

From the editor

I hope you'll soon feel at home with this new format, and find it both attractive and easier to read. The type of articles remains the same, but there is now room for more of them! Apart from coloured pictures, it's the first major revision of this journal since the Society was formed 57 years ago. Times were different then, but the aims of The Hardy Plant Society remain as important – to foster interest in hardy herbaceous plants, to give information about well- and little-known plants, and to ensure that all worthy plants remain in cultivation.

Trendsetters – with the average age of first-home buyers now 39, it's no wonder that the average age of amateur gardeners is also steadily rising – it just isn't the same when you're renting, as I know only too well. So most of us may be considered 'mature', no longer dedicated followers of fashion.

But are we kidding ourselves? Let's not be smug here – after exposure to TV programmes, garden shows and the enthusiasms of our peers, or perhaps by osmosis, don't we sometimes choose 'must have' plants (and ignore 'must nots', despite their being proven good doers). Our first three writers think

out loud about horticultural fashion, and commend a more independent approach.

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Selinum wallichianum, the 'Queen of Umbellifers', is not well known though a delicate beauty.

The answer lies in the soil – in the spring we heard about gardening on free-draining East Anglian soils. Now we turn to another challenge – heavy clay. It took a lot of hard graft and huge amounts of strawy manure, but Keith and Lorna Ferguson now have a stunning garden with a wide range of thriving plants.

Growing good plants well – we have the usual bounty of planterly suggestions and advice, including growing daylilies, umbellifers, lilies and a different sort of 'butterfly bush', plus planting to enhance a cottage garden or create an inner city haven. Although, as Alex Pankhurst

reminds us, plants can defy our best intentions.

Seed – readers will be familiar with Chris Chadwell's conservation work. A Himalayan bed of his introductions at Sheffield Botanical Garden was opened in June. Chris regularly donates seed to the HPS Seed Exchange, so look out for seed marked CC in the seedlist.

© Chris Chadwell



Chris with *Delphinium brunellianum* on his 2011 expedition in Ladakh, in the Indian western Himalaya.

Good health, horticulturally speaking – we want plants that are garden worthy: healthy leaves, flowers poised above them, tough enough to withstand the worst of the weather, and either intriguing up close or bold enough to make a statement across the lawn or terrace. Here are plenty of recommendations for interesting, often eye-catching plants which are reliable star performers.

Traditionally autumn is the time to reflect, and to plan for the next season. So sit down, get out your notebook, and read on for information, ideas and inspiration! 🌱