



Newsletter - June 2025

Good day to you all and welcome to mid-summer. I am picking up many comments from members about how the very dry spring has been so good for roses but that their clematis have struggled. Please let me know your experiences of this. My newly registered atragene called 'Partygate' was wonderful in April, and the roses are still superb. Perhaps that is not so much down to the weather but my new feeding regime. In previous years I have used Osmocote professional slow-release fertilizer for my clematis which has always produced good growth and flower in summer and autumn, especially in pot grown ones. The penny dropped this year that the spring clematis were not getting an early boost from this method because March and April temperatures are too low to activate much of a release of fertilizer which relies on increasing warmth. This year I supplemented the Osmocote with the more instant fertilizer that I use on the roses and shrubs. I think that has made a big difference but will have to assess it over a couple of years to see if the improvement is consistent.



Ken Black

Betty Risdon

A few weeks ago, I received this email from Richard Hodson which I then followed up with Keith Glenn. If you can help Keith, he will be very grateful. His contact details are below.

Good morning, Ken,

I have received an e-mail from Keith Glenn, he is the son of the late Betty Risdon, who had a clematis named for her some years ago. He has lost his plant and is desperate to find a replacement. Is it possible to ask BCS membership if anyone knows of an available plant?

He has given me permission to ask and also sent his e-mail address

rhine1960.aajlr@btinternet.com

Richard Hodson

Good afternoon Ken,

Many thanks for your email. Betty was a founder member of the British Clematis Society in 1991. She became their Treasurer, and a clematis was named for her by Vince & Sylvia Denny in 1996. I believe the Society Journal published an obituary when she died in 1999.

Our family have maintained a number of the plants but this year the severe winds caused a fence to collapse on our plants and crush them. Not being plant breeders, we are hoping that someone might have a few plants for sale, hence my enquiry. Any help at all would be most welcome.

Please forgive the slightly unusual email address, this is to keep a separate correspondence stream for possible response.

Best regards,
Keith Glenn

The new BCS web site - update for members

Work has continued to replace the current dated website with a new visually and functionally attractive BCS website which will signal a fresh approach for the Society. The target for the launch of the new site is September 2025.

The "show room" for public browsers we hope will encourage interest from potential new members, will inform about the Society, and offer some helpful advice/tips. Further to the decisions at the AGM we are working on completing the section to describe the membership proposition/benefits and the various forms to sign up new members and renew existing subscriptions. The new site offers opportunities to streamline the management of memberships and integrate with other e commerce activities.

A major new feature for the Members Only section is the addition of digital versions of the last fifteen years BCS Journals. In this form it will be easy to browse through these colourful and informative quality Journals of which the society is duly proud. The wealth of information and articles will be accessed by direct navigation to articles from each index, there will be word search and other facilities which all serve to enhance the reader experience.

We hope that the fresh look and feel of the site will be popular with all who browse it. Importantly, when visitors and potential members are referred to the new site from social media, from internet search or wherever, they will find a modern, visually appealing, and interesting web site which makes a statement about the society.

Peter Culliney

The British Clematis Society Seed Exchange

Although this information was sent out to you a few weeks ago, Laurie has asked me to remind you all to collect clematis seed, where possible, and to send it to him. Although it is only June, seed from spring and some early flowering clematis will now be ripening. If you have any questions, however, please contact him.

This is what he sent out in May:

We propose to recommence the members seed exchange with your help.

Although this has declined over the last few years, we feel it is one of the benefits of being a member and may attract new members to our Society.

Firstly, seed that is donated needs to be trimmed, ripe and good quality rather than quantity.

Donations must be received by the 10th of October 2025 to ensure entry into the seed list. If you think seed may arrive after the closing date you may contact Laurie Jones to arrange for an alternative posting arrangement.

If you send in a packet and you are unsure about the name (species, hybrid or cultivar) please give some indication of colour and/or size and/or photo (email) as the seed may otherwise be of little value.

We will not be posting out seed lists (email) except on request. Please contact me before the 1st November 2025 if you would like a seed list posted to you.

Best wishes,

Laurie

Mr Lawrence Jones

Greenfields, 1362 Evesham Road, Astwood Bank, Redditch B96 6BD

Email: lcj5243@yahoo.co.uk mob: 07551910861

The 2025-26 Journal

Good progress is being made on the production of this year's journal, but I would still like more articles (however long or short) please. Last summer Everett Leeds sent me dozens of clematis related publications that he had inherited, and I intend to reproduce a few for the Journal this year. Some have been written by what I regard as giants of the clematis world such as Dr Mary Toomey, Dr John Howells, Sheila Chapman and Ruth Gooch.

If you would like to contribute your ideas/experiences, please do so before the end of July if possible. Contact me for a discussion if you like on 07753683185
Many thanks Ken

Membership Renewal

A reminder that if you have not yet renewed your membership for 2025 there is still time to do so. The cut off for receiving payments will be Saturday the 12th of July. After this date the membership data base will be updated and details of anyone whose renewal payment has not been received removed. This means that they will no longer receive newsletters or journals and will not have access to the new web site when launched in September. Details of what and how to pay are on page 11 of the 2024-25 edition of the Journal.

Tamara and Valera Bublîi

Finally, here is some correspondence I had earlier this year with Tamara and Valera who live in the Kharkiv region in Ukraine. To say that I feel naive, guilty and stupid for writing to them at this time is an understatement, but I thought that what they told me in their reply was too important not to share.

Good morning from England,

I hope that I am writing to Bublîi and Tamara Valera who run a clematis nursery in Kharkiv. Some years ago, I read an article on Facebook which was written by Nina Morinova. She mentioned your clematis business and gave me details of your web site. I see from your Facebook page that you are still in business despite the war, and I would be very interested in learning more about your business and clematis growing in both Ukraine and Russia. Would you be prepared to write something for me to publish in this year's Clematis Journal please? Readers in the UK would be very interested in learning about what you grow and what clematis are available. I see from your Facebook page that you have photos of some lovely atragenes.

If you do not have the time to write something but have articles about clematis that you have previously written I would be interested in publishing them in our Journal and would send you a copy when it is published later this year.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please stay safe.

Ken

"Greetings, Ken Black.

Sorry for the delay in reply.

We are Tamara and Valera Bublîi, we live in Ukraine in the Kharkiv region and we are engaged in clematis.

We know your site. We have been following your videos for a long time. We always watch videos from your cozy garden with interest.

We are currently going through a difficult period in our lives... The war is in its fourth year, it is difficult... innocent children and adults are dying, cities are being destroyed, bombs and missiles are flying at hospitals, schools, houses. Russia is a terrorist country!!! A month ago, our daughter had a serious operation, we are undergoing radiation.

At the invitation of Vice President Malcolm Oviatt - Ham, Ian Lang and Richard Green, we became members of the ICIS in 2005. Every year we wrote articles for the magazine, which were sent by Ken Woolfenden.

We do not mind if you use them in the magazine of the British community of clematis lovers.

With best wishes from Ukraine, Tamara & Valera. "

What can I say after that stark reminder that there are far more important things than stressing over a clematis. Spare a thought for Tamara, Valera and their family please.

Stay safe

Ken



Clematis 'Alionushka'