

Over The Fence

The West Malvern Garden & Nature Club News Letter

Autumn 2022



Welcome to the Autumn 2022 Over the Fence. Thank you to those of you who have attended meetings and supported visits, open gardens and of course the Annual Show this summer. Please keep supporting us and encourage your friends to join as well.



For this year's Open Garden we met at the garden of Margaret Cross, who lives a short distance out of the village. After a morning of rain we were lucky to get two hours of dry and warm weather for our visit. I think the weather may have put some people off but for those of us who went we were rewarded with a delightful garden full of interest and a variety of plants. There was a pond, a Japanese garden and even a set of 'prehistoric' rocks in the design. Margaret made us very welcome, and we had the chance to sit in wonderful surroundings, with refreshments, and chat. The garden is part of the garden of an old house, which for many years, was the home of Edward Elgar . A place where he composed The Enigma Variations. If you missed this treat, you could still visit it as Margaret opens her garden, at Nimrod, as part of the N.G.S.



Hilary Ward has written a continuation from the last Over the Fence about Goat's Beard. I hope she will continue with this item in future newsletters.

THE GOAT'S-BEARD SAGA CONTINUES

The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) Atlas shows 3 records for Hybrid Tragopogon in 2020 onwards and 25 between 2010 and 2019. Prior to 2010 there were less than 30 records. Most hybrids were found in the Southeast of England with occasional records from other parts of the country and a couple in Wales. No records from Scotland or Ireland.

A paper¹ published by researchers in the Czech Republic refers to studies of a distinct population of Hybrid Goat's-beard in and around Roudnice, in the north part of Central Bohemia, which is perennial (unlike the biennial parents) and fertile. It is thought that this population has been known for 100 years.

It is doubtful whether 'my' hybrid will display the features of the Czech plants, but I will try a couple of experiments:

- 1 Leave this year's hybrid in situ and see if it is perennial
- 2 Collect seeds and see if they germinate and grow on into hybrids

It is possible new hybrid plants will appear here next year from a crossing between *T. pratensis* and *T. porrifolius*. I will certainly continue to grow both parents.

REFERENCES¹ Krahulec F., Kaplan Z. & Novák J. (2005) *Tragopogon porrifolius* × *T. pratensis*: the present state of an old hybrid population in Central Bohemia, the Czech Republic. – *Preslia* 77: 297–306

Treasure Trail

Unfortunately we had to reorganise this event. It will now take place on Wednesday 21st September, so a report will appear in the next edition.



Arlo's winning container garden

Annual Show

Sadly this year we were without John Deem, who has passed away. He had supported and encouraged the club's Annual Show for many years as a judge for Fruit and Vegetables and donated two of our trophies.

We were very lucky to discover David Butt, this year's judge for Fruit and Vegetables and Ornamental sections. As Head Gardener at Madresfield House he brought a wealth of knowledge as well as enthusiasm for the club's show and for our continuing existence!

Cookery was judged again this year by Lee Smith; Yvette Crawford judged Arts and Crafts again and Chris Hall, a club member, stepped into the breach and offered to judge our photography section. We were very grateful for their professional scrutiny and comments.

I also want to thank the people who served and made the refreshments, those who were stewards, volunteers who helped on the day and in setting up and taking down everything in the hall. It takes a lot of work organising the Annual Show and couldn't be done without people willing to help out the committee, so thank you!

Club Trophy Winners

Annual Trophy Chan Crawford

John Deem Cup Lynn Clearwaters

John Deem Prize Fruit Phil Drake

Members Plate Craft Richard Beach

Members Shield best Home-Grown Lynn Clearwaters

Members Tankard Photography Chan Crawford

Members Spoon Cookery Carole Houghton

Roslington Shield Ornamental James Bullett

Our children's prize was won by Arlo Crawford-Ahmed

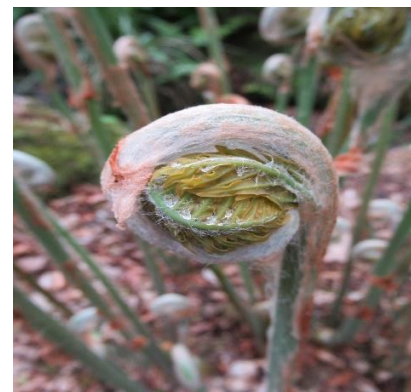


THE BEAUTY OF FERNS

Hilary Ward

On a visit to Plas Cadnant Garden near Beaumaris, Anglesey in early May I was delighted by the huge variety of ferns which thrive in the damp, shady conditions in parts of the garden.

The photos show the intricate detail of the croziers which is the early stage in the development of the fronds. The first two are un-named – answers on a postcard please! The beauty of this shape has inspired many items such as a shepherd's crook, the ceremonial staff carried by a bishop, the scroll on the head of a violin, the curled ornamentation found in classical architecture and even the design on a custard cream!



Royal Fern

A HOVERFLY

Hilary Ward

Here's one to look out for – the Hornet Mimic Hoverfly (*Volucella zonaria*). I've seen two in our garden recently (August 2022). A Mediterranean migratory species, it has

been in the UK since the 1940s's and is spreading north and west. About the same size as a Hornet but it does not sting.



I am grateful to Hilary Ward for writing such interesting articles, which make the magazine so much richer. There are many of you who could contribute to the magazine about your experiences, visits, gardening tips etc. Don't be shy. I know that there is a wealth of talent that the club could benefit from. Get in touch!

We are looking for people to join the committee and lend a hand in running the club. We will be electing committee members at the AGM in March 2023 but if you are interested and want to join us before then please get in touch with David Matthews. You don't need experience just enthusiasm!

Membership

Joining the West Malvern Garden and Nature Club offers a lot for the £5 membership, these are some of the advantages!

- Reduced price entry to the 8 indoor meetings, with refreshments
- Twice yearly magazine
- Invitation to the Christmas Party
- Subsidised Annual Dinner
- Free entry to The Malvern Spring Show, for 2 hours helping with the plant creche and The Autumn Show every other year.
- Treasure Trail and Picnic
- Open Garden
- The chance to win trophies at the club's Annual Show
- A.G.M. Buffet
- And best of all meeting with friends and neighbours!

We ask you to renew your annual subscription at the first meeting in September. Prices haven't gone up in over 10 years, so good value. Door entry £3 non-members £2 members and is important as it helps to pay for the speaker and the hall. (Bums on seats are necessary to raise income!) Encourage your friends to join.

This club has been a presence in West Malvern since 1989 when Mary Read advertised in the Malvern Gazette for people interested in forming a Garden and Nature Club. There are still some original members and Reg Moule, Duncan Coombes and Peter Garner are still popular speakers at the club. Recently, Chris Hall, a club member, has spoken to us, illustrating his talks about visits to various countries. This was the format of those first meetings, when members talked about their gardens or local wildlife. I am grateful to the late Lionel Shorestone who collected the information about the history of the club for the above information. I hope to update our club History/Archive shortly.

Future Programme

Tuesday 13th September 2022

Chris Hall presenting 'Wildlife of the Americas'

Tuesday 11th October 2022

Helen Mugridge from Forest of Dean presenting 'Gardening for Wildlife'

Tuesday 8th November 2022

Richard Harvey presenting 'Gardens of Glos. and Cotswolds'

Tuesday 13th December

Christmas Party Buffet 7pm start Details to follow

Carole Houghton

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