



The Fritillary

Newsletter of the Oxford and District
Group of the Alpine Garden Society

No. 26 December 2021

Crocus, a wonderful genus

Celia Sawyer



For many years I have enjoyed seeing mass plantings of Crocus in the spring, although back then they were probably of the much larger type than I prefer nowadays. When I was a very new recruit on the rock garden at the Oxford Botanic Garden, a young man introduced himself to me as “a croconut”. That young man was John Grimshaw! Over the years I have come to appreciate their beauty much more and there is a staggering array of them, the majority of which flower in spring but there are an awful lot of them which are autumn flowering.

They do of course have their pitfalls, and in fact have quite a tricky time, being subject to mice and squirrels, who delight in excavating the tasty corms, or just chewing off the growing shoots. Slugs and snails are not averse to munching through the stems, birds love the yellow spring ones and pull them apart and the weather tends to batter them, especially the likes of *Crocus speciosus*, which seems to fall over in the slightest breeze. It is highly scented, and no doubt gets pollinated quickly. Once that has happened there is no need for it to do anymore and so they fall over! All in all, they are not bomb proof by any means, apart from the most obvious one, namely *C. tommasinianus* which really is as tough as they come and spreads rapidly, so much so that it can become a pest as it did on the rock garden at the OBG.

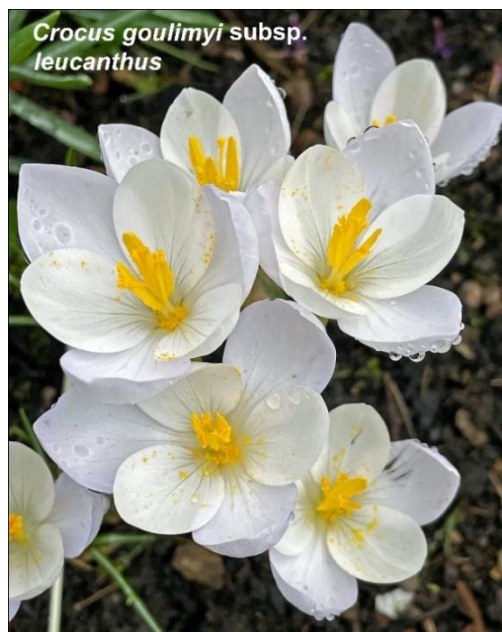
We now grow quite a few of the autumn flowering ones, especially after seeing them growing in the wild on my trip to The Peloponnese in 2018. *C. goulimyi* is a glorious sight and *C. g.* subsp. *leucanthus*, as is *C. kotschyanus* and *C. niveus*. More challenging, at least here, is the beautiful *C. banaticus* and *C. nudiflorus*, both of which I am trying to



establish in the grass, but so far with little success. They don't like the borders either. A few years ago I bought *C. hadriaticus* 'Celia', I have no idea who it was named after, but felt that I should have it. I found it in the RarePlant catalogue and any of you who have dealt with them will know that they charge an awful lot for very tiny bulbs. My slight Scottish ancestry got the better of me and I rather meanly only bought three. The first year they were gorgeous, but since then they have struggled. One valiantly appeared this year, only to be decapitated by some passing mollusc. I have bought three more and they are just showing buds. I must be vigilant. I should really know better as it is not particularly hardy, but there

are times when you must give something a go, and sometimes it works.

After the mass of snowdrops early in the year, it makes a welcome change to have some colour in the garden and so in early spring we have a mass of *C. tommasinianus* (or Tommies) and they give such delight. Three types are planted in the grass, pale mauve, slightly darker and purple which give a longer season as they flower in succession. We also have the bigger *C.* 'Vanguard' which has hybrid vigour and seems to be unaffected by most things. The dainty *C. corsicus* is a delight with feathering on the pale outside and mauve inside. They return each year but hardly spread. *C. vernus* (a good form from my parents' garden) was badly attacked by mice a few years ago, which was so annoying as it was just beginning to spread a little (I had given too many away!). It now comes up through a *Dianthus* and that seems to have saved it. *C.* 'Yalta' is absolutely gorgeous and being robust it grows very happily in the grass. It is mauve on the inside and pale outside, shading to a dark purple marking at the base of the flower. A wise recommendation from 'the croconut'!



Note to self - stick to the easier ones. They will give far more pleasure, with less grief and in greater numbers.

An Autumn journey in the Southern Pindus Mountains, Greece

John Graham

During lockdown in February, this year, I gambled on travel restrictions being released by the autumn and booked a trip to Greece in the autumn. I had been fascinated by Avril Hughes's article 'AGS Trip to the Peloponnese' (Fritillary 2019) and decided to join a Greentours 'Delphi and Peloponnese' tour. Travel limitations were lifted, the correct forms were filled out and the tour went ahead!

The group met at Athens airport, half a day late due to the airline cancelling our original flight, and as we walked to our minibuses it started to rain. It continued to rain, sometimes very heavily, as we were driven by our leaders Kurt Vickery and Alice Hunter to Arachova (near Delphi) our base for the first few days.



The rain had eased by morning, but a thick blanket of cloud covered the high ground so no view of Mt. Parnassus that day. Many of you who have visited Greece will realize that it is a massive collection of rock gardens, the archaeological site at Delphi is no exception to this. Growing in amongst the natural rocks and fallen buildings we found the showy *Sternbergia lutea*, the diminutive *Colchicum cupanii* and (new to me) *Plumbago europaea*. The latter was being visited by

Hummingbird Hawkmoths, whose flight was undisturbed by raindrops. Apart from the chatter of visitors the signature sounds of this site are the calls of Western Rock Nuthatches, we were also rewarded by their continuous activity. In the afternoon we went westwards to land below Delphi. On a walk below some cliffs, on an isolated rock pinnacle, we found the iconic plant of the Delphi area: *Daphne jasminea* (see next page) growing tightly against the rock several plants still had a few flowers. As we got back to the minibuses a klaxon sounded - *where did that come from? – there's no one else about! – there it is again, right by me – it's coming from my pocket and my phone's started vibrating!* Sure,



enough it was my phone! It displayed a message that I was about to enter an area with severe weather and instructed me not to proceed, several others got the same message,



Daphne jasminea



Cyclamen graecum

but their phones were on a silent setting. After a visit to a café, in the pretty seaside town of Ghalaxidi, we returned to Arachova (inside the area of severe weather).

Severe weather it was too, with the sound of heavy rain throughout the night. In the morning our host, Panos, was watching pictures of some of the worst floods on T.V. It was still raining and the mountains around all had a thick covering of dark grey cloud. Kurt and Alice were making careful plans for the day, with other options in reserve. Our first stop of the day was close to the monastery at Koutsouros. Amongst the rocks and on the roadsides were numerous *Cyclamen graecum* plants. On a flat area of ground, below the monastery, we found *Colchicum cupanii* and a few *Crocus hadriaticus* with its distinctive orange anthers. After a picnic lunch, we headed north. Just before the village of Amigdhalia, Alice and I spotted some *Colchicum* in pasture. As we couldn't attract the attention of the lead minibus we didn't stop, but from their size we surmised that they were

Colchicum bivonae. Our journey took us alongside the Mornos Reservoir, through mixed forest with attractive yellows from *Platanus orientalis* and reds from *Cotinus coggygria*.

By now it was raining heavily and when we stopped Kurt made a reconnoitre, while the rest of us stayed dry in the vehicles. He reported finding a single flower of *Crocus robertianus* and a substantial *Spiranthes spirales*, as it was the only opportunity to see the *Crocus*, I ventured out to have a look. Apart from the leaders, I was the only one of party who braved the drenching!



Colchicum bivonae

During the night the rain eased but it was apparent that the mountains, especially Mt. Parnassus were creating rain. Once again Kurt and Alice had to create several cunning plans, but life was made a bit easier for them as the group was now resigned to getting

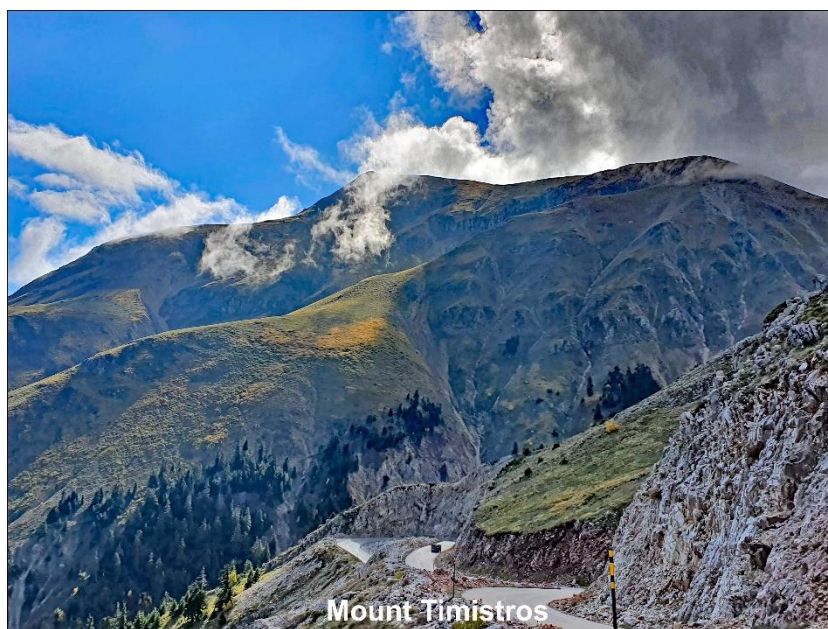


wet. Our route took us into the valley between Parnassus and West Parnassus through forests of *Abies cephalonica*. At our first stop we found a few trees of *Abies* hosting the subspecies of Mistletoe *Viscum album* ssp. *abietis*, the only form that parasitizes conifers. In clearings between the trees where a few *Crocus cancellatus* ssp. *mazziaricus* but we didn't find *Sternbergia colchiciflora* which had probably finished flowering. Higher on the flank of Mt. Parnassus we found a few *Colchicum boissieri*, looking rather bedraggled in the rain. Similarly bedraggled, and cold, we headed north and descended into mixed forest. We were now in the rain shadow of the mountain, the temperature rose, and the sun came out. While Kurt prepared our picnic lunch, we enjoyed some magnificent *Cyclamen hederifolium*, which had survived the attentions of Wild Boar. *Crocus*

cancellatus ssp. *mazziaricus* flowers opened in the sun, attracting the photographers in the group. Unfortunately this was too good to last, for by mid-afternoon it had begun to rain again. On a steep slope we saw hundreds of *Spiranthes spiralis*. Among them were a few flowers of *Colchicum bivonae* that were close to being over. The leaders made a quick decision to return to the village where Alice and I had seen the *Colchicum* the day before. This paid off as we found a large population of *Colchicum bivonae*. The best clumps were in fenced fields, this led me to wonder whether a significant factor in overgrazing damage is due to compaction of the soil by trampling (*Colchicum* are toxic, so aren't grazed).

The next day we left Arachova and travelled north to a new base near Karpenisi. We left the mountains and crossed a plain dominated by agricultural crops, notably cotton. The cotton plants were stunted and shrivelled, partly due to unusually high summer temperatures but also due to failures in irrigation systems and depletion of the aquifers. Near Makrakomi we explored a pasture, notable for hundreds of *Spiranthes spiralis* and thousands of *Prospero autumnale* (formerly known as *Scilla autumnalis*) including a few white flowered forms of the *Prospero*. In his briefing for the day Kurt had described the wealth of plants on the approach road to our hotel. What he hadn't anticipated was that the road had been widened. Thousands of *Sternbergia lutea* and *Cyclamen graecum*, both

CITES protected, had been destroyed along with a good population of *Biarum* – what a waste!



I should explain that we had entered another mountainous area towards the end of our journey. It was a treat to see movements of clouds and mists and the changing light over the forests with the various colours of autumnal leaves as highlights. Karpenisi is a ski resort on the side of Mt. Timfristos, the tallest mountain of the Southern Pindus Mountains. On our way up to the ski station we drove through patches of mist and

sunlight as the clouds swirled around the mountain. After one of the many hairpin bends we were treated to a view of the western face of the mountain, a sheer rock face with twisted rock strata, but quickly the clouds drifted across and the spectacle was lost. As we dropped down the other side of the mountain, we left the blanket of cloud, and the sun came out. A highlight of the afternoon was finding a patch of pasture with some pristine flowers of *Colchicum boissieri*.

Our last full day was taken up with the return trip to Athens. We made stops at various points on the coast and plants (especially bulbs) were few and far between. Birdwatching became the main activity with Greater Flamingo, Kentish Plover, Greenshank and over fifty Grey Herons being the highlights.

On the last morning we drove to north of Athens airport to a rocky hillside near Rafina. In the messy surrounding of an abandoned military base, we found the familiar *Crocus cancellatus* ssp. *mazziaricus*, *Colchicum cupanii* and *Sternbergia lutea*. Among the many *Cyclamen graecum* (see page 4) was a small group with elongated petals that closely resembled *Cyclamen persicum*. After this our group split up with Alice taking one minibus to the airport, while Kurt took the rest of us into the Peloponnese for a second week.

The Bulbous Plants of Turkey and Iran

Peter Sheasby

My second book on Bulbous Plants of Turkey and Iran was published by the AGS in September. This follows the first edition which was published in 2007 and has sold over 1,400 copies. Since then I have visited Turkey many more times and gone to different areas at different seasons, and have made a further visit to NW Iran. Both countries are

very large and have enormous variations in habitats and climatic conditions, and many species are endemic to particular areas.

The second edition describes and illustrates about 150 additional species and includes more than 350 new photographs. In the first edition some plants such as *Corydalis* and some *Crocus* species were illustrated in pot cultivation, but most of these have now been photographed in the wild.

The first edition was designed as a field guide and I tried to minimise the botanical terms used, and to give easily recognisable characteristics to help the less experienced flower lover to identify the plants seen. In the second edition the AGS wanted to give more detailed botanical descriptions, and the experience of Christopher Grey-Wilson was used to achieve this. There are now some 1,200 images and more plants from this area have been illustrated than in any previous publication.

The description of 'bulbous' plants is a very broad one, as for us it includes plants with bulbs, corms, tubers and rhizomes. This represents a very large number of species, a lot of which are only found very locally, so it has been necessary to visit many areas at different times of the year to get a reasonable representation of the bulb flora. I have been helped in this by John Ingham with his many visits to Iran, and Keith and Kay Bankier with visits to some of the Turkish localities that I have missed. In addition, Janis Ruksans has provided illustrations of many unusual *Allium* and *Crocus* species. Most of my visits have been with Greentours or with AGS tours led by Bob and Rannveig Wallis.

These visits have taken place over the best part of 20 years, and in that time we have found about 10 species that were unknown and unnamed. One might expect that these would be small, insignificant species that had not been noticed, but in reality most were attractive species that had not been found or recognised before. They included *Tulipa*, *Crocus*, *Fritillaria*, *Puschkinia* and *Iris* species that had not been named before.

The first of these was a *Puschkinia* species that was only found on the Karabet Pass, south



of Lake Van. It grows with the well-known *Puschkinia scilloides* but on my first visit to the area in 2003 I recognised that it was different. It was illustrated in the first edition as *Puschkinia sp.* and has been named only recently by a Turkish botanist as *P. bilgineri* (also named a few days later in the AGS Bulletin by Janis

Ruksans as *P. kurdica*). Another *Puschkinia* with cream-coloured flowers, found first by Martyn Rix, was named as *P. peshmenii*.



Amongst the new Tulip species were *Tulipa cinnabarina* found in the southern Taurus mountains by K. Persson, and *T. koyuncui*, a cream or yellow-flowered Tulip from the Guzeldere Pass, south of Lake Van. This area is in the Kurdish area of Turkey and access has always been difficult. The Turkish army are present in many areas with lookout posts and roadblocks, and Kurdish militia have guard posts

on the hills. *Tulipa koyuncui* grows on the top of the hills above the Guzeldere Pass and when we drove up a track to the area we were quickly followed by an army vehicle with a group of armed soldiers on board. After questioning our reasons for being there we were allowed to photograph the Tulips but were ringed by crouching soldiers with guns at the ready in case of Kurdish involvement. Under no conditions were we allowed to venture further onto the mountains.



On another occasion we were botanising in an interesting area on the south side of the pass, and I came down from the hillside with a few specimens that I had collected for identification. Almost immediately when I reached the road, an armoured car pulled up and a sergeant and a group of soldiers jumped out and surrounded me with drawn rifles. 'No, No, No' shouted the sergeant 'You may not collect plants'. Fortunately a few moments later our leader, Prof. Adil Guner, reached the road with an armful of collected specimens. Suitable discussions took place and the soldiers withdrew! Iran has many confusing Tulip species, many of which are red-flowered, but an attractive new species from NE Iran was named as *Tulipa botschantzevae*. *Tulipa humilis*, which is pink-flowered in SE Turkey, is widespread in NW Iran and the many different colour forms are illustrated in the book.

The genus *Crocus* has had a lot of attention in recent times, particularly by Janis Ruksans and colleagues, and it is becoming a bit like *Ophrys* in the orchid world. However, two species that we have found deserve attention. The first is a hybrid that is found in NW Turkey near Lake Bolu, between yellow-flowered *Crocus ancyrensis* and blue *C. abantensis*. The hybrid is an attractive brown shade. Also unusual is a blue form of *C. biflorus ssp. crewei* (normally white with black anthers) found in the southern Taurus Mountains. Both are quite spectacular variants.



Crocus biflorus ssp. crewei



Iris kirkwoodii

The genus *Iris* is always an exciting group to find in the wild and the magnificent *Oncocyclus* group is particularly well represented in Turkey and Iran. Many species were illustrated in the first book, but additional species seen include *Iris sprengeri*, *Iris kirkwoodii* and *Iris gatesii*.

Iris sprengeri occurs further west than any other *oncocyclus* *Iris* in Central Anatolia, and it grows on relatively bare hillsides which are hot in summer and very cold in winter. *Iris kirkwoodii* was found earlier in its typical Syrian form

close to the Syrian border near Antakya. This form has tall stems and blue-black flowers. However, it also occurs on Ahir Dag close to Maras. This form is quite different being short-stemmed and brown-flowered.

The most spectacular of this group is *Iris gatesii* with flowers up to 15cm in diameter. It grows in the Batman Valley in SE Anatolia and we found it with the help of local villagers. However it grows about 1,000ft above the village on one of the steepest hillsides that I have ever been on. Even trying to sit down to rest felt unsafe! Nevertheless, we struggled up to the appropriate level only to find that none of the plants were in flower. ‘Don’t worry’ said the villagers ‘They are in flower in the village graveyard’ and they were!! In Iran the aim is to find *Iris meda*, which is the most variable of all this group.

In particular, in one area of NW Iran it is present in hybrid form, though it is unclear what the other parent is. These magnificent forms have been described as ‘moleskin’ *Iris*es as the signal patch on the falls is purple-black in colour.



Iris meda hybrid

Visits to Northern Turkey, along the Black Sea Coast, have added the blue *Iris sintenisii* and yellow *Iris kerneriana*, and the *Iris reticulata* forms have been extended in Iran with the beautiful blue ssp. *hyrcana* and the recently named purple and white ssp. *zagrica*.



In the Juno Iris group the interest has been in finding a new yellow-flowered species, with an AGS group on the Kubbe Pass in S Anatolia. This Iris of the *Iris caucasica* type has now been named as *Iris peshmennii*. New for me were also the brown-flowered *Iris nezahattiae* from the upper Coruh Valley in NE Anatolia and *Iris hymenospatha* in Iran.

The genus *Fritillaria* always attracts interest, and many species occur in both Turkey and Iran, many of them endemic to very localised areas. Newly recognised species include *F. assumaniae*, and *F. enginiana* in SW Turkey, and a new subspecies of *F. crassifolia* ssp. *poluninii*, in W Iran. Magnificent forms of *Fritillaria aurea* were also found on Bolkar Dag in S Anatolia.

Visits to W Turkey have led to the inclusion of *Muscari adilii* (named after Prof. Adil Guner) which grows in very unusual mineral-rich hillsides near Beypazari. The white-flowered *Muscari macbeathianum* was rediscovered near Sainbayli in Inner Anatolia on an AGS trip. As you will have guessed this was first discovered by Ron Macbeath and was named after him, but it had not been seen again after the original discovery. From Iran we have been able to illustrate species such as *Bellevalia shiraziana* and *Bellevalia glauca* and the closely related *Alrawia nutans*. The additional members of the *Scilla* group include *Scilla lepii* in mountains near Kemaliye in the Upper Euphrates Valley, and the newly named *Scilla ingridae* ssp. *taurica* in NE Anatolia. In Iran the unnamed 'Scilla' that I illustrated in the first edition from Olang Mountain in N Iran has been named as *Fessia olangensis*, though to me it looks very similar to *Scilla ingridae* ssp. *taurica*. However, *Scilla ingridae* has not been reported from Iran. Many other species have been added to the descriptions and illustrations in the new book, but this summary perhaps indicates how many species there are to be found in this fascinating area. I hope that more of you will visit it.



Despite the ongoing pandemic the group has managed to get together “in person” on several occasions and it has been wonderful to meet up again. The AGS HQ garden at Pershore has been tended by one person for two days per month for a considerable number of years and is clearly too much for her to be able to keep it in the condition that befits what is essentially the “shop window” for the Society. The Director has plans to improve the garden, to make a wider audience aware of it by opening occasionally under the NGS scheme and to use what is such a good resource for training purposes, etc. To this end a small group of us from the Oxford Group started in May to go once a month and carry out general maintenance in order to help raise its profile. It's been really good to see the garden each month and how it changes and great fun as a team effort. It is surprising how much seven or eight people can get done in five or six hours. A huge thanks to those involved. The old irrigation system is about to be re-done which will cause disruption, but hopefully not too much and one of the large beds is going to be re-done and upgraded.

Hopefully the seed exchange might be a little more as normal this year and we may be able to return to Pershore to help with the distribution.

The Spring/Summer Programme 2022 is almost complete and so here are the brief details and some dates for your diary. Full details will follow in due course.

March - We hope to visit Adrian Young's National Collection of Saxifrages at Waterperry Gardens. This will depend on whether group visits are allowed then and, if it is possible, the date will be arranged nearer the time to coincide with optimum flowering.

April - (Possibly the week beginning 25 April) A group visit to the wonderful private garden of John Massey at Ashwood Nurseries to see his garden and the amazing new tufa construction. This is very much at the planning stage at the moment. It will be in our own cars.

May - Saturday 21 May, 3.00pm, Conversazione at the garden of Mike and Ann Collins, Lyford, near Wantage.

June - Wednesday 22 June, 10.30am visit the garden of John and Catherine Armitage at Winson, near Cirencester and have lunch. 2.30pm to Nick and Mel Tanners garden, Ampney Crucis, near Cirencester and tea.

August - Saturday 20 August, 6.00pm, Social Evening at Sue Bedwell's garden followed by supper and plant sale at a nearby Village Hall.

Thank you all for your ongoing support to make this such a lovely and lively group.

The society has enjoyed a busy year despite restrictions and three lockdowns throughout much of the year. We remain in a healthy and active position, gaining new members, some long distance, due to the use of Zoom talks to help keep the group active throughout the winter months. An advantage of accessing talks through Zoom was that we could have speakers from further afield and access talks from other groups.

We need to thank Celia whose tireless efforts kept the group informed throughout the year. She circulated pictures of her garden along with photos from other members, which kept our spirits up through the year.

Unfortunately, there were no AGS shows, so opportunities to meet in person were not possible during winter; however life moved online for shows and competitions. Congratulations to Celia Sawyer for her success in the online plant show where she has won a number of prizes.

Congratulations also go to Adrian Young, who was deservedly recognised with the 'Sir William and Lady Lawrence Award' for his work with Saxifrages.

The group now has its own Facebook group, specifically for our local society. I would encourage members to look at it to see members' pictures and photos of our events. It would be good to see more members participating.

Once we could meet outdoors, some members volunteered to help Kana Webster bring the AGS show garden at Pershore into a good condition. We meet monthly and work under Kana's direction. These have been very enjoyable and social days. Anyone wanting to join us can contact Celia Sawyer, John Graham or me.

Our winter meetings started in October rather than September, when we began our winter programme on Zoom as outlined below.

14 October 2020: John Graham, fellow member, gave a wonderful talk about his tour of NE Greece, showing a wide range of plants, including Pulsatilla and Soldanella rhodopaea.

11 November 2020: we were given a talk by Dr. Adrian Cooper about 'Alpines in the Alpine House and Open Garden', giving us a tour of his wonderful garden and alpine house full of treasures.

9 December 2020: A Zoom AGM, where Alice Munsey and Malcolm Brownsword (although he will still produce The Fritillary) stood down. They were thanked for their hard work for Oxford AGS. Following the AGM, Charles Shi (former member) entertained us with a talk about his time whilst studying for his three-year Kew diploma.

13 January 2021: Members' evening (via Zoom), three members entertained us: John Graham gave a talk 'Trilliums and other plants of the Carolina Piedmont', a description of a tour where Trilliums grew in large swathes along with other spring flowers.

Avril Hughes – transported members to four gardens from 'An AGS trip to the Wicklow Mountains in Ireland'.

Celia Sawyer- showed members 'A floral resumé of Lockdown in 2020', with wonderful photographs of the beautiful alpines, bulbs and other plants of note in the garden at Long Compton.

10 February 2021: From his home in Turkey, Chris Gardner treated us to the 'The flora of The Silk Road', travels through the region with wonderful photography combining fabulous plants, with insights into landscapes, culture and monuments.

9 March 2021: Jim Almond, an AGS show coordinator and exhibitor treated members to a look at previous prizewinning displays at shows and reflecting on aspects of growing alpinines and dwarf bulbs.

14 April 2021: At our last talk of the winter programme David Charlton talked about the 'Flowers of the Pyrenees,' with excellent photography and tips for visiting the area.

As the COVID restrictions eased, the summer programme started on 14 June, with a plant sale at Kingston Bagpuize House. We need to thank Virginia Grant for welcoming us to her garden and giving us help and support. This was a first for the society: a dedicated plant sale at a garden open to the public. Plants offered for sale were of an excellent quality and variety. It was a blistering hot day, but members made full use of the opportunity to buy plants and meet fellow members for the first time in over a year. We were able to see the garden, with the changes and improvements made by member Alice Munsey.

23 June 2021: The society visited Moor Wood House in Gloucestershire, by kind invitation of Henry and Susie Robinson a farm with 'The National Collection of Rambling Roses', but with much more, including *Dactylorhiza* growing in a patch of meadow land. We were treated to a wonderful lunch served by our hosts, then in the afternoon we visited Bourton House, a beautiful example of an English Garden, full of interesting plants.

24 July 2021: The conversazione was held in the lovely garden of Celia and Walter Sawyer. 48 members enjoyed the afternoon. The weather was kind and the garden sparkled with many plants to interest the members. The hosts had prepared a wonderful afternoon tea with help from members, and the plant sale was enthusiastically supported. Thank you to Celia and Walter and other members for working hard to make the event so enjoyable.

28 August 2021: The final summer event was the social evening at Waterperry Gardens, kindly arranged by Adrian Young, who gave us an introduction to his collections in the Alpine area, and members were free to enjoy the rest of the garden, followed by supper prepared by the committee and members with a plant sale to finish the evening events. There are too many people to say thank you to individually, but a huge thank you to the contributors who worked to make this event such a success.

I would like to thank the committee for all their expertise, advice and time given to the group during the year without which we would not be able to offer such a wide and varied calendar of events. The committee, thanks Malcolm Brownsword for producing 'The Fritillary.' They also thank the wider membership for their support and help at so many of our meetings, social events and trips.

Our 2021 meetings are now in person at Exeter Hall, so we look forward to another exciting and full programme for the next year.

Keeping in Touch

Nigel Birch

We have a Gmail account for sending out notices to Oxford Group members. All of us, bar just one, now use email; 10 years ago, only two thirds of members did. So now the

committee can rely on email for all notices, relying on post only for delivering the printed Winter and Summer Programmes, with no need to use the telephone to cancel a winter meeting when the weather is too severe. To avoid problems that could follow from a committee member using an out-of-date email address, all notices are sent from the Gmail account. This therefore has the one list of e-addresses that has to be kept up-to-date. Please let nigel_birch@hotmail.com know if you change yours!

At the foot of the notice it says '*Please, if replying, leave the **Subject** line unchanged*'- WHY? The subject line, for example **Subject:** Next meeting (CELIA) is important in two ways. First, the reply is automatically forwarded to the personal e-mail address of whoever is dealing with the topic, so they need only check their own personal e-mail to know if there are any new replies. Second, the replies are put in a group with the outgoing notice, which is really useful for the person (usually Celia) to keep track of all the replies on that topic.

You can also contact Celia on other queries using the details on the front of your Winter Programme card.

Garden Visits 2021







Adrian Young received the Sir William and Lady Lawrence Award at the AGS AGM in recognition of his outstanding and excellent work in cultivating and caring for the National Collection of Saxifraga at Waterperry Gardens, increasing and improving it over the past 45 years.

If you would like to contribute an article for the December 2022 edition of 'The Fritillary,' please contact Celia Sawyer, who will tell you who my successor is. After editing fifteen editions of 'The Fritillary,' I will be handing over to someone else.

Malcolm Brownsword