place. I was delighted that I could enter 1 couple of plants of C. persicum grown from seed from a plant given to me by Fred Hunt



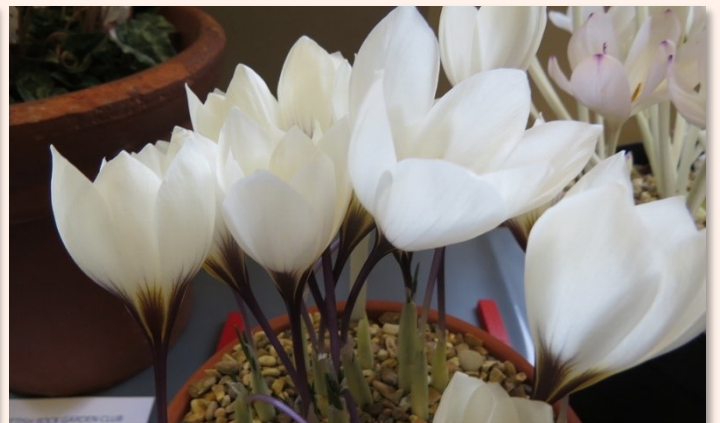
Sternbergia sicula from Alan Furness



Hyacinthoides lingulata from Carole & Ian Bainbridge



Colchicum byzantium 'Innocence' from John Amand



Crocus hadriaticus from Anne Wright

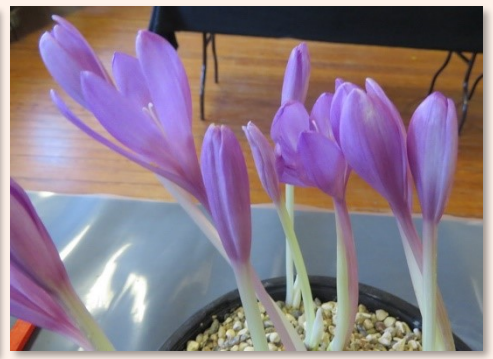


Galanthus reginae-olgae 'Ruby's Green Dream' from Anne



Galanthus peschmennii 'Kastellorhiza' from Anne





Two pans of colchicums which won for John Amand. The white one is *Colchicum autumnale album* one of the first plants which I grew in Dunblane. The other is C. 'Nancy Lindsay' one of the best single purple varieties. John generously donated these and many other bulbs to the auction on Saturday evening.



Mala Janes' *Merendera montanum* 'Norman Barret' won the East Lothian Trophy for the Best Plant in Section II and was recommended for a PC by the Joint Rock Committee. It is paler in colour than clones more usually seen. Mala also won the SRGC Bronze Medal for Most points in Section II.





Stab de Prato won the 2 & 3pan Gentian Classes and the Peel Trophy for 3 pan Gentiana but Carole and David Shaw won the 1 pan Gentiana class. N.B. 'The Caley' is very popular!



**5 of Stan's Class winners.** You have to look after plants for several years to get them looking as good as these do.







King penguins with sand cabbage in the Falkands. The garden centre form now sold as Angel Wings seems to be a selection from this wild plant.

The garden cv likes sun, well-drained soil but hates winter wet or very hard frost.



Stan provided this picture of King Penguins in the Falkland Islands to educate members about the provenance of his magnificent plant of *Senecio candicans* 'Angel Wings'. Its leaves are most certainly silver grey but perhaps he doomed its chances by casting doubts on its hardiness. I, like the penguins like the plant and am glad Stan showed it. Coming from Falkland in Fife I have a soft spot for anything connected to the Falkland Islands.

The *Raoulia x Leucogenes* was shown by Alan Furness. I also like Jean's *C. hederifolium* with its long leaves









The Grant Arms is famous for its ornithological links. Many birders holiday there during the year and are well cared for. Throughout the public areas of the hotel the sound of birds' twittering breaks the silence. The birdsong is comforting and soothing. I could not distinguish which birds were singing when.

I thought that as a tribute to the hotel I would show you this picture of the osprey beside the Falkland Island sea cabbage. I am confident that if one did fly from Loch Garton to the Falklands they might like to p.p.p.pick up a penguin!



**Addendum** — Hebe addenda. Perhaps this is not quite what Steve Newall meant by a wild New Zealand variety but as he directed it is a Hebe not a Veronica!

