



Newsletter - March 2025

Supplement to the March Newsletter

Here are one or two things that I have received since the March Newsletter was sent out, and rather than wait until June I thought that I would send them out as an addendum.

Midland Group Activities 2024-2025

We held one indoor meeting and eight garden visits with two gardens being visited on each outing. Details of these meeting and garden visits, with the exception of the September visit, are detailed in the 2024-2025 edition of this year's Journal.

In September we visited Hidcote Manor Garden and Kiftsgate Court Garden, Mickleton, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire.

Hidcote Manor

The Hidcote Manor Garden is a National Trust Garden that was created by plantsman Major Lawrence Johnson and is best-known for its linked 'Garden Rooms' of hedges, rare tree shrubs and herbaceous borders. The garden was still flush with late flowering flowers and the herbaceous borders blooming with asters,



dahlias, sunflowers and clematis heracleifolia. The trees, many of which were beginning to show hints of autumnal hues, providing a lovely mix of green tones, signalling the coming of autumn. We walked amongst the old, scented roses along the walkway, small garden houses and garden pools,

Clematis heracleifolia

Kiftsgate Court

After lunch we visited Kiftsgate Court Gardens which is a family run garden featuring rare plants and shrubs including the world famous Kiftsgate Rose. The upper gardens around the house are planted with roses, salvia and agapanthus and clematis plants

scrambled around the edge of raised beds. We escaped a shower by resting in a covered building looking over a water garden with sculptural hearts on rods that provided an area of quiet and reflection. We descended a footpath edged with cyclamen hederifolium, through pine trees to the lower pool with its panoramic views of the county. We finished the day with afternoon tea and browsed the plant sale area selling plants abutilons, salvias, cosmos, asters etc that had been raised on site and displayed in the garden.



The Midlands Group Programme for 2025

Saturday 17 May Hill Close Gardens, Warwick, CV34 6HF.

Entrance Fee £8 over65 £7

Alpine members and helpers Free.

Saturday 14th June Bourton House Garden, Morton on the Hill,
Gloucestershire, GL59 9AE

Entrance Fee £10.

Aston Pottery, Brampton, Oxfordshire, OX18 2BT.

Entrance Fee £5

Wednesday 16th July Morton Hall Garden, Morton Hall Lane,
Redditch, Worcs. B96 6SJ.

Private Group Visit

Entrance Fee £17 including lunch and a guided tour by the
owner and /or head gardener.

5 Beckett Drive, Worcester, WR37 B7.

Entrance Fee £5

Saturday 13th September Coton Manor Garden [Botanical Garden], Guilsborough,
Northampton, NN6 8RQ.

Entrance Fee £11

Kelmarsh, Northampton, NN6 9LY

Entrance Fee £8

I have chosen two venues for each garden day visit for those who wish to spend the day out, but if you feel that you would only like to attend one please let me know.

Any BCS members are welcome to attend the visits and may bring a friend who is not a member. They will be made welcome

Laurie Jones

email lcj5243@yahoo.co.uk

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Dear Reader, can you help me please?

I work at Gravetye Manor which was once home to a Clematis Collection which was the envy of Europe. When James Veitch and sons and Morel of Lyon both closed their potting shed doors, William Robinson brought their stock to Gravetye.

Between himself and his head gardener, Ernest Markham, and the garden team they raised, bred, and introduced some of the stalwarts of the genus still found in gardens across our green isles and further afield working alongside Jackmans of Woking. Both Markham and Robinson wrote seminal books on the subject and their cultivation at Gravetye Manor, the introduction to Markham's monograph was Robinson's last published piece of writing. It's influence spread further still, helping to reinvigorate 'the Virgin's Bower' out of the shadow of Clematis Wilt and contributing to the reignition of public interest.

I am now endeavouring to restore those plants significant to Gravetye and its gardeners back to their rightful places at Gravetye Manor. Some are still commercially available, the likes of 'Huldine', 'Ernest Markham', and 'Gravetye Beauty' remain quite rightly prolific in the trade, sadly I fear many may be lost. Introductions such as 'Miriam Markham', tangutica 'Gravetye Seedling', and 'Kings Birthday' remain elusive.

I would like to kindly request any information and guidance you may be able to offer on the following:

tangutica 'Gravetye [Seedling/Form]', 'Miriam Markham', viticella 'Stolen Kisses', alpina var sibirica 'Gravetye Form', 'Betty Thorn', viticella 'Darkie', 'Kings Birthday', 'Moat Star', 'Poupre Mat', and 'Silver Queen'.

I would love to hear from you regarding clematis under Robinson and Markham at Gravetye Manor, you may contact me by sam.fry1@googlemail.com or write to Gravetye Manor, Sussex, Vowels Ln, East Grinstead RH19 4LJ.

Thank you in advance for your time and help,

Sam Fry