

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Forrest Medal Kendal 2105

Dionysia aretioides

Shown by Frank & Barbara Hoyle



For the second year in a row the top plant at Kendal was won by Frank and Barbara Hoyle. The timing of the show is near St Patrick's Day and suits their plants!

With Dionysias it is not always possible to say 'biggest is best' but this year at Kendal the phrase proved true. The winning plant was a magnificent specimen of *Dionysia aretioides* belonging to Frank and Barbara Hoyle. Since I had to leave early I did not find Frank to take his photograph. This was less important than it first seemed because Frank and Barbara won the Farrer medal last year with their magnificent *Cyclamen pseudibericum*. Last year the *Cyclamen* was in a group of 3 plants with one of his *D. aretioides*. I don't think it is the same plant but I cobbled together [skilfully combined?] images from last year to show you Frank with a *Dionysia aretioides*. All the other pictures are of this year's Forrest winning plant.



We are so used to seeing their perfectly symmetrical domes of flower that we forget how much care it takes to coax a plant to perform as well as this. *Dionysias* must be grown hard and will not tolerate damp conditions, so must be grown in a well ventilated alpine house. To keep it perfect shape and to ensure even flowering all round the plant must be turned regularly. [usually by 45% each day] This is easy with a small pot but when it comes to turning a 12 inch potful, plunged in sand it is back breaking, especially if the pot is near the back of the plunge. Reputedly slightly easier to grow than some other species, *Dionysia aretioides* can be cultivated into large plants like this fabulous specimen. It is native to, limestone cliffs in the Elbruz mountains of Iran.

