INTRODUCTION

Botanic garden horticulturists have a wealth of knowledge about plants and how to grow them yet, until now, there has not been a suitable journal in which to convey this knowledge. *Sibbaldia* has been written by botanic garden horticulturists primarily for other botanic garden horticulturists, but I hope it will also appeal to a wider audience including horticultural students and plant enthusiasts. Its aim is to spread information about plant introduction, cultivation and performance, conservation, botanic garden management, policies and legislation covering botanic gardens and descriptions of new projects or designs.

Botanic garden horticulturists do a good job yet their contribution and worth are frequently undervalued. I believe that the importance and role of these horticulturists will undoubtedly increase with time particularly, for example, with the adoption of international agreements such as the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. To rise to these challenges, though, we need to be well-qualified, well-informed and highly professional in all that we do. I hope that *Sibbaldia* will give a voice to that specialist type of horticulture that is practiced in botanic gardens and play a small part in increasing the knowledge that is so vital to success.

This first issue carries articles on a practical re-introduction project, the cultivation of six alpine taxa, a faster, more targeted approach to verification to run alongside our existing verification process, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation that is set to have implications for all botanic gardens, the repatriation of rhododendrons to China, the performance of some lesser-known eastern Himalayan plants and management ideas for *ad hoc,* conservation-interest plants.

At the moment the intention is to produce one issue every 12 to 18 months. In the medium to longer term, however, and depending on popularity, I would like to produce more frequent issues, invite contributions from other botanic garden horticulturists, improve the quality, include illustrations and publish the journal on the web. In the meantime I would be pleased to hear your views and comments.

David Rae
Director of Horticulture and Editor