

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Hexham Autumn Show

5 10 19

Hexham is the perfect meeting place for the SRGC and the AGS, despite the fact that Hadrian built his wall a few miles to the north to keep the Scots out. Ancient Corbridge lies just a few miles east of Hexham, also on the river Tyne. It was an important town in Roman times built on the junction of North—South and East—West routes. The present bridge was built in 1235. Even in 1306 its bridge was the only one between Newcastle and Carlisle. Until 1770 the only way to cross the Tyne at Hexham was by ferry. The present day A68 with its scary blind summits and humps follows the old North - South Roman road. The East—West Roman Road has been uncovered and like the modern road, it runs parallel to the Tyne. Find time when you are next at a Hexham show to visit the impressive Roman remains in Corbridge (below).



They have been constructing great buildings near Hexham for 2000 years, so it should be no surprise to find the Hexham Auction market is much more than a place to sell cattle and sheep. It is wonderful venue for a plant show. It has a big free car park, plenty space for our nurseries and its own kitchen offering a wide range of tasty meals and snacks. The show hall itself is spacious and well lit with windows down one whole side and it is fully carpeted. As you walk around you are warm and comfortable. The soft carpet underfoot is kind to aging legs and feet.



In the Corbridge museum there is proof that livestock farming has long been important in this area, namely the statue of the Corbridge lion. This artefact depicts a lion killing a sheep or goat which is not smoking a cigar. That is its tongue. It doesn't say whether or not the lion was raised in the area.

Mind you, you can be caught unawares by the offers on the blackboards in the auction market. Chris obviously knows his bulls!



FOR SALE
ANGUS BULL, GOLD
SORT FOR MEATERS
3 YEARS
BY NETHERTON AMERICANO
SEE CHRIS

NEXT SALE:-
FOR SALE
SUPER LIMOUSIN BULL
26 MONTHS, GREAT END
BY PLUMTREE FANTASTIC
Sensibly priced
SEE CHRIS



The main floral content of the show comprised numerous pans of Cyclamen and other 'bulbous' plants. I write 'other' because under Scottish Rock Garden Club rules Cyclamen are considered to be 'bulbs' although everyone realises that they are not true bulbs. They are in the Primulaceae family rather than Liliaceae, Iridaceae, Alliaceae or Asparagaceae. Still, tradition and a reluctance to change maintains this interesting divergence in rules between sister societies. Perhaps there will be a reconciliation in due course. It is interesting that Trilliums and Arisaemas are also included as 'bulbs'.



Bob and Rannveig Wallis won the 3 pan 'rock plant in flower' class with *Cyclamen graecum graecum* [left and below] and *C. g. candidum* [right] with *Oxalis speciosa* in front.





TOMS TRIO FROM THREE CONTINENTS

Small shrubs are very useful in the garden although they are often overlooked. In terms of show plants they are the 'exhibitors' friends', in that they can be taken to many shows over the season. It is very worthwhile taking time to study the shrubs. There are often special plants to entice you to discover more about them.

Tom Green had a trio of interest.

Top left Coleonema pulchellum 'Aureum' is a South African plant, a member of the Rutaceae (Rue and Citrus family)}, known as 'confetti bush' because of its myriad tiny flowers illustrated by the picture on the top right of Coleonema album which I saw near the Cape of Good Hope.

Helichrysum selago var. tumidum is an endemic New Zealand-er where it may be found, if you are lucky because it is pretty rare, on coastal cliffs on the Otago Peninsula. Helichrysum derives from two Greek words; *helios*—sun and *chrysos* — gold, referring to the golden flowers on some species.

Tom's third plant is labelled Fuchsia x encliandra which intrigued me. so I looked it up and 'encliandras' seem to be group of species within the genus Fuchsia. They grow above 10,000 feet in Cental American mountains. Those most often seen here are F. microphylla and F. thymifolia. They are hardy in an alpine house. The picture on the bottom left is Fuchsia microphylla shown by David and Liz Livermore.

Below this column is Fuchsia 'Lottie Hobby' growing at Holehird garden in Cumbria. The plant is taken inside in winter.



Bob and Rannveig Wallis' *Cyclamen hederifolium crassifolium* and *Cyclamen rohlfsianum* were both awarded Certificates of Merit. Both plants are a tribute to their growers. This the biggest pan of *crassifolium* which I have seen and probably the richest colour form of *rohlfsianum*.

I also like Tommy Anderson's *Cyclamen hederifolium* 'Silver Arrow' at the bottom.





Cyclamen maritimum (above right) was formerly known as Cyclamen graecum anaticum but has now been raised to species rank. It along with C. graecum album and C. graecum candicum won the 3 pan Class for Bob & Rannveig.

Bob Worsley was unlucky to come up against these three as his own entry was excellent.

John Richards was equally unlucky as his well flowered Cyclamen hederifolium album (below) met the Wallis' Certificate of Merit plant in its class. Note that is in full leaf.

Interestingly Mike Dale's C. hederifolium album (bottom below) flowered without leaves. It was placed third.





There were fewer Gentians this year. John Richards won the three pan class with 'Silken Giant', 'Murrayfield' and 'The Caley'. The latter two hybrids were raised by the Dr Ian McNaughton and are a tribute to his work. Below left is a picture of Ian with his wife Beryl taken at the SRGC Discussion Weekend in Peebles in 2016 when his pan of Gentian 'The Caley' won the Forrest Medal. G. 'Silken Giant' was raised by Dr Keith Lever of Aberconway Nursery, where I photographed him during a visit by members of the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee in 2015. Sadly both Ian and Keith passed away recently. They are sorely missed.





Perfect cushion plants demand meticulous attention all year round. Dionysias and Saxifrages win top prizes when they are in flower. It is good to see the skill of the exhibitors recognised by the award of a Certificate of Merit to John Dixon for his pan of *Dionysia esfandiari* when it was out of flower. Note the other perfect green domes in the other picture.

Dionysia esfandiari has violet flowers. It is native to the Zagros mountains of western Iran. It may have been collected by Jim Archibald and by Henrik Zetterlund. Its named for Dr Esfandiar Esfandiari, the Iranian Scientist and botanist, one time Professor of Botany at Keredj University in Iran. He was an expert on plant pests and diseases.



Another Triumph for Bob & Rannveig in Class 19 for 3 pans bulbous plants! Their trio could hardly have been more different- Bright yellow *Oxalis lobata*, the weird pink-spotted *Biarum marmarisense* and *Cyclamen graecum* ssp. *graecum*, 'Rhodopu form' with quite plain silvery leaves. In the 1 pan bulb class they showed a form of the *Biarum* with white flowers. Both forms exist side by side in same wild population.





One Pan Bulbous plant in Section I



1



2

Allium callimischon
sp. *hoemastichum*



Colchicum agrippinum



3

Biarum marmisense



Crocus tournefortii

Alan Furness' Forrest Medal winning pan of *Crocus tournefortii* was recommended for a cultural certificate by the RHS Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee



Leaves in all colours



Dwarf Berberis



Roscoea purpureum?



Paeonia obovata



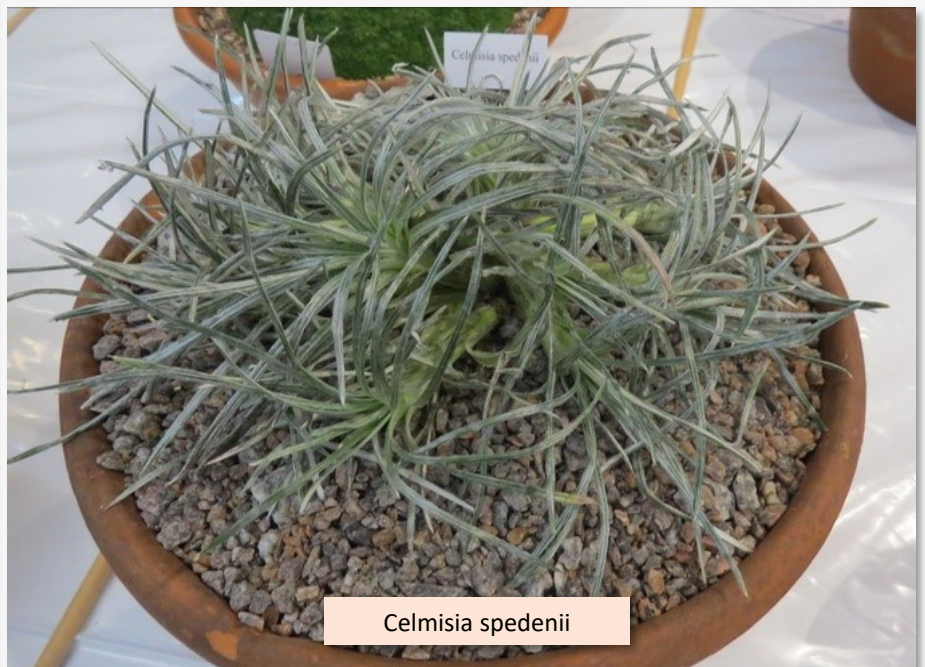
Viburnum opulis 'Nanum'



Ficinia 'Ice Crystals'



Ozomanthus coralloides



Celmisia spedenii



Haemanthus albiflos. This seems to be an 'in plant' at the moment. It is native to the Southern and Eastern Cape regions of South Africa. It is a plant in the Asparagaceae family, cousin to Ophiopogon, Disporum, Maianthemum, Uvularia and Clintonia. Its leaves do look like Clintonia leaves but its untidy flower is pretty well unique, resembling a stringy-yoked boiled egg. The 'flower' is actually an umbel comprising numerous erect narrow white flowers and the 'petals' are actually white bracts. The protruding stamens are tipped with yellow pollen. This configuration has given it the colloquial name of 'Paintbrush' but it is no relation to Castillejas of North America. In the wild it prefers shady spots. It needs protection from frost in the UK. Several species of Haemanthus have red flowers, hence its specific name. It has orange / red fleshy berries.

Variation is the spice of shows

Ian Instone's trio illustrated different variegations. That most commonly seen at or shows is the wonderful *Sedum sieboldii* variegatum with its heads of pink flowers in autumn. Less often seen on the show bench is *Iris pallida* 'Argentea Variegata'. My variegated irises are 3 feet tall just now. Ian competed his trio with *Euonymus japonicus* microphyllus pulchellus. A long name for a wee plant.

The variegated *Ophiopogon* won for Alan Newton.





Barry Winter won with a splendid pan of *Sedum caucicola*, this time the non variegated form.

He also showed a pink berried *Symphoricarpos* 'Coral'. I am used to seeing the white berried species, *S. albus*, used as a hedge in Scotland. It tends to sucker around but my wife says it is one of her favourite shrubs. Both are American species. Wikipedia says it is a favourite food of bighorn sheep, white-tailed deer and grisly bears. I hope our local roe deer might find our patch to be a delicacy. It was introduced as a garden shrub in the late 1800's.

This pink form of the Coralberry is really pretty. It may be a selection of *S. microphyllum* from Southern USA. I hope it maintains its short stature.



- Alchemilla conjuncta*
- Alchemilla erythropoda*
- Alchemilla glabra*
- Anemone* sp.
- Cyclamen hederifolium*
- Eryngium bourgatii*
- Euonymus atrata* Compacta
- Geranium argenteum*
- Geranium* Buxton's Var.
- Geranium sanguinum*
- Hypericum androsaenum*
- Polypodium vulgare*
- Sanguisorba minor*



Colchicum sanguicolle Persson 1999

Liliaceae Endemic in SW Turkey, Asia

Described only 20 years ago, *C. sanguicolle* differs from the similar *C. cilicium* in its corm tunic; its untessellated flowers and most notably its dark red cataphylls which are just visible at soil level at flowering time. It is known from 3 or 4 sites where it grows in seasonably moist mountain meadows and rocky slopes.

It grows reasonably well in a pot in a cold greenhouse but multiplication is very slow and seeds take many years to mature into flowering sized bulbs. Consequently, stock is seldom available, if at all, so it remains a desirable rarity.

Sternbergia clusiana
(Family: Amaryllidaceae)

Found in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, & Syrian Islands on stony fields.

Leaves appear in Spring

Cultivation: Grown in Alpine House
Needs a deep pot and summer baking. Feed well when leaves appear.

Propagation: By division when dormant



An AGS Medal for Bob & Rannveig Wallis as well as the Patricia Furness Vase for *Empodium flexile* and a P.C. for *Pterostylis coccinea*. Pretty good awards for a sextet of immaculate plants!



Colchicum cupanii ↑

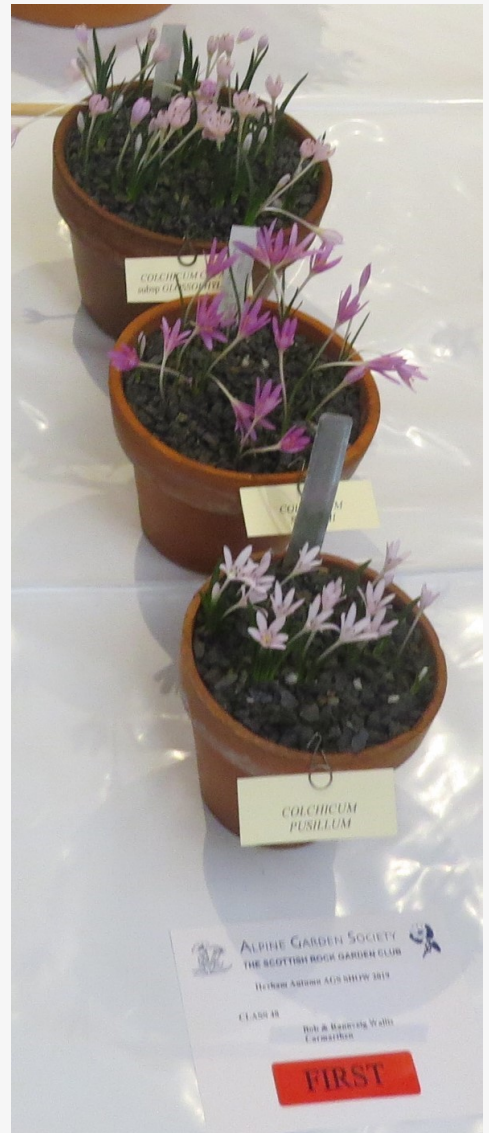
Colchicum cupanii ssp. *glossophyllum*

I am always surprised by the diminutive size of these *Colchicum*s

Colchicum stevenii

Colchicum pusillum

The Joint Rock recommended a P.C to the Australian orchid, *Pterostylis coccinea* shown by Bob & Rannveig



The David Boyd Award went to *Sternbergia sicula* shown by Mala Janes. This was a very appropriate award as Mala produced a superb photo and text exhibit of David Boyd's garden and its plants. Her exhibition was admired at the Hexham spring show and at the SRGC Lockerbie weekend.

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A triumph from sunny South Wales



Narcissus elegans (Haw) Spach 1846
Amaryllidaceae **Western Mediterranean (Europe & North Africa)**

Although known for a very long time "it has been the despair of most of those who have tried to cultivate it in England" according to John Blanchard in *Narcissus: a guide to wild daffodils*. It flowers very rarely and sometimes goes dormant for several years. It has obviously enjoyed the last two hot summers as it has flowered for the first time for many years.

It is grown in a long tom pot so that the bulbs are situated quite deeply and repotted infrequently as it seems to resent disturbance. It is kept in a warm greenhouse in full sun and allowed to get very dry in summer. A first watering in mid September stimulates rapid growth.

Scottish Rock Garden Club  **88**

1 pan rock plant, rare in cultivation.

Cut and Dried



Actaea pachypoda



Calliandra x bodneri



These Eastern autumn flowering forms of *Saxifraga fortunei* are popular with exhibitors and nurserymen. I wonder if this is a fascination led by prescient nurserymen who realise that they will flower late in the season until the first frosts. They will withstand winter colds and frosts while they hibernate. Sometimes they seem to be reluctant to wake up in spring and summer may be well on its way before they do burst into growth. Like Heucheras [also in the saxifrage family] once the hybridists get stuck into them there seems to be no end to the number of exotic hybrids.

Left to right An unnamed cultivar, white flowered 'Shiranami,' red flowered 'Gokka' (the last two shown by Ron & Hilary Price)
The picture of Barry Winter's trio (below left) demonstrates how the leaf size and colour can vary in these hybrids.



Alan Newton in the master of *Petrocosmea* cultivation







CROCUS KOTSCHIANUS
Subsp. KOTSCHIANUS



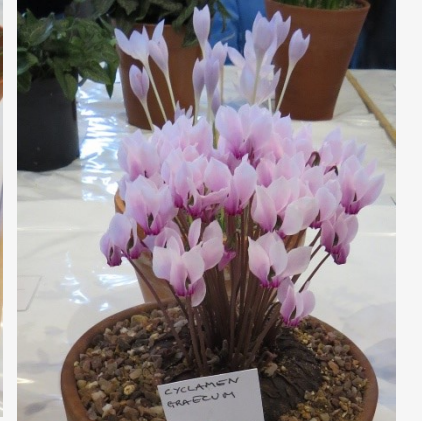
Merendera
montana



Sternbergia
grueteriana



Merendera
montana



CYCLAMEN
PRAECUM



Crocus
boryi

ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY
Health & Safety Officer
Ewesley Salver
First Certificate in Horticulture (2014)

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Hickman Autumn AGS SHOW 2019

CLASS 48
Derek Pickard
Stuckton on Tees

FIRST



Moss
Strobilata

Drosera
rotundifolia

Chamaenerion
pinnatifidum

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FIRST

THIRD

