

HPS Conservation Scheme

Hugh Robinson

What is the aim of the Conservation Scheme?

The scheme aims to identify rare plants that are worth preserving, plants which have been in our gardens for generations but due to them not being stocked in nurseries are very difficult to come by. This may be because of the difficulty to propagate or the length of time it takes them to bulk up, but they are often good garden plants just not very profitable for a nursery to invest time in growing them.

The scheme then looks to propagate these plants and spread them round the scheme members through an annual plant exchange. By doing this it is hoped that we can keep them thriving in our gardens for generations to come.

Who are we?

We are a newly formed Western Counties group, led by myself (Hugh Robinson) as the group co-ordinator. With the help of others we are looking to expand our membership.

I should stress that it doesn't matter if you are new to gardening or struggle to propagate plants. I am relatively new to gardening having only caught the bug about a year ago which is the same time I joined HPS. So, whether you are a complete novice or have a lot of experience we would be happy to have you. There is no membership fee as the scheme is entirely free.



We hope to run a launch event in January to promote the scheme, though anyone who wishes to join sooner or has any questions can come see me at the November meeting.

This is me on the left.

What can you get out of it?

One of the main benefits you can enjoy from the scheme is an opportunity to acquire rare plants that one simply cannot find in a local garden centre. Plants which have fewer than 4 entries in the RHS plant finder are hard to come by. As mentioned before the scheme is completely free - you get all of these rare plants for free!

You can develop new skills in propagation through growing these plants, and we are hoping to run a small propagation workshop to help develop and hone our skills. If you do join our group, we have some plants left over from our annual exchange so you would be able to start growing some straight away.

Which plants are on the scheme?

There are many plants on the scheme and the full list can be found on the HPS website, in the 'ABOUT PLANTS' and 'Conservation' section.

What do we require from you?

All we need from you is a small bit of information about how the plants do in your garden and the conditions you grow them in. We would also ask you to attempt to propagate the plants though if this isn't possible it isn't a problem, all we ask is that you try.

Here are a few of my favourites:-

***Hemerocallis* 'Apple Court Damson'**

It was introduced as a seedling from *H.* 'Joan Senior' as one parent, however it was never registered. It flowers June to July with stunning 10cm diameter deep damson coloured flowers with a lime throat, as seen in the photo. Like all *Hemerocallis* (day lilies) it is tolerant of a wide range of conditions and soil types.



***Iris x robusta* 'Dark Aura' AGM**

'Dark Aura' was purchased by Jennifer Hewitt in 1979. She introduced it into cultivation under the name *Iris virginica* 'De Luxe' in 1987 with the American Iris Society. That name was found to be invalid according to the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP) so it was renamed and registered as *Iris x robusta* 'Dark Aura' in 1996. It was awarded an AGM in 2005.



***Zantedeschia aethiopica* 'Glencoe'**

This particular form of *Zantedeschia aethiopica* was found growing in the garden of HPS member Keith Ferguson, who named it after his garden. It was found to be vigorous and very floriferous, forming nice large clumps and producing lovely 15-20cm long 12-15cm wide white flowers.

All these photos are from our members gardens where they grow their conservation plants.