



# Beechgrove Garden

Factsheet 2 – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017



Welcome to Beechgrove for the second factsheet of the season. Jim, Carole and George were talking about the hawthorn hedge which had been hacked back quite severely over the last two winters. One side during the winter of 2015/16 and the second side over last winter. The regrowth has shown that it is possible to be quite severe with this hedging and it will still grow back.



There has been a bit of a change in temperatures since last week. Temperatures had reached 18–19°C in some places at the weekend, but it was feeling much cooler today. However, the increased temperature had brought out the cherry blossom and an amazing red colour of Peach blossom too which George would grow purely for the blossom itself. Promise of a bumper crop to come soon we hope.





#### Featured varieties

Cherry 'Sweetheart'

Peach 'Melred'



He wanted to put an end to the argument that onions which are planted as setts don't keep well over winter.



He illustrated this by showing some of his own onions which he had grown from setts which had been overwintered perfectly well in his garage. He explained that the secret is in drying out the harvested onions so that all moisture is removed before storing them. It has nothing to do with growing onions from setts or seeds. Jim prefers to grow from setts as seedlings are more difficult to deal with. The planted onion setts will be put into a cold frame and then planted out into the vegetable plot in mid-May. By growing from setts it also means that the onions will be 6 weeks ahead of anything grown from seed.



#### Greenhouse Work



Jim's first task of the day in the greenhouse, was to plant some onion setts into cells in trays.





Jim then moved onto plug plants. A new variety of Salvia called 'Vista Red' had just arrived by post and were in good nick. He removed the plug plants from their packaging and planted each into a cell tray. As the plug plants were already quite moist you can leave the watering for a day or two after planting, they also need good light to get established. Lots of plugs will be arriving at this point of the year and can be treated in exactly the same way.



Jim had a bit of fun with some broad beans. He experimented with the positions of the seed when sown to see if this made any difference to germination. He had 3 cell trays with seeds in each tray being sown in different positions – end down, other end down on the flat, and on their side. All the seeds were then watered with a larger holed rose head on the watering can to avoid disturbing the seeds.



Finally Jim pricked out some 'stretched' plants and potted them on. These had grown tall and leggy as they had been left for too long in the greenhouse. He potted up some leggy French marigolds, burying the long stems a bit deeper into the compost. They will be watered in and will need a bit of time before they get going.

### Featured seeds and plants

Broad bean 'Oscar'

Broad bean 'The Sutton'

Courgette 'Romanesco'

Onion 'Sturon'

Pot Marigold 'Key Lime'

Salvia 'Vista Red'

### Fruit Cage



At the end of last season, George and Carole were worried about the health of some of the fruit in



the fruit cage and they thought it could have been caused by drainage issues. As a result four pits were dug in different parts of the raised beds to find out what was happening .



Three of the pits drained well however one did not. This has consistently been the slowest to drain based on observations by the gardening team over winter. We know that there are drainage problems and waterlogging through the Beechgrove site, and we have addressed this in some areas by increasing the drainage.

The solutions in the fruit cage are either to put in new drainage system (very expensive) or to build up the raised beds to a height of 0.5m (1.5 feet).



Then it was onto to another problem – rabbits! They got into the fruit cage during the winter and have eaten the bark at the base of the apple trees. One tree has been totally ring barked. That means that all of the bark right round the stem had been removed, and that may well mean death to the tree as this interrupts the flow of nutrients

and water from the roots to the tip of the tree. Sometimes they can be saved so George advised the gardening team to put cling film around the damaged area.



This has acted like a mini-greenhouse and stopped the damaged areas from drying out. In time this might callous over hopefully this might save the tree.



One apple tree had died completely possibly it was affected by canker. A replacement of the same apple variety was planted in its place. In order to avoid 'replant disorder', where any one plant is replaced with another of the same in the same spot, George applied mycorrhizal fungal powder to the roots.



Apple 'James Grieve'

Apple 'Katy'

Apple 'Keswick Codlin'

Apple 'Lass o' Gowrie'

Apple 'Spartan'

Apple 'Stobo Castle'

Apple 'Sunset'

There were 3 different types of rootstocks planted in this bed in the Fruit Cage:

- Extremely dwarf (M27 rootstock)
- Dwarfing (M9 rootstock)
- Semi-dwarf (MM106 rootstock)



The same varieties of the semi dwarfing rootstock (MM106) have just been planted to add to the dwarfing and extremely dwarf rootstock so they can easily be compared.

#### **Apple varieties (from Scottish Fruit Trees)**

Apple 'Discovery'



#### **Pond banking**



The new upper pond bank created last year along with the redevelopment of the main pond effectively is an island border and as such requires a slightly different planting approach because the plants are viewed from all sides. It also becomes a harmoniser to unify the top with the bottom of the ornamental part of the garden.

Rather than taking the more established traditional route which would be a scalloped shaped area (which you can delineate by sand or a hosepipe) and the tallest plants at the back, and gradually tier down to the smallest plants at the front.





Chris wanted to play with a structured border of loose drifts and ribbons which needed to marry together the lower and upper part of the garden.



Each drift is a combination of 3–5 plant and grass varieties to form an informal structure and 'community of plants'. Chris arranged 8 ribbons of mutually compatible plants to create a total effect that can be viewed from all 4 sides.



Each ribbon will for example be composed of: a grass to give something willowy and airy; a structural plant to give colour throughout the winter, some rounded herbaceous and then a mercurial (more spreading an 'ankle tickler' herbaceous to flow through and mingle,



The density of planting was 3 – 5 plants per square metre.



#### Featured plants

*Actaea simplex* 'Black Negligee'  
*Actaea pachypoda* 'Misty Blue'  
*Amsonia salicifolia*  
*Asclepias incarnata* 'Cinderella'  
*Astrantia* 'Roma'  
*Baptisia australis*  
*Calamagrostis brachytricha*  
*Echinacea pallida*  
*Echinacea* 'Rubinglow'  
*Erigeron karvinskianus*  
*Eryngium agavifolium*  
*Eryngium giganteum* 'Silver Ghost'  
*Eryngium pandanifolium* 'Physic Purple'  
*Eupatorium perfoliatum*  
*Eupatorium purpureum* 'Riesenschirm'  
*Gaura* 'Rosyjane'  
*Geranium* 'Light Dilys'  
*Helenium* 'Rubinzweg'  
*Molinia* 'Poul Petersen'  
*Monarda* 'Scorpion'  
*Panicum* 'Heavy Metal'  
*Panicum* 'Warrior'  
*Pennisetum alopecuroides*

*Penstemon* 'Heavenly Blue'  
*Perovskia* 'Little Spire'  
*Phlomis tuberosa* 'Amazona'  
*Rudbeckia* 'Herbstsonne'  
*Rudbeckia maxima*  
*Sanguisorba canadensis*  
*Sanguisorba officinalis*  
*Saponaria officinalis* 'Graciella White'  
*Schizachyrium scoparium*  
*Sedum* 'Matrona'  
*Sporobolus heterolepis*  
*Stachys officinalis* 'Hummelo'  
*Stipa pseudoichu* (syn. *Jarava ichu*)  
*Tradescantia* 'Concorde Grape'  
*Trifolium rubens*  
*Veronica gentianoides*  
*Veronicastrum* 'Diane' (white)  
*Veronicastrum* 'Fascination'  
*Yucca filamentosa*



Verbena 'Endurascap' was supposed to be hardy down to  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Sadly it looked as if this plant had not survived the winter outside at Beechgrove and the lowest temperature was only  $-6^{\circ}\text{C}$ , so Carole decided to cut back the plant hard to see if it would spring into life. She had also dug up a stock plant as an insurance policy last year and this had been overwintered in the polytunnel.



## Half Hardy Perennials



Last year the summer bedding display comprised of a range of half hardy perennials some of which were lifted and potted up to keep them as stock plants over the winter.



The Verbena stock plant was looking much more healthy and green in the Keder greenhouse where it had spent the winter along with





Agyranthemum, Osteospermum and Geranium. These half-hardy plants are frost tender, i.e. they will not survive frost, and so they have been kept at 5–7°C over winter in this polytunnel.

Now is the time to take softwood cuttings for new plants this summer. At this time of year they tend to root quickly but can lose a lot of moisture quickly. It is best to take cuttings in the morning and then keep them turgid in an atmosphere of high humidity in a polybag or propagator. Here's a step-by-step guide:



Select plant material for cutting – ideally 1–2 inches in length – and cut off with a sharp pair of secateurs below a leaf node;



Take off the bottom 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of leaves from the cutting be careful not to damage the stem;

Trim the end of the cutting with a sharp knife;



Dip the end of the cutting into rooting hormone;



Plant the cutting around the edge of the pot in a mixture of 50% cutting compost and 50% sharp sand;

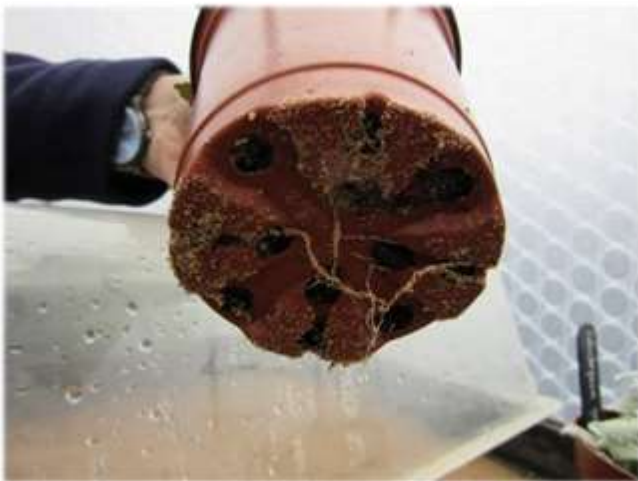




When you have 6 cuttings in a pot water them in;



Put planted pot into a propagator or cover with a plastic bag;



They should take 5 weeks to root and they can then be potted on.

You should then have some wonderful new plants for this summer.

### Featured varieties

Argyranthemum Madeira series

Calendula 'Power Daisy'

Geranium Americana 'White Splash'

Geranium Zonal 'Baldo' (red)

Geranium Zonal 'Bernd' (pink)

Osteospermum 'Blue Eyed Beauty'

Osteospermum 'Violet Ice'

Verbena 'Endurascape'



### Winter Stems



The winter stem garden area at Beechgrove was planted by George last spring to create an area of interesting stem colour for the winter months. The position was chosen as there the sun in the winter hits this bed especially in the afternoon (Programme 2 07/04/2016).





*Salix medemii* was laid flat on the ground and then planted. It was starting to send up vertical shoots called 'crown shoots' which George now tied down into place with some string and he also trimmed off small weaker shoots. The resulting shoot growth will be used to form a screen.



*Salix alba* 'Chermisina' has beautiful orange and yellow stems – one of the best plants for winter stem colour. Now in the spring, it has done its job, and so will be pruned hard back (Anderson style is what we are starting to call this)



This will produce lots of new shoots to create winter interest for next year.



The prunings will not be thrown away as they can be planted up as hardwood cuttings. Trim them to 100 – 200mm long and push them firmly into the soil.



*Cornus* 'Midwinter Fire' was not looking very vigorous, so George cut this back to 2 buds to



stimulate it into growth.



He also planted 3 varieties of ivy as ground cover on the bank. This will decrease the amount of maintenance and weeding for the gardening team.

#### Featured plants

*Cornus* 'Midwinter Fire'

*Hedera algeriensis* 'Gloire de Marengo'

*Hedera colchica* 'Dentata Variegata'

*Hedera colchica* 'Sulphur Heart' syn. *hedera colchica* 'Paddy's Pride'

*Salix alba* 'Chermisina'

*Salix medemii*



#### Garden Visit



Carole visited David Hawson at Paradise cottage Monymusk who is a retired Doctor and an artist. His garden has some interesting yew and box topiary which makes it colourful and full of form all year round.



He has clipped them into all types of animals, birds and shapes over the last 40 years. David maintains that his garden is like art and that a plant must look good and survive.





Further details can be found at  
<http://www.davidhawson.com/>.



## Handy Hints



**GEORGE:** Last week George was tickling fertiliser into the soil of his Small Space Garden. This week it's time to sow some seeds. He used a piece of wood to mark out the length and width between drills. He sowed Beetroot seeds by hand. He then 'knuckle planted' some pea seeds. This meant setting out seeds in a grid on the soil surface and then pushing them into the soil up to the first knuckle on your finger.

## Featured seed varieties

Beetroot "Albina Vereduna"

Pea 'Kelvedon Wonder'



**JIM:.** It's that time of year to start pruning Buddleja. There were 2 not so vigorous varieties in the raised bed there – *Buddleja fallowiana* and *Buddleja weyeriana* 'Sungold'. Both were treated in the same way – reducing the height and pruning back to just above a bud. Jim likes this gardening job as he is able to stand up to do it and it does not require much thinking about!

## Featured plants

*Buddleja fallowiana*

*Buddleja weyeriana* 'Sungold'



**CAROLE:** Last week we looked at crocus which were naturalising in the old orchard lawn. These have now started to go over. This week the



recent sunshine has brought out the beautiful blue *Scilla siberica*. These contrast well with the yellow daffodils starting to come through.

### Featured bulbs

*Scilla siberica*



### Goodbye



In the Secret Garden, George was continuing on the theme of a salad for each week of the series.



This time he had made one of a mixture of Carole's asparagus shoots, pak choi, kale, broccoli tips, hawthorn leaves, oregano, lovage,

cavolo nero and edible flowers (cowslip and viola). This week's offering was deemed much more appetising than last week's weedy salad.



### Courgette, Chilli and Ginger Soup

Serves 3–4

Tbsp olive oil  
2 shallots finely (chopped)  
1 chilli finely (finely chopped)  
1 tsp Ginger  
50g easy cook long grained rice  
400g courgettes (chopped into 2cm chunks)  
750ml good chicken stock  
Handful coriander (finely chopped)

1. Heat the oil in a pan and sauté the shallots, until soft but not browned. Add the chopped chilli and rice, and cook for a further minute. Add the courgettes and cook for another 2–3 minutes, stirring continuously.
2. Add the stock to the pan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 12 minutes or until the rice is soft.
3. Pour the soup into a food processor and blend. Add the chopped coriander and reheat before serving.

© Fiona Bird



## Next week

Jim and Carole are in their 6x8 greenhouses starting off their displays for this year.

Brian is at Scone Palace trying out a range of rabbit resistant plants.



**13 April 2017**

### ARGYLL

#### Crarae Garden

Inveraray, PA32 8YA

The National Trust for Scotland

Wednesday 19 April, 10am–5pm

Sunday 23 April, 10am–5pm

*National Plant Collection: Nothofagus (Southern Beech). This collection is the most northerly of its type in the UK.*

#### Benmore Botanic Garden

Benmore, Dunoon, PA23 8QU

A Regional Garden of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Sunday 23 April, 10am–6pm

*National Plant Collection: Abies, South American Temperate Conifers, Picea*

### AYRSHIRE

#### Beach House

25 Snowdon Terrace, Seamill, West Kilbride, KA23 9HN

The Clark Family

Sunday 16 April, 2–5pm

### DUNBARTONSHIRE

#### Kilarden

Rosneath, G84 0PU

Carol Rowe

Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm

*Open 25 years for Scotland's Gardens*

### EAST LoTHIAN

#### Humbie Dean

Humbie, EH36 5PW

Frank Kirwan

Wednesday 19 April, 1–5pm

### EDINBURGH & WEST LoTHIAN

#### 41 Hermitage Gardens

Edinburgh, EH10 6AZ

Dr and Mrs Tony Toft

Saturday 22 April, 2–5pm

### ETTRICK & LAUDERDALE

#### Bemersyde

Melrose, TD6 9DP

The Earl Haig

Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm

### FIFE

#### Backhouse at Rossie Estate

By Collessie, KY15 7UZ

Mr & Mrs Andrew and Caroline Thomson

Saturday 15 April, 2–5pm

#### Cambo Gardens Spring Plant Sale

Kingsbarns, KY16 8QD

Trustees of Cambo Heritage Trust

Sunday 16 April, 11am–4pm

### KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

#### 3 Millhall



Shore Road, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4TQ  
Mr Alan Shamash  
Sunday 16 April, 2–5pm

#### **MORAY & NAIRN**

##### **Brodie Castle**

Brodie, Forres, IV36 2TE  
The National Trust for Scotland  
Sat/Sun 22–23 April, 10:30am–4pm  
*National Plant Collection: Narcissus (Brodie cvs.)*

#### **PERTH & KINROSS**

##### **Megginch Castle**

Errol, PH2 7SW  
Mr Giles Herdman and The Hon. Mrs Drummond–  
Herdman of Megginch  
Sunday 16 April, 2–5pm

#### **RENFREWSHIRE**

##### **Kilmacolm Plant Sale**

Outside Kilmacolm Library, Lochwinnoch Road,  
Kilmacolm, PA13 4EL  
Scotland's Gardens – Renfrewshire  
Saturday 22 April, 10am–noon

#### **ROSS, CROMARTY, SKYE & INVERNESS**

##### **Dundonnell House**

Little Loch Broom, Wester Ross, IV23 2QW  
Dundonnell Estates  
Thursday 13 April, 2–5pm  
  
*Open 50 years for Scotland's Gardens*

#### **STIRLINGSHIRE**

##### **Gargunnock House Garden**

Gargunnock, FK8 3AZ  
The Gargunnock Trustees  
Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm

#### **STIRLINGSHIRE**

##### **Gargunnock House Garden Plant Sale**

Gargunnock, FK8 3AZ  
The Gargunnock Trustees

**20 April 2017**

#### **ARGYLL**

##### **Crarae Garden**

Inveraray, PA32 8YA  
The National Trust for Scotland  
Sunday 23 April, 10am–5pm  
*National Plant Collection: Nothofagus (Southern Beech). This collection is the most northerly of its type in the UK.*

#### **Benmore Botanic Garden**

Benmore, Dunoon, PA23 8QU  
A Regional Garden of the Royal Botanic Garden  
Edinburgh  
Sunday 23 April, 10am–6pm  
*National Plant Collection: Abies, South American Temperate Conifers, Picea*

#### **DUNBARTONSHIRE**

##### **Kilarden**

Rosneath, G84 0PU  
Carol Rowe  
Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm

#### **EDINBURGH & WEST LOTHIAN**

##### **41 Hermitage Gardens**

Edinburgh, EH10 6AZ  
Dr and Mrs Tony Toft  
Saturday 22 April, 2–5pm

#### **ETTRICK & LAUDERDALE**

##### **Bemersyde**

Melrose, TD6 9DP  
The Earl Haig  
Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm  
  
*Open 75 years this year*

#### **MORAY & NAIRN**

##### **Brodie Castle**

Brodie, Forres, IV36 2TE  
The National Trust for Scotland  
Sat/Sun 22–23 April, 10:30am–4pm  
*National Plant Collection: Narcissus (Brodie cvs.)*

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Kilmacolm, PA13 4EL

Scotland's Gardens – Renfrewshire

Saturday 22 April, 10am–noon

### **STIRLINGSHIRE**

#### **Gargunnock House Garden & Plant Sale**

Gargunnock , FK8 3AZ

The Gargunnock Trustees

Sunday 23 April, 2–5pm

You can find more information on gardens involved in Scotland's Garden Scheme on their website, here:

<http://www.scotlandsgardens.org/>



The Beechgrove Garden is produced for BBC by Tern – [www.terntv.com](http://www.terntv.com)

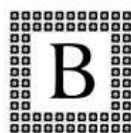
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**HAPPY GARDENING!**





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# **SCOTLAND'S DAFFODIL FESTIVAL (DEBUT)**

## **SAT 15TH & SUN 16TH APRIL**

### **BACKHOUSE, ROSSIE ESTATE, FIFE.**

Celebrate Easter with the new National Daffodil Collection and meet **George Anderson MBE** Beechgrove Garden Presenter on Saturday 15th April.

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE** - Enjoy our woodland Daffodil walk, Egg Hunt, 9 hole putting, secret grotto, café, stalls, talks, tours, demonstrations and more...

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Call 0844 414 5803 or download the Entry Form from our website (All exhibits to be set up 14th April 3-6pm)

**15TH APRIL** from 10am  
Daffodil Festival with SGS  
Charity afternoon (2pm - 5pm)  
**16TH APRIL** from 10am - 4pm  
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**ENTRY PRICES:** Adults £5,  
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(5-16), Under 5's free, Family  
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PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE  
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15th April (2-5pm)

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**Fife**  
www.fife.gov.uk



**DISCOVER**  
SCOTTISH GARDENS

