

Stop press! Reprieve for a 'bad' Conservation plant?

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Fig. 1

In my article about some of the HPS Conservation plants in the Spring 2019 issue of this journal, I included *Pulmonaria* 'Netta Statham'. The story was that it had been given to Mrs Statham by Margery Fish when she admired its "almost entirely silver leaves with deep-blue flowers". The plant in the Conservation Scheme does have deep-blue flowers in dark calyces, but has lightly spotted leaves (fig. 1), so we concluded it was probably a hybrid that might have arisen in Netta Statham's garden, and could not be circulated under that name.

However, in her revised and updated *Pulmonarias* booklet (2nd Edition, published in 2019 by the HPS), Margaret Stone has renamed this cultivar *Pulmonaria* 'Erway Farm', after the home and garden Netta made in Shropshire.

This Conservation Scheme plant should therefore be correctly labelled by anyone who grows it, and I believe it should be reintroduced to the Scheme as *Pulmonaria* 'Erway Farm' since it fulfils the criteria for selecting plants for conservation.

Netta Statham was a founder member of the HPS. She and her husband moved into three adjoining farm cottages in 1952, converting them into a family home for their four children, and developing the garden from the adjoining field. She was a self-proclaimed gardening novice, but rapidly acquired knowledge and friends through letters and "swapping plant parcels" as she put it. Her friends included plantsmen such as Margery Fish and Eric Smith, with whom she carried on a long correspondence; she would send him cake at Christmas

and he would send plants for her garden. A recipe for her fruit cake can be found in her book *My Plants and Other Friends* (published by Erbrook in 1997, now sadly out of print). The cover shows Netta with the author Clay Perry in 1982, when her garden was featured on BBC Gardeners' World (fig. 2). 🍪

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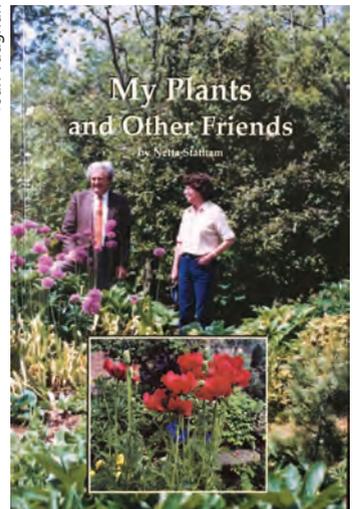


Fig. 2