

AGS news

Newsletter of the Alpine Garden Society

Conference is a big success

The two-day AGS conference run alongside the annual general meeting in November was another great success, building on the foundation laid by last year's event.

Around 90 members enjoyed a varied programme of lectures, with topics including the cultivation of hardy orchids, creating a woodland garden, the AGS tour in Peru and plant breeding.

The Society plans to stage another conference next year.

At the AGM, conference speaker Harry Jans was presented with the AGS's highest honour, the Lyttel Trophy. The trophy is awarded by its previous winners (see list on page 5) and Harry was unaware he had been chosen as the 2014 recipient until



Harry Jans receives the Lyttel Trophy from AGS President David Haselgrove

the announcement was made by AGS President David Haselgrove. Harry, an accomplished alpine plantsman from the Netherlands, has travelled the world researching alpine habitats and has led many tours.

More AGM pictures on pages 2 and 3

SAVE 25% ON KEITH WILEY'S NEW BOOK: PAGE 12

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Annual subscriptions:

Single (UK and Ireland) £32*

Family (two at same address) £36*

Junior (under 18/student) £14

Overseas single US\$56 £34

Overseas family US\$62 £37

* £2 deduction for direct debit
subscribers

AGS CENTRE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY HOURS

The AGS Centre will close on
Friday, December 19, and
will not reopen until Monday,
January 5. The AGS garden is
open every day.

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Send items for the March 2015
issue of AGS News to Jackie Cooper
at the address above or email
jackie@alpinegardensociety.net.
The deadline is January 31, 2015.

NOTICEBOARD



Jon Evans and Robert Rolfe receive the
Clarence Elliott Memorial Award for their
series of articles about Blackthorn, Robin and
Sue White's garden, in *The Alpine Gardener*



Joan Vincent (South Lancashire) receives a
Local Group Award

AGS Snowdrop Day
Saturday, February 7, 2015
Fully booked

PICTURES FROM THE AGM



AGS slide librarian and author Peter
Sheasby receives the Award of Honour



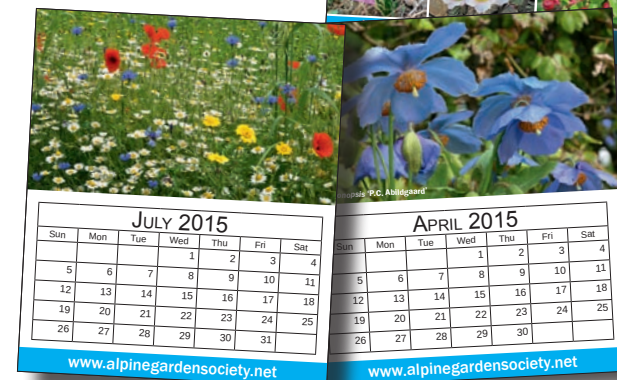
Sonia and Neville Morris (Birmingham)
receive a Local Group Award

The 2015 AGS desk calendar

Our handy desk calendar features 12 superb
images of plants and gardens taken by AGS
members. The calendar costs just £4.50, or
buy two for £8.

Postage is free
in the UK, £2.50
for the rest of
Europe and
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Order on the
AGS website in
the Book Shop
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Centre on 01386
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NOTICEBOARD

AGS TRAVEL AWARDS AND GRANTS

Applications for 2015

The Alpine Garden Society considers applications for AGS Travel Awards annually. Applications for these awards must be received by January 31, 2015, at the latest.

TRAVEL AWARDS

Each year the Society gives a limited number of Travel Awards to enthusiasts wishing to gain field experience in the serious study of alpine plants in native habitats. Applications should be for clearly defined projects, though Awards have been made to those wishing to participate in an AGS tour if it complements a particular area of interest.

HENDRY FUND GRANTS

In addition, grants for specific alpine-related projects are available, financed by the E. F. Hendry Fund.

Application forms and further details for Travel Awards and Hendry Fund grants are available from: Jackie Cooper, c/o AGS Centre, or email: jackie@alpinegardensociety.net

MERLIN TRUST & ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY

Travel scholarships for 2015

In 1990 the Merlin Trust was founded by the late Valerie Finnis VMH to provide travel grants for young horticulturists. In 2015 the Merlin Trust is offering jointly with the Alpine Garden Society up to six fully paid travel scholarships on AGS-organised plant tours.

Applicants should be enthusiastic about plants and have a particular interest in alpinism. They must be 18 to 35 years of age or in their first five years of a career in horticulture and have British or Irish citizenship. Students of other nationalities are eligible only if they are currently studying at a UK horticultural training establishment.

If you would like to receive information about the tours and an application form, please send your contact details to: Joanne Everson, Rock Garden Team Leader, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Richmond TW9 3AB.

Email: j.everson@kew.org Phone: 0208 332 5585



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TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE SOCIETY'S CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNTS FOR 2013-2014

The Consolidated Accounts include the combined income and expenditure accounts of both the parent Society (the Alpine Garden Society) and its two subsidiary companies (AGS Publications Ltd and AGS Expeditions Ltd). The full version of the Consolidated Accounts was approved by the Trustee Board at its meeting on 25 October 2014. It will be sent to the Charity Commission in fulfilment of the Society's statutory obligations. In line with an earlier decision made by the

Society's Annual General Meeting (AGM), only a summarised version comprising the Statement of Financial Activities and the Consolidated Balance Sheet is presented to the AGM. It will, however, also be made more widely available both in the Society's Newsletter and on its website. Any member wishing to see a full set of the accounts may obtain one by making a written application to the Society's Director.

The comments that follow relate to items in the

full accounts and their accompanying notes only where significant variations occur compared with the previous year or where attention is otherwise drawn to particular noteworthy features. If small differences occur between the comparative figures for 2013-2014 in these accounts and those published last year, these probably arise from the late submission of some information or in changes in the way sums of money have been attributed to particular purposes. The Society is grateful to its independent auditors, Messrs Kendall Wadley LLP, not only for preparation of the accounts but also for their advice on a number of financial issues during the year. This is my third report to the Society as Honorary Treasurer. My thanks to Christine McGregor and her staff at AGS Centre who have supported and helped me over the year.

1. Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2014

1.1 Incoming resources

The total incoming resources for 2013-2014 amounted to £720,311, made up of subscriptions, gifts, investment income, trading income and funds covenanted from the AGS's two trading companies.

1.2 Subscriptions

There has been a small increase in the income received from subscriptions: £149,960 against £141,498 in 2012-2013. This is largely the result of an increase in subscription rates, slightly offset by a small fall in membership.

1.3 Gifts, donations and legacies

As always the Society is extremely grateful for those legacies and donations that are received and thanks most sincerely members who have assisted the Society in this way. Donations and covenants during the year amounted to £15,470.

1.4 Investment income

Interest income from investments was virtually the same as in 2012-2013: £65,616 against £65,767. Although there was a need to sell investments, as in earlier years, to make up the shortfall between income and expenditure, this was on a smaller scale this year. The adverse effects of sales were offset by the continued strengthening of the stock market, at least during the earlier part of the year.

1.5 Trading income

Trading income for the two subsidiary companies,

AGS Expeditions Ltd and AGS Publications Ltd, was £392,399, very substantially up on last year's £75,215. A total of £62,521 was contributed to the Society under deeds of covenant by the subsidiary companies. The outstanding loan of £55,578 made by the Society to AGS Publications Ltd, was reduced during the year from £57,375.

1.6 Activities for generating funds

At £93,618, this was substantially greater than last year (£68,289). Activities included: seed sales (£13,734); conferences (£23,875); advertising (£8,663).

1.7 Notes on resources expended

At £728,285, the total resources expended in 2013-2014 showed a large increase over those in 2012-2013 of £428,710. A substantial part of that expenditure (£319,684) was incurred by the two trading companies. It is important to note, however, that for the companies, their income exceeded expenditure by £62,715 compared with £1,046 in 2012-2013. Administrative costs, at £109,498, were very slightly lower (by just under 1%) than those in 2013 of £110,568, despite inflation running at around 2.5% a year. It appears increasingly that these costs represent a minimum. Further reductions could be achieved only by reducing the level and quality of service to members.

1.8 Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for the year

A deficit of £7,974 has been recorded for this year compared with that for last year of £76,040. As in earlier years the deficit was met by the sale of investments though on a smaller scale than in previous years.

1.9 Other recognised gains and losses

The market value of the Society's investments rose by £112,275 from £2,113,401 to £2,225,676, around 5.5%. This is well in line with the national picture of the state of the market over the last year.

1.10 The Society's assets at 31 August 2014

The value of the Society's assets at the end of the year has increased overall by £134,301 and now stands at a total of £2,667,508.

Notes on the Consolidated Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2014

This shows the make-up of the Society's current assets and liabilities. Tangible fixed assets (£292,895) include the value of the lease on

the Society's headquarters building, the fixtures and fittings therein, and its trophies, medals and library. Investments stand at £2,225,676 (see 1.9). The net current assets amounting to £148,937, compared with £123,621 last year, include: stocks (mostly books) of £61,544; debts outstanding in the Society's favour (£62,024); and cash, either in hand or banked (£94,158). These total £217,726 from which sum must be subtracted the Society's debts, currently standing at £68,789.

The section on Income Funds shows the breakdown between Restricted and Unrestricted Funds. Restricted Funds can be used only for the objects of the charity within conditions specified by the donor. The Revaluation Reserve is the result of the successive annual revaluations of investments, trophies, etc.

Commentary

In many ways 2013-2014 has been a very satisfactory year for the Society from a financial point of view. This year's accounts show a deficit of expenditure over income of £7,974, significantly smaller than that of last year (£76,040). As in past years that deficit has been met by the sale of investments, albeit on a reduced scale.

Conclusion

Nothing has changed during 2013-2014, however, to vary last year's conclusions in any significant way. Overall, the accounts show that the Society is in a relatively healthy financial position with significant investments and that

those investments are continuing to increase in value. Nevertheless, it remains that members' subscriptions represent only a relatively small part of the Society's income and expenditure, only around 20% during the last year. The existence of the investments cushions the year-on-year losses but, in doing so, it also camouflages the fact that the AGS cannot run on its current level of membership subscriptions. The persistent gap between regular income and levels of expenditure is probably not sustainable other than in the short term. Although the gap this year was relatively small, that is largely the result of exceptionally successful trading by the two subsidiary companies that is only supportable with the use of professional staff. Although very encouraging, there is no strong reason to suppose that it is a position that can be reproduced consistently.

If the high quality and volume of services and activities enjoyed by members is to be maintained, there is no long-term solution that does not include a strong and enduring commitment by the current membership as a whole to the recruitment of new members. That services to members have to be subsidised to the extent they are by investments and trading is not a satisfactory state for the AGS to be in. The Society does need to consider where its future best lies in its relationship with the wider world.

**John Galloway, Hon. Treasurer,
November 2014**

Independent auditor's report to the Trustees of the Alpine Garden Society

We have examined the summarised financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2014 which are comprised of the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the Auditor

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the charities SORP.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full annual financial statements and Trustees' Annual Report. We conducted our

work in accordance with Bulletin 2008/3 issued by the Auditing Practices Board. Our report on the full annual financial statements describes the basis of our opinion on those financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of the Alpine Garden Society for the year ended 31 August 2014.

Jonathan Marston FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) for and on behalf of Kendall Wadley LLP	27 Sansome Walk Worcester WR1 1NU 25 October 2014
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Summarised consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2014

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2014 £	Total 2013 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Incoming resources from generated funds				
Voluntary income				
Subscriptions	149,960		149,960	141,498
Donations and gifts	3,671	11,799	15,470	1,901
Activities for generating funds				
Advertising income – The Alpine Gardener	8,663		8,663	7,476
Seed distributions	13,734		13,734	15,236
Other activities for generating funds	47,346	3,248	50,594	45,577
Conference income	23,875		23,875	
Trading income from subsidiary companies	392,399		392,399	75,215
Investment income	60,404	5,212	65,616	65,767
Total incoming resources	700,052	20,259	720,311	352,670
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Charitable activities				
Cost of generating funds				
Staff costs	109,498		109,498	110,568
The Alpine Gardener journal	58,541	11,799	70,340	78,768
Costs of major exhibits	10,957		10,957	10,003
Seed distribution costs	9,636		9,636	10,928
Other direct costs	98,829	29,463	128,292	83,084
Other support costs	57,955		57,955	51,573
Conference costs	15,002		15,002	
Direct expenditure of subsidiary companies	319,684		319,684	74,169
Governance costs	6,871	50	6,921	9,617
Total resources expended	686,973	41,312	728,285	428,710
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources	13,079	(21,053)	(7,974)	(76,040)
Other recognised gains and losses				
Gains on investment	131,118	11,157	142,275	240,656
Net movement in funds	144,197	(9,896)	134,301	164,614
Fund balances at 1 September 2013	2,338,287	194,920	2,533,207	2,368,591
Fund balances at 31 August 2014	2,482,484	185,024	2,667,508	2,533,207

Summarised consolidated balance sheet as at 31 August 2014

	2014 £	2013 £
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	292,895	296,185
Investments	2,225,676	2,113,401
	2,518,571	2,409,586
Current Assets		
Stocks	61,544	88,379
Debtors	62,024	54,102
Cash at bank and in hand	94,158	80,463
	217,726	222,944
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(68,789)	(99,323)
Net Current Assets	148,937	123,621
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	2,667,508	2,533,207
Income Funds		
Restricted Funds		
E F Hendry Bequest Fund	172,527	162,177
Wilscher Fund	10,386	13,632
Book Bursary		17,000
David Harding Foundation	2,111	2,111
	185,024	194,920
Unrestricted Funds		
Designated Funds	325,716	308,881
Other charitable funds		
General Funds	1,173,600	1,175,579
Revaluation Reserve	983,168	853,827
	2,156,768	2,029,406
	2,667,508	2,533,207

Trustees' Statement

The summarised accounts contained in this report are extracted from the financial statements prepared by the Society and approved by the Trustees on 25 October 2014. The full financial statements were externally scrutinised by Kendall Wadley LLP, the Society's statutory auditors, and give an unqualified opinion. The full financial statements will be submitted to the Charity Commission in due course.

The summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Society. For further information the Trustees Report, the full financial statements and the statutory auditors' report on those financial statements should be consulted. Copies can be obtained from: AGS Centre, Avon Bank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP. – Christine McGregor (Director)

News from the AGS Trustee Board

This is a summary of some of the items discussed by the Trustee Board at meetings earlier this year, intended to keep members up to date with developments.

- Budget issues are under constant review. The Trustees heard that savings had been made with the cost of printing the journal and with telephone charges. Staff costs have been kept to a minimum. Solar panels at Pershore have helped to generate additional income. With regard to promotional activities, the Board agreed not to stage a display garden at Chelsea in 2015 but to opt for a promotion stand instead, based on the fact that the Society achieves a better recruitment result from such a stand.
- Members discussed the Plant Awards Supplement and approved a charge of £8.00. The AGS is the only organisation that publishes a full written report of the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee awards. This is costly to produce and the Society can no longer afford to offer it free of charge. Also, only a small minority of members request this publication.
- The Board revisited the discussions about the Society's strategy and reaffirmed the points previously agreed. To summarise, these are: to seek to reduce central overheads (extensive savings have already been achieved). To continue to enhance the journal while keeping costs to a minimum. To reverse the trend of declining membership – a problem experienced by many other similar organisations (although our membership over the past two years has been fairly stable). National shows must improve their financial performance and increase visitor numbers in the hope of recruiting more members. Overall the aim is to cut the annual deficit from its previously high level to a more sustainable figure. This has been achieved in the 2013-2014 financial year, but mainly as a result of the performance of the two limited companies (AGS Publications and AGS Tours). This performance cannot be relied upon and the situation will be carefully monitored.
- There is still no consensus of opinion on changing the name of the Society. Strong feelings had been expressed at the AGM in 2013 that the current name no longer reflected the wider interests of members and could inhibit the recruitment of new members. The topic is still under consideration.
- Following on from the letter sent to all Local Groups regarding the Society's financial situation, responses are being collated and a report is in preparation.
- Further development of the AGS Encyclopaedia on the website is in hand. User experience is being reviewed and this will help inform future changes to the site.
- The Board continues to be much exercised with ways of balancing the costs of running all the activities of the Society with the income from subscriptions. Recruitment remains a priority and good publicity is a key factor.

In 2015 the Wirral and West Cheshire Group will celebrate its diamond anniversary, the main event being a celebratory meal in February.

Founded in 1955 by Murray Bartlett, his brother Jeffery and two sisters, Ursula and Molly, among others, we have come a long way since our first meetings in a local public house, subsequently moving to a wooden hut, upgrading to a brick-built hall and then onto the newly built Visitor Centre at Ness Botanic Gardens in 1984. Following a change in management we found Ness too limiting for our needs and moved to our present, comfortably intimate venue in Burton Village.

The Society's Travel Award scheme was established by our founder, and the Murray Bartlett Memorial Lecture always heralds the start of our new season. Many of our activities would still be familiar to past members, now since departed, but in recent years innovative ideas have ensured a regular and slightly increasing membership.

AGS Group celebrates diamond anniversary

These include a very successful, monthly plant competition for The Pen-y Llwyn Trophy with the highest aggregate points for the season winning the exhibitor the claret jug. A July field trip to places of natural interest in the North-West keeps members in touch, as do our appearances at several plant sales in the area. These help to defray costs and publicise the Society to growers of all persuasions.

Embarking on this special anniversary year, we are reminded of those who have been our pillars of strength in the past and look forward to a long and fulfilling future extolling the many virtues of our beloved alpine.



Members of the Wirral and West Cheshire Group enjoying a social evening

Designing and Planting a Woodland Garden

by Keith Wile

**Designing
and Planting
a Woodland
Garden**

Plants and combinations
that thrive in the shade

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Postage and packing: UK £3.50 EU airmail £9.50

Rest of the world surface £9.50 (airmail add £6.50 to surface price)

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Name on card:

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Start date: Expiry date: Issue No. (some debit cards):

Send this form to AGS Centre, Avon Bank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP, UK.

Order code	Title and author	Members' price
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032	Alpine Gardening for Beginners by John Good	£6.50
772	Alpines from Mountain to Garden by Richard Wilford	£23.00
028	Alpine Plants: Ecology for Gardeners by John Good & David Millward	£12.00
292	Alpines: An Essential Guide by Michael Mitchell	£15.00
024	Alpines in Pots (New Edition) by Kath Dryden	£4.00
026	Crevice Gardening by Zdenek Zvolanek	£5.50
857	Growing Alpines in Containers by John Good	£5.00
033	Portraits of Alpine Plants by Robert Rolfe **LOW PRICE**	£15.00
453	The Himalayan Garden by Jim Jermyn	£20.00
729	The Rock Garden Plant Primer by Christopher Grey-Wilson	£16.00
SPECIFIC GENERA		
019	Androsace: The Genus by G.F. Smith & D.B. Lowe **LAST FEW COPIES**	£8.00
694	Bleeding Hearts, Corydalis & Their Relatives by Mark C Tebbitt et al	£20.00
277	Dwarf Campanulas by Graham Nicholls	£12.00
643	Clematis (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by Mary Toomey	£12.00
374	Epimedium: The Genus by William T Stearn	£36.50
271	Hellebores: A Comprehensive Guide by C. Colston Burrell and J. Knott Tyler	£20.00
248	Heucheras & Heucherellas by Dan Heims & Grahame Ware	£16.00
288	Hostas (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by Diana Grenfell & Michael Shadrack	£12.00
778	The Book of Little Hostas by Kathy Guest Shadrack & Michael Shadrack	£14.50
881	Meconopsis by Christopher Grey-Wilson **NEW TITLE**	£54.50
283	Peony Rockii and Gansu Mudan by Will McLewin and Dezhong Chen	£25.00
799	Phlox: A Natural History and Gardener's Guide by James H Locklear	£28.00
669	The Daylily: A Guide for Gardeners by John Peat and Ted Petit	£18.00
282	The Genus Roscoea by Jill Cowley	£33.50
885	The Plant Lover's Guide to Dahlias by Andy Vernon **NEW TITLE**	£14.50
700	Saxifrages: A Definitive Guide by Malcolm McGregor	£28.00
021	Silver Saxifrages by Beryl Bland **LOW PRICE**	£3.00
766	Thyme Handbook by Margaret Easter and Susie White	£8.00
BULBOUS PLANTS		
843	A Gardener's Guide to Bulbs by Christine Skelmersdale	£20.00

Order code	Title and author	Members' price
866	A Gardener's Guide to Snowdrops by Freda Cox	£28.00
599	Autumn Bulbs by Rod Leeds	£8.00
027	Bulbous Plants of Turkey and Iran by Peter Sheasby	£25.00
034	Bulbs of Greece (A Field Guide to the) by Christopher Grey-Wilson	£20.00
280	Buried Treasures by Janis Ruksans	£24.00
653	Calochortus: Mariposa Lilies & their Relatives **LOW PRICE**	£5.00
798	Crocuses: A Complete Guide to the Genus by Janis Ruksans	£24.00
268	Cyclamen by Christopher Grey-Wilson (booklet) **LOW PRICE**	£2.50
864	Daffodil by Noel Kingsbury	£14.50
852	Genus Cyclamen edited by Brian Mathew	£72.00
	Special postage rates: UK £13.50; EU £16; rest of the world £19 (airmail £31)	
795	Galanthomania by Hanneke van Dijk	£23.00
317	Kirstenbosch Gardening Series – Grow Bulbs by Graham Duncan	£15.50
241	Kirstenbosch Gardening Series – Grow Agapanthus by Graham Duncan	£4.50
240	Kirstenbosch Gardening Series – Grow Nerines by Graham Duncan	£5.00
880	The Genus Erythronium by Chris Clennett **NEW TITLE**	£40.00
861	The Genus Lachenalia by Graham Duncan	£96.00
882	The Plant Lover's Guide to Snowdrops by Naomi Slade **NEW TITLE**	£14.50
860	Growing Garden Bulbs by Richard Wilford	£5.50
608	Pocket Guide to Bulbs by John E Bryan	£12.00
848	Snowdrops by Gunter Waldorf	£12.00
246	Snowdrops Booklet by Jackie Murray (second edition, 2011)	£3.50
859	The Genus Tulipa by Diana Everett **NEW TITLE**	£54.50
266	Tulips (Species & Hybrids for the Gardener) by Richard Wilford	£10.00
868	Wild Flowers of Turkey: Bulbous Plants by Yasemin Konuralp	£25.00
	ORCHIDS	
265	Growing Hardy Orchids by John Tullock	£16.00
804	Growing Hardy Orchids by Philip Seaton et al	£10.00
846	Hardy Cypripedium by Werner Frosch and Phillip Cribb	£36.00
698	Ophrys: The Bee Orchids of Europe by H Aerenlund Pedersen & N Faurholdt	£27.00
274	Orchids of Britain & Ireland (A Field & Site Guide) by Anne & Simon Harrap	£24.00
597	Orchids of the British Isles by Michael Foley & Sidney Clarke	£36.00

Order code	Title and author	Members' price
349	The Genus Cypripedium by Phillip Cribb	£58.50
	SUCCULENTS AND CACTI	
741	Cacti and Succulents for Cold Climates by Leo J Chance	£20.00
749	Succulent Container Gardens by Debra Lee Baldwin	£16.00
883	The Plant Lover's Guide to Sedums by Brent Horvath **NEW TITLE**	£14.50
264	Timber Press Guide to Succulent Plants of the World by Fred Dortort	£28.00
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588	Ornamental Grasses (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by Rick Darke	£12.00
589	Shade Perennials (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by W George Schmid	£12.00
725	Tall Perennials by Roger Turner	£20.00
261	The Explorer's Garden: Rare and Unusual Perennials by Daniel Hinkley	£12.00
	TREES & SHRUBS	
840	A Natural History of Conifers by Aljos Farjon	£24.00
775	Conifers (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by Richard L. Bitner	£12.00
652	Conifers for Gardens by Richard L Bitner	£32.00
621	Dirr's Encyclopedia Of Trees & Shrubs by Michael A Dirr	£40.00
746	Hardy Heathers from the Northern Hemisphere by E Charles Nelson	£48.00
755	Japanese Maples by JD Vertrees & Peter Gregory	£28.00
660	Japanese Maples (Timber Press Pocket Guide) by P Gregory & J C Vertrem	£12.00
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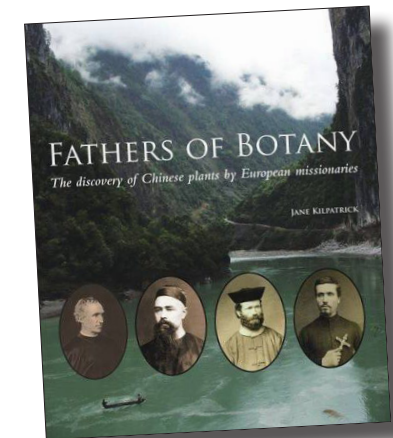
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Fathers of Botany: The discovery of Chinese plants by European missionaries, by Jane Kilpatrick

Many of the world's most beautiful ornamental plants such as magnolias, roses, rhododendrons, tree peonies, lilies and blue poppies have their origins in China.

In the mid-19th century, professional plant-hunters were dispatched by nurseries and botanic gardens to collect specimens from China for cultivation in Europe, and it is these adventurers who are often credited with the explosive bloom of Chinese flowers in the West. But as Jane Kilpatrick shows in *Fathers of Botany*, the first Westerners to come upon and document this bounty were in fact cut from a different cloth: the clergy.

Following the Opium Wars, European missionaries were the first explorers to press further into the Chinese interior and send home evidence of one of the richest and most varied floras ever seen, and it was their discoveries that caused a sensation among Western plantmen. Both men of faith and talented botanists alike, these missionaries lent their names to many of the plants they discovered, but their own stories disappeared into the leaf-litter of history. Drawing on their letters



and contemporary accounts, Jane unearths a lost chapter of botanical history by focusing on the lives of four French missionary botanists: Peres Armand David (of *Davidia involucrata* and discoverer of the giant panda), Jean Marie Delavay, Paul Guillaume Farges and Jean André Soulié, as well as a group of other French priests, Franciscan missionaries and a single German Protestant pastor, who all amassed significant plant collections. In so doing, the author reminds today's gardeners and botanists of the enormous debt owed to these obscure fathers of botany.

Cover price £40

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LIST OF AGS LOCAL GROUPS

The Alpine Garden Society has 47 Local Groups across England, Wales and Ireland. Most meet on a monthly basis and offer a varied programme of talks, garden visits, shows and social events. If you are not already a member of a Local Group (some members join more than one), please use this list to find those nearest to your home. A programme of Local Group events can be found on the AGS website. Groups are encouraged to send copies of their programmes to AGS Centre so that they can be included on the website.

BEDFORDSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr David Livermore, 6 Cambridge Road, Barley, Royston, SG8 8HN. Email: david.g.livermore@gmail.com. Meetings: Wilstead Village Hall, near Bedford, 7.30pm on 1st Monday of month, February to December. Programme on request. website: www.bedfordshirealpines.com

BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT

Hon. Sec: Mrs Sonia Morris, 55 Grange Road, Stourbridge, DY9 7LH. Tel: 01384 378609. Meetings: The Unitarian New Meeting Church, 31 Ryland Street, Five Ways, Birmingham, B16 8BL, on 2nd Friday of month, September, October, December and January to April. Birmingham Botanical Gardens Lecture, 3rd Thursday in August. Roy Elliott Memorial Lecture, 3rd Saturday in November. Garden visits March to August. Subscription £6, family £10. Visitors welcome.

BRISTOL

Hon. Sec: Cathy McLaren, 35 Quarrington Road, Horfield, BS7 9PJ. Tel: 0117 9513180 (only after 7pm). Email: cathymclaren75@gmail.com. Meetings: The Methodist Hall, Westbury-on-Trym, 7.30pm on 3rd Friday of month, September to May. Subscription £10 per person, visitors £2.

CHESHIRE EAST

Hon. Sec: Vacant (temporary contact Bob Worsley,

email: bob@homeinthegarden.co.uk). Meetings: Wilmslow Preparatory School, Grove Avenue, Wilmslow, 7.30pm usually on 3rd Monday of month, September to April. Summer outings. Subscription £10, family £18, visitors £2.

CHESHIRE WEST & WIRRAL

Hon. Sec: Peter Cunningham, 3 The Quillet, Neston, South Wirral, CH64 9QE. Tel: 0151 336 3407. Email: p.cunnington1@ntlworld.com. Meetings: Gladstone Village Hall, The Village, Burton, Neston, South Wirral, CH64 5TH, 7.15pm on 2nd Friday of month, September to May. Subscription £5. Visitors welcome.

CHESTERFIELD & DISTRICT

Hon. Sec: Mr Steven Spells, 120 Prospect Road, Bradway, Sheffield, S17 4JE. Tel: 0114 235 0125. Email: steve@sueandsteve.myzen.co.uk. Meetings: the Schoolroom, United Reformed Church, Cotton Mill Hill, Holymoorside, Chesterfield, 3pm on 2nd Sunday of month, September to May, Subscription £3.

CHILTERN

Hon. Sec: Stephen Cotton, 59 Haw Lane, Bledlow Ridge, Buckinghamshire, HP14 4JH. Tel: 01494 481863. Meetings: Great Kingshill Village Hall, near High Wycombe, 7.30pm on 2nd Friday of month, except June, July and August. Visitors very welcome. Subscription £6, family £9.

CLEVELAND

Hon. Sec: Mr Barry Winter, 92 Oxbridge Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 4HN. Tel: 01642 800373. Email: barry.winter@agsgroups.org. Monthly winter meetings. Subscription £4 single, £6 family; senior citizens £3 single, £5 family.

CORNWALL

Hon. Sec: Mrs Elsie Beamish, The Cottage, Carloggas, Penwithick, St Austell, PS26 8YS. Tel: 01726 850516. Meetings: St Marks Church Hall, Sticker, St Austell, 7.30pm on 3rd Wednesday of month except August and December. Garden visit in July. AGS members visiting Cornwall are very welcome to our meetings. Subscription £6, visitors £2.

COTSWOLD & MALVERN

Hon. Sec: Mrs Pam Turner, Bramblegarth, Forge Lane, Upleadon, Newent, GL18 1EF. Tel: 01531 820666. Meetings: Redmarley Village Hall, Redmarley, Gloucestershire, 7.30pm on 1st Wednesday of month, September to April, excluding January. Garden visits. Spring show on Easter Monday, Maisemore Village Hall, near Gloucester. Subscription £8, family £11, visitors £1.50.

DERBYSHIRE

Hon. Sec: David Charlton, 41 Cole Lane, Ockbrook, Derby, DE72 3RD. Tel: 01332 668915. Email: david.charlton41@btinternet.com. Meetings: Breadsall Memorial Hall, Breadsall, Derby, 7.30pm on 1st Wednesday of month, September to May. Garden visits. Subscription £5 per member.

DEVON – EXETER

Hon. Sec: Mrs Lorraine Birchall, Barratts Cottage, Clyst Hydon, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 2NQ. Tel: 01884 277614. Email: lorraine@talevalleynursery.co.uk. Meetings: Longdown Village Hall (on the Exeter to Moretonhampstead Road), Longdown Road, Nr Ide, Exeter, 7pm on 3rd Thursday of month except July and August. Subscription: AGS members £5, family £8, non-members £8, visitors £2 per meeting.

DEVON SOUTH

Hon. Sec: Andy Whorton, 30 Teignmouth Road, Holcombe, Dawlish, EX7 0JE. Tel: 01626 862455. Email: andy.whorton24@talktalk.net. Meetings: Dartmoor Lodge, Pear Tree Corss, Ashburton, 7.15pm for 7.30pm on 1st Wednesday of month, September to May. Subscription: AGS members £8/£12, non-members £10/£17, guests £2.

DORSET

Hon. Joint Secs: John and Christine Chappell, 3 Church Lane, Frampton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9NL. Tel: 01300 320247. E-mail: johnchappell321@btinternet.com. Meetings: Corfe Mullen Village Hall, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, 7.30 pm on 1st Thursday of month, September to April; 1st Friday in May. Subscriptions: AGS members £7, family £12;

non-AGS members £10, family £17; visitors £2.50 per meeting.

EPPING FOREST

Hon. Sec: Ms Kit Strange, 5A Hartham Road, Bruce Grove, London, N17 6RZ. Email: Kit.Strange@agsgroups.org. Meetings: Theydon Bois Village Hall, Theydon Bois, near Epping, Essex, CM16 7ER, on the 2nd Tuesday of month from September to May. Subscription £5 plus £2 a meeting.

ESSEX

Hon. Sec: Ruth Jones, Famile House, Wayside, Little Baddow, Essex CM3 4RS. Tel: 01245 227190. Meetings: New Village Hall, Church Road, Rawreth, near Wickford, 7.30pm on last Thursday of month except December. Subscription £3, partners £3.50, plus £2 per meeting. Guests £2.

HAMPSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Ben Parmee, 179 Hursley Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, SO53 1JH. Tel: 023 8026 5672. E-mail: ben179@hotmail.co.uk. Meetings: Chilworth Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, 7.30pm on 4th Thursday of month, September to April, 5th Thursday in May, 2nd Thursday in December. Subscription: AGS members £6, AGS family members £8; non-members £7, family £10; visitors £2.50.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Bernard Gane, 65 Ox Lane, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 4PH. Tel: 01582 761416. Meetings: Homewood Road United Reformed Church Hall, Homewood Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4BH (junction of Homewood Road and Sandpit Lane), 3pm usually 4th Saturday of month, September to May. website: www.hertsags.co.uk.

IRELAND – CORK

Hon. Sec: Mrs Hester Forde, Coosheen, 15 Johnstown Park, Glounthaune, Co Cork, Ireland. Tel: 00 353 21 4353855. E-mail: hesterforde@hotmail.com.

LIST OF AGS LOCAL GROUPS

IRELAND – DUBLIN

Hon Sec: Ms Mary O'Neill Byrne, Larch House, 44 Northumberland Avenue, Dun Ladghaire, Dublin. E-mail: mary.onb@agsgroups.org. Meetings at National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Co. Dublin, 8pm usually 3rd Thursday of month, September to May. See our website www.alpinegardensociety.ie/ for programme of activities. Subscription 12 euros, family 18 euros, student 5 euros.

IRELAND – ULSTER

Hon. Sec: Priscilla Dodd, Mill Cottage, 23 Seven Mile Straight, Muckamore, Co Antrim. Tel: 02894 463989. E-mail: pdmilcot16@yahoo.co.uk. website: www.alpinegarden-ulster.org.uk. Meetings: Main Hall, St Bride's Hall, Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast, 2.30pm on Saturdays, September to March. Summer garden visits. Subscription £9; family £14.

KENT EAST

Hon. Sec: Gillian Ingram, Copton Ash, 105 Ashford Road, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8XW. Tel: 01795 535919. Email: coptonash@yahoo.co.uk. Meetings: Lower Hardres & Nackington Village Hall, Street End, Canterbury, CT4 5NP, 7pm for 7.30pm on 2nd Friday of the month. Subscription £7, visitors £2.

MID KENT

Hon. Secs: John & Carolyn Millen, Spring Platt, Boyton Court Road, Sutton Valence, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 3BY. Tel: 01622 843383. E-mail: john.millen1@btinternet.com. Meetings: Madginford Village Hall, off Willington Street, Bearsted, 8pm on 1st Friday of month, September to May. Garden visit in June. Subscription £6, visitors £2.

KENT – TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Hon. Sec: Mrs Anne Hill, Hamptons, Blackhurst Lane, Tunbridge Wells, TW2 4QG. Tel: 01892 824813. Meetings: Main Hall, King Charles the Martyr Church, Warwick Park, Tunbridge Wells, 7.30 for 8pm on 1st Monday of the month, unless it falls on a Bank Holiday, then the 2nd Monday, September to May, with Group barabecue in June/July. Subscription £5, visitors £1.

KENT WEST

Hon. Sec: Mr Rodney Starmer, Strathmore, Tan House Road, Oxted, Surrey, RH0 9PE. Tel: 01883 713043. Meetings: Crofton Halls, Orpington (adjacent to Orpington Station), 7.30pm on second Tuesday of the month. Subscription £10.

LANCASHIRE EAST

Hon. Sec: Cliff Booker, 11 Horsefield Avenue, Whitworth, Rochdale, OL12 8SW. Tel: 01706 356385. Email: bookcliffo@aol.com. Meetings: Ramsbottom Civic Hall, near the junction of Bolton Street & Bridge Street, Ramsbottom, near Bury, usually on Mondays at 7.45pm, September to June. Summer outings. Subscription £1 plus room charge at each meeting. Lecture programme sent on request, SAE please. Visitors welcome.

LANCASHIRE NORTH

Hon. Sec: Mrs Liz Walsh, 3 Thirsk Road, Bowerham, Lancaster, LA1 4NF. Tel: 01524 36627. Meetings: Lancaster Methodist Church, Scotforth Road, Greaves, Lancaster, LA1 4TE, 7.30pm on 3rd Thursday of month, September to April. Summer outings. Subscription £6, family £9, visitors £3 [plus 50p per lecture at meetings].

LANCASHIRE SOUTH

Hon. Sec: Joan Vincent, 34 Burden Road, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside, CH46 6BQ. Tel: 0151 678 1621. Meetings: Emmanuel Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Southport, 2pm for 2.30pm usually on 2nd Saturday of month, September to April. Subscription £2, family £3.50.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Eric Webster, 25 Highfields Drive, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3JS. Tel: 01509 261626. E-mail: dozzelobro@tiscali.co.uk. Meetings: Braunstone Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone, Leicester, 7.30pm on 4th Wednesday of month, September to May. Subscription £5 per member.

LINCOLNSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Mark Childerhouse, The Gardens, 12 Vicarage Lane, Grasby, Barnetby, DN38

6AU. Tel: 01652 629122. Email: hen.chouse@btinternet.com. Meetings: New Waltham Village Hall, Station Road, New Waltham, Grimsby, 7.30pm on last Wednesday in most months. Website: www.alpinegardeners.co.uk

LONDON CENTRAL

Hon. Sec: Mr R Barker, Flat 2, 27 Great Ormond Street, London, WC1N 3JB. Tel: 07946 413258. E-mail: roy.barker@theforwardgroup.com. Meetings: Royal Horticultural Society, New Hall, Greycoat Street, London SW1, 6.15pm on 1st day of RHS shows, September to June. Programme on request. Visitors welcome.

LONDON WEST

Hon. Sec: John Humphries, Lodore, Star Hill, Hartley Wintney, RG27 8AQ. Tel: 01252 844078. E-mail: john.humphries@bull.co.uk. Meetings: Horsenden Hall, Perivale Community Centre, Horsenden Lane South, Perivale, Middlesex, UB6 7NP, 8pm for 8.15 pm on 4th Thursday of month, September to November and January to June. No meetings in December, July or August. Summer visits. Subscription £6, additional family member £3.50, visitors £2.

MID ANGLIA

Hon. Sec: Mrs Veronica Munson, The Priory, Flowton, Ipswich, IP8 4LH. Tel: 01473 658425. Meetings: Community House, Birdbrook, usually the 2nd Saturday of month. Garden meetings in summer. Subscription £2.

NORFOLK

Hon. Sec: Mrs Diane Blyth, 33 Stoke Road, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7NJ. Tel: 01508 494277. Meetings: Hetterset New Village Hall, Hetterset, Norwich, 7.30pm on 3rd Wednesday of month except January, July & August when meetings are held at different times and places. Subscription £5, visitors £1.

NORTHAMPTON

Hon. Sec: Geoffrey Oddy, 2 Hawthorn Drive, Brackley, Northamptonshire, NN13 6PA. Tel: 01280 700787. Email: jean.geoffoddy@btinternet.com. Meetings: Weston Favell Parish

Hall, Northampton, 7.30pm on 3rd Wednesday of month except August. Subscription £6, family £8. Non-AGS members £7, family £10.

NORTH EAST ENGLAND

[Northumberland & Durham]

Hon. Sec: Mr Terry Teal, Copse End, Ryton Village, Ryton, NE40 3PZ. Tel: 0191 413 2574. Meetings: St Mary's Church Hall, Ponteland, 7.30pm on 2nd Monday of month. Garden visits June & July. Subscription £8.

NOTTINGHAM

Hon. Sec: Mr Alwyn Foster, Otterpool, 4 Hillcrest Gardens, Burton Joyce, Nottingham, NG14 5DD. Tel: 0115 9312571. Meetings: Wollaton Park Community Association, Community Centre, Harrow Road, Wollaton Park, Nottingham, NG8 1FG, 7.30pm on 2nd Wednesday of month, September to May. Subscription £6, family £9 plus a meeting charge of 50p per attendee. Visitors £1.

OXFORD & DISTRICT

Hon. Sec: Mrs Celia Sawyer, South Lodge, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3RF. Tel: 01865 316229. Email: celia.sawyer@btinternet.com. Meetings: Exeter Hall, Kidlington, OX5 1AB, 7.30pm on 2nd Wednesday of month from September to April. Garden visits in summer. Subscription £5, visitors £2.

SHROPSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Les Jones, 26 Wharf Close, St Georges, Telford, TF2 9PX. Tel: 01952 619659. Meetings: Bayston Hill Memorial Hall, Lyth Hill Road, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, SY3 0EW, 7.30pm on 1st Tuesday of month, September to November and February to May.

SOMERSET

Hon. Sec: Richard Horswood, Freshfields, Fenny Bridges, Honiton, Devon, EX14 3BG. Tel: 01404 850868. E-mail: skrah@btinternet.com. Meetings: The Frank Bond Community Centre, 84 Mountway Road, Bishops Hull, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 5DS, 7.30pm on 4th Wednesday of month. Subscriptions: £6 single, £10 family, £1 visitors.

LIST OF AGS LOCAL GROUPS

SURREY EAST

Hon. Sec: Mr David Stephens, Green Hollow, South Terrace, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 2AQ. Tel: 01306 886302. Meetings: Christ Church Hall, Christ Church Road, Stamford Green, Epsom, KT19 8NE (¾ mile from Epsom Station, car park next to the Church), 7.30pm on 1st Tuesday of month. Occasional garden visits and field trips. Subscription £8.

WOKING & WEST SURREY

Hon. Sec: Mr James Lintott, 8 Liners Drive, Bramley, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0EJ. Tel: 01483 894056. Email: james.lintott@btinternet.com. Meetings: Mayford Village Hall, Saunders Lane, Mayford, Woking, Surrey, GU22 0NN, 7.30pm on 1st Thursday of month except June, July & August. Subscriptions: £10 single, £15 family, £2 visitors.

SUSSEX WEST

Hon. Sec: Diann M. Berry, 5 Balmoral Close, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7XQ. Tel: 01243 786254. Meetings: Donnington Parish Hall, Donnington, Chichester, 7.30pm on 2nd Monday of month, September to April. Subscriptions: £6 single, £11 family.

WALES NORTH

Hon. Sec: Mrs Pam Boardman, Bryn Llwyd, Rhosgadfan, Caernarfon, LL54 7LB. Tel: 01286 831194. Meetings: Llandygai Village Hall on 2nd Wednesday of month. [Note: The Len Beer Memorial Lecture in March is held at The Main Arts Lecture Theatre, College Road, Bangor]. Subscription £4, family £6.

WALES SOUTH

Hon. Sec: Mrs R. Wallis, Llwyn Ifan, Porthyrhyd, Carmarthen, SA32 8BP. Tel: 01267 275205. Meetings: Pencoed College, near Bridgend, 7pm usually 2nd or 3rd Wednesday or Friday of autumn and spring months. Phone for exact dates. Summer garden visits. Subscriptions: £6 single, £8 family, £1 visitors.

WARWICKSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mrs Jo Walker, 9 Bellamy Farm Road, Shirley, Solihull, B90 3DH. Tel: 0121 744 3129. Meetings: Bishopton School, Drayton Avenue, Stratford-on-Avon, 7.30pm usually on 4th Tuesday of month, September to May.

WILTSHIRE

Hon. Sec: Mr Grahame Fowkes, 14 Wells Close, Chippenham, SN14 0QD. Tel: 01249 654918. Email: fowkes810@btinternet.com. Meetings: Westbury Leigh Community Hall, on the main road through Westbury Leigh Village, 7.00 for 7.30pm on 2nd Friday of month, September to May. Subscriptions: £5 single, £8 family, plus £1 per meeting when there is a speaker.

YORKSHIRE WEST

Hon. Sec: Miss Liz Barber, 68 Eden Close, Woodthorpe, York, YO24 2RD. Tel: 01904 704459. Meetings: St Chad's Parish Centre, Otley Road, Leeds 16, 2.30pm on 2nd Saturday of month, September to May. Subscription: £15 single, £2 visitors.

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The steppe form of *Oxalis enneaphylla*

PATAGONIA

November 28-December 17, 2015
(approximate dates)

Leader: Martin Sheader

Cost: in the region of £4,600 including return flights from London (single supplement around £500).

This tour will be led by Martin Sheader, who has visited Patagonia many times and is the author of the AGS book, *Flowers of the Patagonian Mountains*.

The tour covers the far south of the Patagonian mainland, concentrating on the mountains and steppe of Argentina's Santa Cruz province, with a short detour to visit Chile's Torres del Paine National Park. We will stay in comfortable hotels and hosterias. The trip caters for those with an average level of fitness with only

a couple of moderate uphill climbs. We will visit in the austral spring, when the weather is usually dry and often windy. Temperatures vary, but are similar to the UK in spring, with occasional night frosts and with daytime temperatures cool to warm.

After a short visit to Torres del Paine National Park (Chile), the rest of the tour will be in Argentina, starting in Los Glaciares National Park and moving north to finish at Monte Zeballos. We should experience spectacular scenery and see abundant wildlife such as condors, guanacos, rheas, foxes and many species of flowering plants on both the steppe and in the mountains.

If you are interested in going on this tour please call the AGS centre. As with our last tour to Patagonia, demand is likely to be high so we would advise placing your name on the waiting list as soon as possible.

**For further information on this tour please contact AGS Centre
Phone 01386 554790 or email ags@alpinegardensociety.net**

UZBEKISTAN AND TAJIKISTAN

April 18-May 4, 2015
(approximate dates)

Leaders: Harry Jans & John Mitchell

Costs (all approximate): £3,800 per person including flights from London. £3,300 per person starting in Tashkent and ending in Dushanbe (no flights included). Single supplement £350.

This 17-day tour to see spring flowers starts in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and ends in Dushanbe (Tajikistan). We will begin by visiting the spectacular mosques and squares in Samarkand, which is perhaps the most famous city of modern Uzbekistan. The city centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After botanising on a pass near Samarkand, we will head towards Dushanbe which will be our base for several daily excursions. During these botanical excursions we will see plants such as *Fritillaria eduardii*, *F. bucharica*, *Iris bucharica*, *I. rosenbachiana*, *I. hoogiana* and *Dionysia involucrata*, to name but a few.

After Dushanbe we will drive towards Kulob and Kala Khumb. Here we will botanise in several valleys. In these areas we will find *Tulipa linifolia*, *T. praestans*, *Iris korolkowii*, *I. darwasica*, *Colchium luteum*, *C. kesselringii*, *Crocus korolkowii*, *Eremurus* and many others.

The tour will be by coach for the first four days. In Tajikistan we will use jeeps all the way because road conditions vary from tarmac to dirt tracks.



Tulipa linifolia and, below, *Dionysia involucrata*



Accommodation will be in three-star hotels or the best available pensions.

The tour is limited to 20 participants plus two leaders and bookings will be processed in order of receipt. If you intend to book your own flights, please do not do so until we have confirmed there are sufficient participants for the tour to go ahead.

For further information on this tour please contact AGS Centre
Phone 01386 554790 or email ags@alpinegardensociety.net



A view above
Fuente Dé and
Saxifraga felineri



PICOS DE EUROPA

May 23-June 1, 2015

Leader: Christopher Grey-Wilson

Cost: In the region of £700 (excluding flights and car hire)

This is a two-centre tour in the heart of the Picos National Park. Our first centre is the delightful mountain village of Tudes, close to the medieval town of Potes, the regional capital of the southern Picos.

The accommodation is in excellent self-catering apartments with a good range of facilities. Self-catering, however, is not a requirement because there are plenty of restaurants and cafes in Potes, ten minutes drive away.

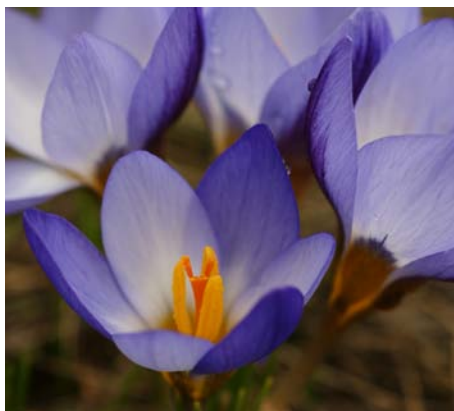
Tudes is surrounded by glorious flower meadows with numerous orchids and some of the specialities of the

Picos region. From Tudes there will be excursions to the high mountains above Fuente Dé and the *Narcissus* meadows of the Puerto de san Glorio. There will be ample time for walking and photography, as well as evening plant sessions highlighting the 'finds of the day'.

The second centre will be Covadonga, in the north-west of the Picos, where mountain lakes and entrancing mountain scenery are a focal point for the flower lover. The accommodation will be in a local hotel, with excursions to Valdeon (via the Puerto de Pandetrave) and the Puerto de Tarna.

The tour will start at Stansted Airport (except for those wishing to drive to the Picos overland). Participants will share self-drive cars, hired from Santander Airport. This is an easy and relaxing tour, but participants should be prepared for mountain walks and variable mountain weather.

For further information on this tour please contact AGS Centre
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Crocus biflorus subsp. *pulchricolor* and, right, a colony of *Cyclamen coum*



NORTH-WEST TURKEY

March 28-April 4, 2015

Leaders: Chris Gardner & Eylül Dizdaroğlu

Cost: From London, £1,985
Izmir to Istanbul, £1,685

Behind Izmir (Smyrna of the ancients), drifts of *Anemone coronaria* populate the lower slopes of Boz Dağ, and along higher roads are delicate *Corydalis wendelboi* and golden *Crocus chrysanthus*.

In the mountains of Bithynia we'll stop to enjoy golden *Crocus flavus*, yellow and plum *Iris attica* and, among moss-covered boulders, a carpet of *Galanthus gracilis*. On Uludağ are thousands of *Crocus herbortii* and *Crocus biflorus* subsp. *pulchricolor*, the latter varying from lavender to deep purple or even

white. Under the trees at beautiful Abant are carpets of *Cyclamen coum* and *Galanthus plicatus* subsp. *byzantinus*. Meadows are studded with rare *Crocus abantensis*, whose pale blue blooms compete for memory-card space with deep yellow *Crocus olivieri* and the dew-laden lilac flowers of *Corydalis caucasica*.

The Marly hills are home to the lovely *Muscari adillii*, only recently discovered, and named for your guide's father-in-law! Flowering in red clay soil is *Fritillaria fleischeriana* and in nearby pine woods *Hyacinthella micrantha*.

Call Greentours on 01298 83563, email enquiries@greentours.co.uk or visit the website at www.greentours.co.uk

Iris medwedewii and, below, *Iris sari*



ARARAT: AZERBAIJAN & EASTERN TURKEY

April 27-May 9, 2015

Leaders: Kurt Vickery, Oron Peri & Eylül Dizdaroğlu

Cost: From London, £3,515
Baku to Diyarbakir, £3,085

This is the heartland of the *Oncocyclus* irises, from furry-falled *Iris paradoxa* to mighty *Iris gatesii*. Ararat is the axis on which the tour revolves. To its east is tiny Nakhchivan, a beautiful Azerbaijani enclave that is home to the magnificent dark flowers of *Iris lycotis*.

Multi-hued *Corydalis seisumsiana* and *Fritillaria crassifolia* bloom in the mountain meadows of Batabat and

there are literally millions of impressive *Iris imbricata*. Ararat's slopes have magnificent shows of *Iris elegantissima* while Van's steppes host blue-purple *Iris barnumiae* and variable *Iris sari*.

A million powder-blue puschkinias bloom all the way up the Karabet Pass, mixing with deep cerise *Merendera kurdica*, bright mauve-pink *Tulipa humilis*, yellow, green, maroon or butterscotch fritillarias and scarlet diphelypaeas.

The tour starts with *Iris acutiloba*, close by Baku's Caspian shore. We'll explore the Talysh Mountains, where alongside *Fritillaria kotschyana* are *Iris grossheimii*, the elegant pale flowers of *Iris lineolata* and gorgeous *Iris medwedewii*. If we are lucky we'll see the last flowers of *Paeonia mlokosewitschii*.

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

May 2-15, 2015

Leaders: Paul Cardy & Vanessa Handley

Cost: From London, £3,995
San Francisco to San Francisco, £3,375

Coastal redwood groves, sagebrush-covered hillsides, the snowy Cascades Range and the unspoilt Klamath coast – the western seaboard of the United States is home to a range of habitats that boast a rich flora.

There are castillejas, penstemons, phloxes and meadows of blue camassias, not to mention a multitude of irises and kaleidoscopic *Calochortus*, including *C. elegans* (the elegant cat's ear), *C. amabilis* (the golden fairy lantern), the etched blooms of *C. superbis*, rich pink *C. splendens*, furry *C. tolmiei*, *C. monophyllus* and *C. luteus*.

Lilium maritimum holds out beautiful red blooms, though arguably *L. pardalinum* is even more spectacular.

We'll see *Erythronium californicum*, *E. oregonum*, *E. purpurascens* and great swathes of the creamy white *E. citrinum*.

Fritillaries will include *Fritillaria affinis*, *F. atropurpurea*, *F. glauca* and the striking scarlet *F. recurva*.

Colonies of carnivorous *Darlingtonia californica* carpet bogs alongside the Californian lady's slipper orchid. *Cypripedium californicum*. We'll see the hummingbird-pollinated firecracker flower, *Dichelostemma ida-maia*, and the perfect little orchid *Calypso bulbosa*.



Fritillaria recurva and, below, *Calochortus luteus*



Saxifraga flagellaris subsp. *flagellaris* and, right, *Lilium monadelphum* var. *szovitsianum*

GEORGIA

June 28-July 11, 2015

Leaders: Shamil Shetekauri, Kurt Vickery & Oron Peri

Cost: From London, £2,595
Tbilisi to Tbilisi, £2,195.

Summer in the wild untamed Greater Caucasus is the perfect time to assimilate fully Georgia's breathtaking floral diversity. *Lilium kesselringianum* blooms with many beautiful delphiniums, foxgloves and monkshoods in meadows on the volcanic Javakheti Plateau.

Dianthus raddeanus glows pink from rocky outcrops, where red *Sedum sempervivoides* blooms with clusters of *Campanula aucheri*. Yellow globe orchids and endemic *Gladiolus dzavakheticus* mix with pink and yellow centaureas. The range of campanulas is impressive and includes several delicate rock-dwelling species such as



Campanula petrophila. Pink and deep purple primulas (as well as creamy-white *Primula bayernii*) bloom alongside azure *Corydalis alpina*, yellow *Corydalis emmanuelii* and gentians. Steel-blue swertias and shining red louseworts line sinuous streams. In scenic Racha the subalpine meadows are alive with many species of geraniums, inulas and salvias as well as *Lilium monadelphum* var. *szovitsianum*, dracocephalums, *Polemonium caucasicum* and the strange primula relative *Sredinskya grandis*. Higher up you will find *Paeonia wittmanniana* alongside the rare *Daphne pseudosericea*.

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Subscriptions of members joining after July 31 are valid until the end of the following calendar year. The membership year runs from January 1 to December 31 and subscriptions are renewable on October 1 for the following year. Direct Debit subscriptions become due annually in the quarter that you joined.

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