

HPS Photographic Competition 2017

Brian Hackett, photo librarian

I'm delighted to report a higher number of entries than ever before, despite the rather rainy summer season, and it was particularly pleasing to have so many entries in the Junior category. The judges were pleased to note the number of submissions which showed evidence of original thinking, with interesting lighting, unusual angles and exciting colouring; these arresting photographs gave them a hard time choosing the finalists.

Many of the winning shots were taken on the photographers' own property, suggesting that time and timing are important ingredients for a great picture.

Category one: individual hardy perennial – whole plant or close-up

**Winner: Peter Williams –
Sanguinaria canadensis f.
multiplex 'Plena' (d)**

Peter's winning entry was photographed in his garden in Seaton Ross, in the Yorkshire Wolds near York.

The judges thought it a very beautiful composition using restrained colours of green and white. They particularly liked the sharp forms and detailing of the leaves in the left foreground flower and the soft focus on the bloom in the centre background – a quiet and totally effective tone poem.



**2nd Place: Nadine Mitschunas
– *Oenothera speciosa* with a
background of *Stipa tenuissima***

Nadine took this photograph on her allotment in Wallingford in early July. The judges appreciated this elegantly artistic picture with its interesting light and colour, and quite a bold use of an unusual viewpoint. They particularly liked the contrast between the grass and the flowers, which proved surprisingly harmonious, and just the right amount of detail in sharp focus.



3rd Place: Louise Sims – *Malus hupehensis* in frost

This entry was considered a very painterly and harmoniously coloured composition. Interestingly, the highly coloured background complements, rather than undermines, the colour of the foreground shrub. The overall colour field effect is excellent.

Louise gardens in West Sussex.

Category two: a plant grouping, border, garden view or HPS event

Winner: Kelly Baldry – Spring border, Hugglescote Surgery

Kelly is no stranger to this competition, in fact he is the most frequent winner in its history! This picture was taken on St George's Day, 23rd April, near Coalville in Leicestershire. It features: *Tiarella cordifolia*, *Crocsmia*, *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Overdam', roses (cultivars unknown) and *Veronica umbrosa* 'Georgia Blue'. This is what the judges thought:

An excellently considered and resolved composition, showing carefully selected colour harmonies. The drifts of white across the picture plane, checked by the clumps of grass, give a floating feel to the image, so that it works in an almost abstract way. The blue, creeping in from the left in the background, anchors the whole composition.



2nd Place: Nadine Mitschunas – *Allium sphaerocephalon* with *Knautia macedonica*, *K. arvensis*, *Achillea millefolium* and *Stipa tenuissima*

Beautiful colour harmony, with lovely detail in the different sections; *Allium sphaerocephalon* looks wonderful, as do the *Knautia* and *Achillea*. The background grasses make the whole picture even more interesting by tying it all together. Nadine took this picture on her allotment in late June.



3rd place: Nadine Mitschunas - *Kniphofia* 'Mango Popsicle' with *Dianthus carthusianorum*, *Berkheya purpurea*, *Stipa calamagrostis* and *Stipa tenuissima*

Here's another terrific picture from Nadine, with superb detail centred on the kniphofias. The picture has great depth, with all the colours and shapes working well throughout the whole field of view.

This photograph was also taken on Nadine's allotment (which must be a sight to behold!), this time in high summer, the end of July.



Category three: a picture by members' children or grandchildren (16 or under) on any garden subject

Winner: Sophie Wilson, age 6 – My gramp's and nana's pond

The judges thought this water garden was a lovely garden feature, with great atmosphere well caught by the photographer. (Front cover)

2nd: Toby Wilkinson, age 14 – Leaf

This is an interesting close-focus image of a single brown oak leaf. The judges thought the slightly different and original viewpoint made this image stand out from many other entries. They were also impressed by the colouring and clear focus.



3rd: Emily Robson, age 11 – *Helianthus*

The judges enjoyed the low viewpoint from which this picture was taken, which emphasised the height of the sunflower. They were also impressed by the cloudy sky, which retained its moody detail.



My thanks once again go to the judges, Ruth Baumberg and Barry Sheridan. Before judging takes place I anonymise all the images, so the judges have no idea who has taken the pictures and each image is considered purely on its photographic merit.

I hope you have been inspired by this year's winners to submit some entries of your own in 2018. The email address for your entries is: photo.comp@hardy-plant.org.uk or you can send them to my usual address: photos@hardy-plant.org.uk

If your picture files are large, to avoid problems with email size-limits please send them via www.wetransfer.com (which is free and simple to use). Full entry details, including the closing date (usually early September), will appear in the July newsletter.

Enjoy these photos in a larger format on the HPS website – www.hardy-plant.org.uk