



NEWS SHOOTS

From the FRIENDS of THE **BOTANICAL GARDENS SHEFFIELD**

Plant of the Month

Beschorneria yuccoides, an architectural evergreen perennial with fleshy leaves, was planted in 2002 in Osborn's Field as part of the Gardens' restoration. Originating from Mexico, you'd hardly expect this plant to survive our harsh winters, but this spring it excelled and produced a pinkish flowering stem with pendent, apple-green flowers and bright pink bracts.



Thanks to everyone who helped with this month's News Shoots.

We're keen to include contributions from members. Please send items for future editions or feedback on this one to Jill Thompson on welding.thompson@gmail.com or write to her at 4 Park Lane, Sheffield S10 2DU.



Message from our Chair

I think we can all agree, Summer is here! I turned my back for a few days and when I looked again, there was no doubt. It's far too dry, of course, but it is rather delightful to be able to contemplate lazy relaxing days, working only in the cool early mornings and as the shadows lengthen.

A couple of years ago, I purchased a plant of *Meconopsis* 'Lingholm' from Peter Kohn at the workshop he ran. I raised a number of seedlings and planted a dozen in my own woodland margin. I thought I'd lost the lot to slugs and drought. To my huge surprise and delight, two returned at flowering size and another 5 or 6 are growing well. My dreams of a serious patch are not dead.

Peter and Trish continue the highly popular plant sales (apply to petergkohn@gmail.com). I was very pleased to see the list now carries a brief description of these, mainly rare, species. Please spread the word that the sales are open to everyone. As ever, all proceeds go to the Gardens.

We still await news of how our Volunteers will be able to return. Andy is working closely with SCC Health & Safety and hopefully it won't be too much longer. With some relaxation of lockdown rules, the Gardens are attracting more and more visitors. Hardly surprising when they are looking so glorious.

Enjoy this month's News Shoots; continue to enjoy this fabulous summer; stay well. Warmest wishes,

Jill Thompson

Garden Books

Rene May recommends Robin Lane Fox's *Thoughtful Gardening* from Penguin Books.

'It's the perfect book for dipping into; full of fun and humour with short essays on topics such as eliminating squirrels (eat them perhaps?) taking cuttings and even a piece about Corona - a lady who had a wonderful garden near Dublin!'

Send us a short review of a garden-related book you'd recommend and we'll feature it in a future edition.

Plant Clinic

Last time Sally Vardy asked for advice on keeping poinsettias from year to year. Sadly, our members couldn't help much (except to express some doubt on whether it was feasible). But for Sally and others who are feeling valiant, the RHS has advice: www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=146

On front cover: AGM bed in the Gardens. Below: *Meconopsis baileyi* in the Woodland Garden. Both photos by Rod Egglestone.



Le Jardin Conservatoire des Plantes Tinctoriales

By Lucy Jones

Another in our series looking at gardens to visit.

The Dye-Makers' Garden in Lauris, Provence is a centre for research and education. Located high above the plain of the Durance River in south-eastern France, the garden is a treasure trove of plants used in painting, dyeing, food and cosmetics. The story behind each plant is fascinating. In Korea the green fruits of the Persimmon, *Diospyros kaki*, are used for dyeing overalls orange. The colourant also protects against skin infections. The leafy twigs produce a dark yellow dye, while young shoots rich in tannin are used for brown dyes.

More unusual plants include the Crimson Threadflower *Caesalpinia gilliesii* whose heartwood is used to produce a red dye (pictured).

For more information on the Garden see: <https://www.couleur-garance.com/> (French only)



Secret of Successful Meadows

Members Sarah Thomas and Nigel Pereira have been using yellow rattle to help make the meadows in their new garden sustainable.

Yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* is also known as 'the meadow maker' or hay rattle. It's said to be the secret of a successful wild flower meadow. It's hemiparasitic, using photosynthesis and relying on its host for extra nutrients. It's supposed to be difficult to grow, so we were surprised when seed sowed in November started to appear. The seedlings look as if they are in green corduroy jackets. The flowers appear in mid May, and the seeds are ready to be sown again when the dry seeds begin to rattle.



More Data for Nature

Information from Pete Tomlin, Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust.

Thanks to a Lottery funded project, you can submit and record wildlife sightings in Sheffield and Rotherham via the new Nature Counts website which aims to develop ecological monitoring across the area. You're invited to carry out a garden 'BioBlitz' and add your contribution online.

Some great wildlife records have been submitted recently, including an Oil Beetle near Redmires and a Large Red Damselfly at Woodhouse Washlands Nature Reserve (pictured right).

For more info go to www.wildsheffield.com/sightings



Bringing Cheer to Local Communities

Earlier this year the FOBS growing team propagated some colourful lupins (below) which we have donated to HERB (Helping Environmental Regeneration in Broomhall), a street gardening community project. HERB aims to improve the external environment of the older part of Broomhall for local residents and those passing through the area, as well as for wildlife. Polly Blacker, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, said 'We planted all the lupins in Holberry Gardens, Havelock Street and they are looking very happy and healthy!' If you'd like to know more about the project, or lend a hand, you can contact Polly by email polytone@doctors.org.uk.



From Members' Gardens

From top: 15ft evergreen *Ceanothus* from Linda Denial. *Dicentra formosa* 'Bacchanal' in Alison Hunter's garden. *Myosotidium hortensia* from Anna Davids.

The last two were bought from FOBS plant sales.





More from Members' Gardens

From top: *Aethionema grandiflorum* from Sue Spells. Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* flowering in Jude Haslam's pond. *Magnolia* 'George Henry Kern' from Joan Daines.

Send us pictures of plants in your gardens - especially if you bought them from one of our plant sales - and we will feature some of them next time! Email them to jillsinclair123@gmail.com

Online Gardening

Four suggestions this month for interesting garden-related web resources:

Search for Garden Masterclass on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) for free Thursday Garden Chats with well-known designers such as Dan Pearson and tours of interesting sites, including the Hepworth in Wakefield, which we had hoped to visit in April.

Martin Fish offers seasonal gardening advice at <https://www.martinfish.com/in-the-garden/gardening-jobs-for-june>.

On Instagram, Adam Frost offers frequent fun live sessions on his story. His instagram handle is [@adamfrostdesign](https://www.instagram.com/adamfrostdesign)

Jill Sinclair writes about Sheffield street trees at <http://thegardenstrust.org/sheffield-campaign-to-save-street-trees>.

Puzzle Corner

Do you enjoy these puzzles? We've had anagrams, quizzes, brain teasers and crosswords. Let us know what you'd like us to offer in future editions.

Brain teaser: our group

I have assigned the numbers 1 to 26 to the letters of the alphabet A to Z in some order. For example, F=12, O=5, B=25 and S=21. So the numbers for FOBS put together give 1252521, which is palindromic. Similarly, each of the two words OUR and GROUP gives a palindromic number.

Given that U's number is greater than R's, what are the two palindromic numbers for OUR and GROUP?

Early Summer quiz

- 1 What is the birth flower of June?
- 2 Miss Willmott's ghost is a famous name for what plant?
- 3 Which flower did Gregor Mendel use for his genetic experiments?
- 4 In which Gilbert and Sullivan opera does Little Buttercup appear?
- 5 Which plant featured on the threepenny piece from 1937 to 1967?
- 6 The roots of which plant are sometimes used to replace coffee?
- 7 What is the most popular cut flower?
- 8 When is the best time to prune Spring flowering shrubs?
- 9 What carnivorous plant did Charles Darwin describe as the most wonderful plant in the world?
- 10 Where does the male gamete form in the flowering plant?

Answers from last time

Brain teaser: ATL - Judy, CCC - Bill, FOBS - Rene, NUS - Mark, NUT - Jock, OWLS - Harry, SUFC - Keith.

Spring quiz:

1. Spanish bluebells flower all around the stem (at least 5 other differences exist)
2. Japanese knotweed.
3. Tomato.
4. Wheat.
5. Lotus.
6. Nebuchadnezzar II.
7. Percy Thrower, 1974.
8. Mustard.
9. Vinca.
10. Northumberland.