

# AGS news

Newsletter of the Alpine Garden Society

## Conference is huge success

This year's AGS Conference has been voted a tremendous success by members who attended. More than 100 delegates enjoyed a fascinating, informative and entertaining series of talks from some of the world's leading alpine plantsmen.

The delegates were joined by young horticulturists from RHS Wisley, the National Trust, St Andrews Botanic Garden and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, whose places were sponsored by the AGS as part of our charitable work in encouraging an interest in alpinism among young people.

The conference, over two days, heard lectures by the new AGS President Christopher Bailes, AGS tour leader Harry Jans, Jim Jermyn from Branklyn Garden in Perth, Johan Nilson from Gothenburg Botanical Garden, accomplished alpine plantsman Paul Cumbleton, and the AGS's Associate Editor Robert Rolfe.



**Michael Kammerlander is this year's Lyttel Trophy winner**

The Conference was preceded by the AGM, at which Christopher Bailes was elected President and it was announced that this year's winner of the Lyttel Trophy, the Society's highest honour, is Michael Kammerlander, the German plantsman who has worked tirelessly on the genus *Dionysia*.

**AGM and Conference pictures: pages 12 and 13**

**2018 AGS calendars now available**  
See page 4 for details of how to order

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Fax: +44(0)1386 554801

Email:  
ags@alpinegardensociety.net

Registered charity No. 207478

Annual subscriptions:

Single (UK and Ireland) £35\*

Family (two at same address) £38\*

Junior (under 18/student) £15

Overseas single £37 (\$50)

Overseas family £39 (\$54)

\* £3 deduction for direct debit  
subscribers

### AGS CENTRE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY HOURS

The AGS Centre will close on  
Friday, December 22, and  
will not reopen until Monday,  
January 8. The AGS garden is  
open every day.

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Send items for the March 2018  
issue of AGS News to Jo Gildea at  
the address above or email  
ags@alpinegardensociety.net.  
The deadline is January 31, 2018.

## NOTICEBOARD

### OPPORTUNITY TO SPONSOR THE AGS AT CHELSEA



The Alpine Garden Society is looking for sponsors for its display in the Great Pavilion at next year's Chelsea Flower Show. The display helps to fulfil the Society's charitable objectives by promoting the growing of alpine plants to an audience of 160,000 and is an excellent way to recruit members.

The Society would like to attract financial sponsorship from individuals or businesses. If you run a business that could help in this way, or sponsor us by donating plants or materials, or know a person or a business who might like to help, please let us know. Sponsors will all be acknowledged in a special leaflet about the display, which will be given to Chelsea's visitors. Thank you to those who have already offered their support.

**For further details please contact  
Christine McGregor, Society Director,  
at the AGS Centre (details left).**

## AGS Snowdrop Day

Saturday, February 3, 2018

**Admission is by advance ticket only**

At Ford Hall, Lilleshall National Conferencing Centre,  
Newport, Shropshire TF10 9AT. Ample parking.

**Tickets for lectures, plant sales, tea and coffee,  
two-course lunch:**

**AGS members £35, non-members £45**

**Tickets can be obtained from the AGS Centre.**

### PROGRAMME

- 8.30 Registration, plant sales & coffee
- 10.30 Welcome by the AGS President
- 10.35 Andy Byfield – Into Colchis on the trail of wild snowdrops
- 11.30 David MacLennan – Holding a National Snowdrop Collection
- 12.30 Plant sales and lunch
- 14.00 Wim Boens – Snowdrops' companions: bringing some real colour to the winter garden
- 14.55 Snowdrop question & answer session with the panel of speakers
- 16.00 Close of session and coffee
- 16.30 Event closes

Nurseries attending include: Monksilver, Glen Chantry,  
Woodchippings, Ivycroft, Matt Bishop and Edulis Nursery

There will also be an AGS stand with a selection of  
gardening books and merchandise for sale.

**Book now to be sure of your place**

## NOTICEBOARD

# 2018 AGS CALENDARS

The AGS **WALL CALENDAR** features beautiful images taken by some of the Society's best photographers.

The calendar is A3 size when opened up and the date panels include enough space for you to write down appointments and AGS events!

The calendars cost just £5.50 each, or two for £10, with free postage in the UK. Postage is £2.50 for the rest of Europe and £3.50 for the rest of the world.

Stock is limited so order now to avoid disappointment.

## ALSO AVAILABLE

Our popular **DESK CALENDAR** comes in a CD case and costs just £4.50, or buy two for £8. Postage rates as above.



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Mrs V Lee  
R J A Leeds  
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B Russ  
Dr C Grey-Wilson VMH  
J J McGregor  
Prof J E Good OBE  
Prof A J Richards

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R J A Leeds  
Dr L Joyce

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**Director of the Society**  
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C Bailes  
**Treasurer**  
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Mrs D Clement  
**Director of Shows**  
M Rogerson  
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Vacant

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**Office Manager**  
Mrs J Cooper  
**Editor**  
J Fitzpatrick  
**Associate Editor**  
R G Rolfe

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**To retire in 2018**  
Dr C Grey-Wilson VMH  
P Sheasby  
**To retire in 2019**  
R Barker  
P G Liverman  
**To retire in 2020**  
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Dr A Cooper  
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## TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE SOCIETY'S CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNTS FOR 2016-2017

The Consolidated Accounts combine the income and expenditure accounts of the Alpine Garden Society and its two subsidiary companies: AGS Publications Ltd and AGS Expeditions Ltd. The full version of the Consolidated Accounts was approved by the Trustee Board at its meeting on October 21. It will be sent to the Charity Commission in fulfilment of the Society's statutory obligations. A summarised version only, consisting of

the Statement of Financial Activities and the Consolidated Balance Sheet, is presented to the AGM. It will also be made available in the Society's Newsletter and on its website. Any member wishing to see a full set of the accounts may obtain one by making a written application to the Society's Director. The comments that follow relate to items in the full accounts and their accompanying notes only where significant variations occur

compared with the previous year or where a particular feature needs to be highlighted. If there are small differences between numbers in these accounts and those published last year, these arise either because of the late submission of information or changes in the way sums of money have been attributed to particular purposes.

The Society is grateful to its independent auditors, Messrs Kendall Wadley LLP, not only for preparation of the accounts but also for their advice on a number of financial issues during the year.

This is my seventh report to the Society as your Honorary Treasurer. My thanks are due, as always, to your Director, Christine McGregor, and her staff at the AGS Centre who have supported and helped me over the year.

## **1. Statement of financial activities for the year ended August 31, 2017.**

### **1.1 Income**

The Society's income together with that of its subsidiary companies during 2016-2017 was £601,221. This was made up of: subscriptions, gifts, investment income and the trading income of the charity itself and that of its two subsidiary companies. The Society's income, including the companies' covenanted trading profits of £9,859 (1.5 below) was £335,654.

### **1.2 Subscriptions**

This year has seen a further fall in income from subscriptions: £139,969 against £142,867 in 2015-2016 and £148,553 in 2014-15.

### **1.3 Gifts, donations and legacies**

As always the Society is most grateful for those legacies and donations that are received and thanks most sincerely members who have assisted the Society in this way. Donations and covenants were £19,844, rather lower than last year's £28,083.

### **1.4 Investment income**

Investment income was £64,094, up from £55,584 in 2015-16 and £56,887 in 2014-15.

### **1.5 Income of the two trading companies and funds covenanted to the Society**

The two Limited Companies performed less

well this year than last. This was largely a result of much reduced profit margins on the various expeditions. Combined trading income for AGS Expeditions Ltd and AGS Publications Ltd was £275,426 compared with £339,970 in 2015-16; expenditure was £261,806 resulting in a combined surplus of £13,620, with £9,859 being covenanted to the Society compared with £32,387 in 2015-16.

### **1.6 Other activities for generating funds**

£101,888 (roughly the same as last year) was raised by a variety of other activities. These included: seed sales (£12,275), shows (£45,632), advertising (£7,926), the conference and other events (£29,180), Chelsea stand (£4,368).

## **2 Expenditure**

Total expenditure by the Society (excluding that of the subsidiary companies) was £442,008 compared with £416,665 for 2016, an increase of £25,343. The majority of the increase can be attributed to major projects (£49,189). Apart from these, the main items of expenditure were employment (£135,000), support costs (£102,000), direct charitable activities (£125,000) and governance (£6,227).

### **2.1 Net (outgoing/incoming) resources**

A deficit of £102,593 has been recorded for this year compared with that for last year of £45,000. As in earlier years, there was a need to sell investments (£65,000 this year) to make up the shortfall between income and expenditure. The sale was offset by a buoyant stock market (3.1 below).

## **3 Assets and investments**

### **3.1 Performance of the Society's investments**

The market value of the Society's investments rose by £241,582 over the year, from £2,455,288 to £2,640,866, an increase of just under 10%.

### **3.2 The Society's assets at August 31, 2017**

The total value of the Society's assets at the end of the year had risen by £138,988 to £3,055,823, against £2,916,834 last year (roughly a 4% rise).

## **4. Notes on the consolidated balance sheet as at August 31, 2017**

This shows the make-up of the Society's current assets and liabilities.

**Tangible fixed assets** of £279,069 include the value of the lease on the Society's headquarters building, its fixtures and fittings; and trophies, medals and library.

**Investments** stand at £2,640,866.

**Current assets** amounting to £198,590 (compared with £290,075 last year) include: stock (mostly books); debts outstanding in the Society's favour; and cash, either in hand or banked. The Society's debts being subtracted, the net current assets stand at £135,888.

## **5. Commentary**

This year's accounts show a deficit of expenditure over income of £101,888, considerably larger than that of last year. Two contributory factors can be identified. On one hand, spending on major projects such as the Mardale Mountain Meadow conservation project, the Society's website and a down payment on the new alpine house at Pershore. On the other, a considerable reduction in income from AGS Expeditions.

## **6. Conclusion**

Little has changed during 2016-2017 to vary

last year's and earlier years' conclusions. Although, year on year, expenditure exceeds income, overall the Society is financially healthy and as a result is able to invest in major progressive projects in pursuit of its charitable objectives. This is in large part because it holds substantial investments that in recent years have greatly increased in value due to a buoyant stock market. Those resources also cushion the persistent losses. But by the same token they hide the fact that the AGS does not run on its membership subscription, income from which amounted to only 40% of the Society's income and offset only 32% of expenditure. Thus the message of earlier years must be repeated yet again. If the high quality and scale of services and activities enjoyed by members is to be maintained and the Society is to fulfil its charitable obligations, there must be an energetic and enduring commitment by the present membership to recruit new members.

**John Galloway, Hon. Treasurer,  
November 2017**

## **Independent auditor's statement to the Trustees of the Alpine Garden Society**

The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprise the summary Consolidated Balance Sheet as at August 31, 2017, and the summary Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of the Alpine Garden Society for the year ended August 31, 2017. We expressed an unqualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated October 21, 2017. Those financial statements, and the summary of financial statements, do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on those financial statements.

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (as amended for accounting periods commencing from January 1, 2016). Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the Alpine Garden Society.

### **Trustees' responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the charities SORP.

### **Auditor's responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 810, 'Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements'.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion, the summary financial statements derived from the audited financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of the Alpine Garden Society for the year ended August 31, 2017, are consistent, in all material respects, with those financial statements.

Jonathan Marston BA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) for and on behalf of Kendall Wadley LLP	27 Sansome Walk Worcester WR1 1NU October 22, 2016
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	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>				
Voluntary income				
Subscriptions	139,969		139,969	142,867
Other voluntary income	6,844	13,000	19,844	28,083
Activities for generating funds				
Advertising income – The Alpine Gardener	7,926		7,926	10,054
Seed distributions	12,275		12,275	13,722
Binders, badges and shirts	1,277		1,277	964
Conferences and events	29,180		29,180	22,742
Major exhibits	4,368		4,368	6,727
Show donations	45,632		45,632	43,413
Fritillaria Group	2,840		2,840	4,725
Bad debts	(1,610)		(1,610)	(228)
Trading income from subsidiary companies	275,426		275,426	339,970
Investment income	59,650	4,444	64,094	55,584
<b>Total income</b>	<b>583,777</b>	<b>17,444</b>	<b>601,221</b>	<b>668,623</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>				
Cost of generating funds				
Staff costs	134,943		134,943	126,974
Journals	58,061		58,061	65,570
Seed distribution costs	8,262		8,262	9,722
Show expenditure	41,115		41,115	46,283
Conference expenditure	23,615		23,615	18,819
Major exhibits	14,139		14,139	12,546
Fritillaria Group	2,262		2,262	2,031
Major projects	49,189		49,189	28,246
Other direct costs	45,834	7,610	53,444	54,341
Other support costs	50,751		50,751	45,369
Expenditure of subsidiary companies	261,806		261,806	296,831
Governance costs	6,227		6,227	6,764
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>696,204</b>	<b>7,610</b>	<b>703,814</b>	<b>713,496</b>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before investment gains	(112,427)	9,834	(102,593)	(44,873)
Net gains on investments	223,837	17,745	241,582	239,493
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	111,410	27,579	138,989	194,620
Transfer between funds	13,000	(13,000)		
Net movement in funds	124,410	14,579	138,989	194,620
Fund balances at September 1, 2016	2,728,879	187,955	2,916,834	2,722,214
<b>Fund balances at August 31, 2017</b>	<b>2,853,289</b>	<b>202,534</b>	<b>3,055,823</b>	<b>2,916,834</b>

## Summarised Consolidated Balance Sheet as at August 31, 2017

	2017 £	2016 £	2017 £	2016 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible assets	279,069	278,244		
Investments	2,640,866	2,455,282		
			2,919,935	2,733,52
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Stocks	56,926	58,874		
Debtors	43,562	105,161		
Cash at bank and In hand	98,102	126,040		
	198,590	290,075		
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(62,702)</b>	<b>(106,767)</b>		
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		135,888		183,308
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		<b>3,055,823</b>		<b>2,916,834</b>
<b>Income Funds</b>				
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
E F Hendry Bequest Fund	194,086	177,078		
Wilscher Fund	8,448	8,766		
David Harding Foundation	-	2,111		
		202,534		187,955
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Designated Funds	355,522	351,809		
Other charitable funds				
General Funds	2,497,767	2,377,070		
		2,853,289		2,728,879
		<b>3,055,823</b>		<b>2,916,834</b>

### Trustees' Statement

The summarised accounts contained in this report are extracted from the financial statements prepared by the Society and approved by the Trustees on October 21, 2017. The full financial statements were externally scrutinised by Kendall Wadley LLP, the Society's statutory auditors, and give an unqualified opinion. The full financial statements will be submitted to the Charity Commission in due course.

The summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Society. For further information the Trustees Report, the full financial statements and the statutory auditors' report on those financial statements should be consulted. Copies can be obtained from: AGS Centre, Avon Bank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP. – Christine McGregor (Director)

## News from the AGS Trustee Board

**New website and Society rebranding:** The technical side of the work to build a new website is well under way. Part of this process involves a redesign of the appearance of the website as well as an image rebranding for the Society. Once the new website is launched the rebranding will be incorporated in all AGS publicity material and publications so that it corresponds with the website. The content of the website is also being reviewed and developed. Laura Armstrong is taking the lead on this as our new Web & Social Media Editor. Her role will be similar to John Fitzpatrick's work on the journal, but will be focused online. Laura may be in touch from time to time to discuss article ideas and contributions. Jim McGregor is continuing to advise and assist with the complex development work and transition process for the new site.

**Local Group Co-ordinators:** Members received a report by the two local group co-ordinators, David Charlton and Ben Parmee, on activities since the last meeting.

**Social Media Support:** Paddy Parmee Paddy is the volunteer contact whom local groups can approach for assistance with social media. She has visited a number of AGS groups to give talks and advice on how they can set up a social media presence to help promote activities. Paddy has also made a great contribution to improving the Society Facebook and Twitter activity. The Board recorded their thanks to Paddy for her tremendous input in this area.

**Local Group insurance contribution:** It is the intention to issue insurance invoices to groups before Christmas and payment will be due by August 31, 2018. This should enable groups to record their payments more easily and any group which may have paid in advance will be issued with a credit note.

**Online Plant Encyclopaedia:** Additional entries and images have been added since the last newsletter. Discussions are taking place on how the Encyclopaedia will fit into the redesigned website.

**Editorial Board:** It was decided to establish an Editorial Board whose role will be to monitor/advise on Society publications including the journal and new books.

**AGS National Shows:** There is to be a new show at RHS Wisley and possibly another in East Cheshire. Both Pershore shows will move to a new venue nearer the town. Changes to opening times were also discussed with a view to adopting a common opening time for visitors to the plant sales and the show.

**Mardale Mountain Meadow Conservation Project:** The Board received the third quarterly report on the work undertaken so far. The fencing is working well with no ingress of deer into the area. A circular trail around the enclosure was completed in August and the trail has been waymarked. An information leaflet is to be produced. Further surveys of some of the surrounding crags are also being undertaken. Some notable species including *Juncus triglumis* (three-flowered rush), *Botrychium lunaria* (moonwort) and *Empetrum hermaphroditum* (hermaphrodite crowberry) were discovered, the latter having been presumed lost from Riggindale.

## AGS TRAVEL AWARDS AND GRANTS Applications for 2018

The Alpine Garden Society considers applications for AGS Travel Awards annually. Applications for these awards must be received by January 31, 2018, at the latest.

### TRAVEL AWARDS

Each year the Society gives a number of Travel Awards to enthusiasts wishing to gain field experience in the serious study of alpine plants in native habitats. Applications should be for clearly defined projects, though awards have been made to those wishing to participate in an AGS tour if it complements a particular area of interest.

### HENDRY FUND GRANTS

In addition, grants for specific alpine-related projects are available financed by the E. F. Hendry Fund. Application forms and further details for Travel Awards and Hendry Fund grants are available on the AGS website or by contacting the AGS Centre, or email: [ags@alpinegardensociety.net](mailto:ags@alpinegardensociety.net)

### MERLIN TRUST & ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY: Travel scholarships for 2018

In 2018 the Merlin Trust is offering jointly with the Alpine Garden Society up to six fully paid travel scholarships on AGS-organised plant tours.

If you would like to receive information about the tours and an application form, please send your contact details to: Sarah Carlton, Secretary of The Merlin Trust, St Andrews Botanic Garden, Canongate, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 8RT.  
Email: [info@merlin-trust.org.uk](mailto:info@merlin-trust.org.uk)



Congratulations to the AGS Shropshire Group who won a Gold Medal for their display at this year's Shrewsbury Flower Show. The display included a cultivation section with a video display on how to plant alpines, information boards and samples of compost ingredients. The display was much admired by visitors to the show and some new members were recruited.

## NOTICEBOARD



A display of plants by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, with a large pot of *Arisarum vulgare* in the foreground



Jim Jermyn delivered an excellent lecture on Branklyn Garden in Perth, where he is Horticultural Consultant

## AGM AND CONFERENCE PICTURES



Clare Oates receives the AGS Medal from newly elected AGS President Christopher Bailes



Philip and Diane Blyth from Norfolk receive a Local Group Award and the Sussex Weald Silver Jubilee Trophy



Exhibitor Bob Worsley receives an AGS Gold Medal



Nurseryman Rob Potterton receives the Sir William and Lady Lawrence Award for his extensive work with alpinism



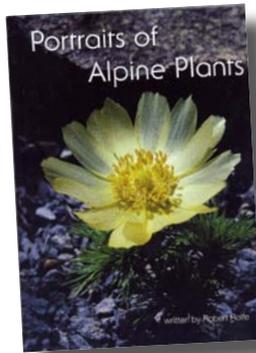
Johan Nilson from Gothenburg Botanical Garden spoke about some of his favourite plants there



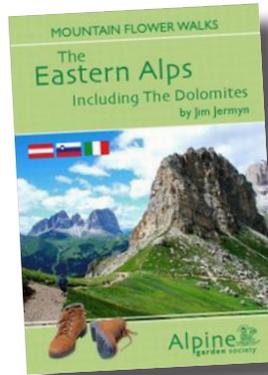
Wol and Sue Staines receive the Kath Dryden Award in recognition of their work with *Galanthus*

# CHRISTMAS BOOK SALE

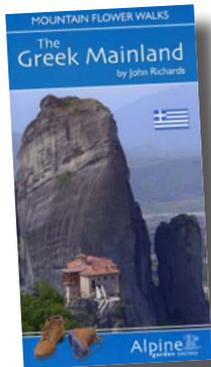
Portraits of Alpine Plants by Robert Rolfe  
Cover price £25  
**Sale price £5**  
(code 033)



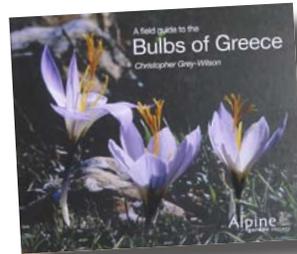
Mountain Flower Walks: The Eastern Alps by Jim Jermyn  
Cover price £22  
**Sale price £5**  
(code 418)



Mountain Flower Walks: The Greek Mainland by John Richards  
Cover price £22.99  
**Sale price £5**  
(code 031)



A Field Guide to the Bulbs of Greece by Christopher Grey-Wilson  
Cover price £26  
**Sale price £10** (code 034)



**Or order both the above Greece titles for just £12**

**To order use the form on page 21 or visit the online AGS Book Shop at [www.alpinegardensociety.net](http://www.alpinegardensociety.net)**

**AGS Bedfordshire Group Conference and Plant Sale**  
**'Modern-Day Plant Hunters'**  
Saturday May 12, 2018, at Biggleswade Weatherly Centre, SG18 8JH. £20 plus optional £5 for lunch.  
Speakers to include Harry Jans  
For more information and booking form visit [www.bedfordshirealpines.com](http://www.bedfordshirealpines.com)

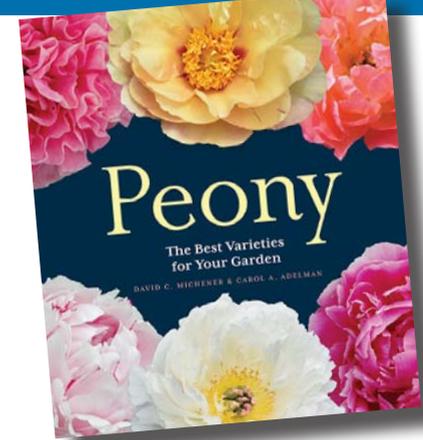
# NEW BOOKS

**SAVE 27%**

**Peony: The Best Varieties for Your Garden** By David C. Michener and Carol A. Adelman

This book, due to be published in December, features growing advice for one of the most beautiful and popular flowering plants. Enthusiastic gardeners and peony collectors alike will learn the history of the plant, discover the different types of peonies available and enjoy profiles of the best 194 varieties. Growing information includes details on climate, soil, light, planting and watering. Helpful lists detail the best peonies for specific situations.

David C. Michener is associate curator at the University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens and



Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor, where he is overseeing the rejuvenation of the Peony Garden, the largest public collection of historic herbaceous peonies in North America.

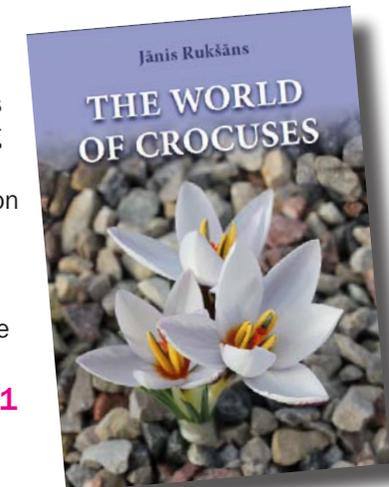
Carol A. Adelman and her husband own and operate Adelman Peony Gardens near Salem, Oregon.

Cover price **£21.99**  
**AGS members' price £16**  
Order code 942

**The World of Crocuses** by Jānis Rukšāns

This monograph is the result of the author's more than 50 years' experience of growing crocuses. It includes descriptions of 235 species, which are accompanied by distribution maps and colour photographs. In total the 568-page book has more than 1,700 colour pictures. It also includes information about the cultivation of crocuses and a key for all the species included in the book.

Cover price **£52** **AGS members' price £41**  
Order code 937  
**Special overseas postage rates: Europe £13; rest of the world £15 (airmail £21)**



Order code	Title and author	Members' price
	 <b>Denotes AGS publications</b>	
	<b>GENERAL ALPINE TITLES</b>	
032	 <b>Alpine Gardening for Beginners by John Good</b>	£6.50
772	Alpines from Mountain to Garden by Richard Wilford	£23.00
028	Alpine Plants: Ecology for Gardeners by John Good & David Millward	£12.00
292	Alpines: An Essential Guide by Michael Mitchell	£15.00
857	 <b>Growing Alpines in Containers by John Good</b>	£5.00
033	 <b>Portraits of Alpine Plants by Robert Rolfe</b> **LOW PRICE**	£5.00
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## GOTHENBURG

May 29-31, 2018

Leader: Ray Drew

Cost: to be confirmed

Gothenburg Botanical Garden is one of the largest and arguably one of the best alpine botanical gardens in Europe, if not the world. Since the appointment of its first director Carl Skottsberg, the garden has been synonymous with rare and unusual plant collections.

The garden has the world's largest collection of bulbs and tuberous plants along with an incomparable collection of *Dionysia* species brought back as living material or seed from numerous collecting trips. There are over 500 species and cultivated varieties of *Rhododendron*, many of which should be at their best. There are as many as 16,000 plant species outdoors as well as 4,000 species in the greenhouses: obviously not all would be in flower at the time of our visit. Among them are Sweden's finest collection of 1,500 orchids.

Expect to see trilliums and cypripediums in the woodland beds along with a breathtaking display of shortias and other choice woodland plants, rare trees and shrubs, all grown to perfection. Under glass we would have a private tour of the collections given by the people who have collected a number of the accessions. Although perhaps past its best at this time of year, the Per Wendelbo Memorial Garden, devoted to geophytes from around the world, will still have much of interest to see and photograph.



Arriving in Gothenburg mid-morning on the first of a three-day stay, we book in to a four-star hotel then head off to the gardens for early afternoon, staying on for an informal 'potting shed' party where we can chat with some of the garden's experts. Back to the Hotel for a meal, drinks and informal discussion meeting before bed. The next day we will enjoy formal tours of the glasshouses, frames and garden, with behind-the-scenes access. An optional visit to the Natural History Museum (within easy walking distance of the gardens) could be arranged in the afternoon. The next day will include informal tours of the orchid houses, cacti, succulent and tropical collection and garden/arboretum. It should be noted that a reasonable degree of fitness is required as access to the rock garden and beyond involves negotiating a very steep slope.

For further information on these tours please contact the AGS Centre.  
Phone 01386 554790 or email [ags@alpinegardensociety.net](mailto:ags@alpinegardensociety.net)

## WESTERN CAPE

August 30 to September 13, 2018

Leader: Callan Cohen

Cost: in the region of £4,400

South Africa owes much of its unique botany to the tiny Cape Floral Kingdom, situated in the mountains of the southernmost tip of the continent.

Although tiny compared with the world's other floral kingdoms, it encompasses a staggering diversity of plant species that are found only here (for example, there are over 670 species of *Erica*!). In addition, the adjacent Succulent Karoo is the world's richest area for succulents, and the clay soils that form the common border of these two regions hold the greatest concentration of bulbous species in the world. We'll explore all these areas in spring, the peak time for flowering.

We'll begin our exploration on the 70km long mountainous spine of the Cape Peninsula. Here the Table Mountain National Park protects the unique 'fynbos' vegetation and patches of rare Afromontane forest.

Nestled below Table Mountain is the world-famous Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, where we will have time to explore the wide collection of plants from across the country.



The sandy shores of the West Coast, just north of Cape Town, hold a completely different flora, and we'll explore both the flashy displays of daisies on the coastal sands and the endemic-rich granites of the West Coast National Park. The nearby shales in the Darling area have a profusion of bulbs, such as romuleas, babianas and the stunning geissorhizas.

We'll also explore the southern edge of Namaqualand, where the Cape Mountains give way to the valleys and plains of the arid Karoo and the landscape is dominated by small succulent bushes, prone to bursting into pink flower at this time of year. We will stay at charming local guesthouses and lodges.

**UPCOMING TOURS: The Peloponnese in October 2018.**

**Patagonia (new route) in November/December 2018.**

**More details in the March issue of AGS News.**

The AGS tours to Tasmania in January and to Peru in March are fully booked

For further information on these tours please contact the AGS Centre.  
Phone 01386 554790 or email [ags@alpinegardensociety.net](mailto:ags@alpinegardensociety.net)

## SIKKIM

**Around June 19-July 9, 2018**

**Leader: Harry Jans**

**Cost: in the region of £3,500**

Day 1 – International flight to Dehli and domestic flight to Bagdogra.

Day 2 – Transfer to Darjeeling, crowned by the majestic Himalayas and fondly called the ‘Queen of the Hills’.

Day 3 – Heritage Walk covering the Bhotay Busty Monastery and the Tibetan Self Help Centre. Drive to the Takvar Tea Factory for tea tasting.

Day 4 – Transfer to Gangtok passing through attractive temperate forests which are the habitat for orchid species and arisaemas.

Day 5 – Sightseeing in Gangtok covering the Plant Conservatory, Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, local market and experience the Cable Car ride.

Day 6 – Botanising at Tsomgo Lake and Kyongnosla Alpine Sanctuary, rich in both flora and fauna. Rare, endangered ground orchids and rhododendrons are among the important plants present.

Day 7 – Travel to Lachung through remote areas with narrow valleys, botanising en route. Lachung provides the base for exploring Yumthang, the Valley of Flowers, a paradise for nature lovers and botanists.

Day 8 – Drive to Dambung valley to explore the rich forest where we will find *Iris*, *Pleione*, *Arisaema*, *Cardiocrinum*, *Asarum*, *Paris*, *Roscoea*, *Trillidium*, *Rhododendron* and many more.

Day 9 – Botanise in Yumthang valley, famous for *Rhododendron* species.



Day 10 – Further botanising in Yumthang valley.

Day 11 – Explore the Yume Samdong area and zero point (Zadong).

Day 12 – Transfer to Thangu.

Day 13 – Botanise in Yathang valley to see *Cypripedium* species.

Day 14 – A full day in the Thangu area.

Day 15 – Botanise east of Thangu towards Jachu Valley. We will encounter plants such as *Arenaria*, *Saxifraga*, *Gentiana*, *Thermopsis barbata*, *Meconopsis horridula*, *Cyananthus*, *Omphalogramma* and more.

Day 16 – Transfer back to Gangtok.

Day 17 – Transfer to Kalimpong, botanising along the way.

Day 18 – Fly to Dehli then drive to Agra.

Day 19 – Visit Taj Mahal and Agra Fort.

Day 20 – Flight home.



*Iris acutiloba* subsp. *longitepala* and *Iris meda*

## IRAN

**Around April 17 to May 2, 2018**

**Leaders: Bob & Rannveig Wallis**

**Cost: In the region of £3,250**

With its snowy winters and dry summers, the climate of Iran has seen the evolution of a huge diversity of bulbs and tuberous-rooted plants. The north-west of the country is an area of high plateau punctuated by enormous peaks, mainly of volcanic origin, and fertile slopes covered in *Allium*, *Iris*, *Tulipa*, *Corydalis*, *Fritillaria*, *Colchicum* and *Crocus* which flower in, or soon after, the snow melts.

We will take in arid steppes where, for example, *Iris meda* and *Fritillaria gibbosa* can be found; moister woodlands where many orchids abound; and rocky hillsides which are the home of, among others, *Fritillaria imperialis*, *Tulipa biflora* and *Anemone biflora*.

Particular highlights will include:

- ‘Eight-Frit Mountain’, which is really a high pass over the Avroman mountains,

where not only are there eight species of *Fritillaria* but also the recently described *Iris zagrica*, alliums and red tulips (possibly *Tulipa systola*).

- Kuh-e-Sabalan, a volcano (4,811m) which is readily accessible and boasts a kaleidoscope of *Iris reticulata* (*I. hyrcana*) and *Tulipa humilis* colour forms.

- A pass over the Talysh mountains, travelling from the dry high plateau side to the misty Caspian forests on the east side to see the newly described *Paeonia wendelboi*, *P. cf. tomentosa*, *Anemone caucasica*, *Corydalis angustifolia*, *Fritillaria kotschyana*, *Iris imbricata* and a host of other choice taxa. There is even a snowdrop (*Galanthus transcausicus*).

- Another new *Iris* has been described near to Zanzan, so we aim to go to the misty hillsides where *I. acutiloba* subsp. *longitepala* grows among pink *Aethionema*. This pass is also the home of colourful *Tulipa humilis* forms and *Fritillaria olivieri*.

- And we may take in the wonderful rock carvings of Taq-e Bostan.

The tour will start and finish in Tehran’s Imam Khomeini International Airport.

For further information on this tour please contact the AGS Centre.  
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*Kniphofia caulescens* and, below, *Protea caffra*



## DRAKENSBURG

January 15-28, 2018

Leaders: Paul Cardy & Callan Cohen

Cost: London to London, £4,655;  
Johannesburg to Johannesburg,  
£3,795

The Drakensberg Mountains are one of the largest areas of alpine habitat in Africa, and the South African summer is the perfect time to catch the peak flowering. Over 2,200 plant species have been documented here, with a staggering 400 endemics.

We'll drive up to lofty heights where South Africa and Lesotho meet below Sentinel Peak. Sweeping panoramic views provide a backdrop to floral wonders such as *Crocoshia pearsei*, *Eucomis bicolor*, *Dianthus basuticus*

and *Agapanthus* and *Moraea* species. At Oxbow, in Lesotho, extensive boggy meadows host specialities like *Disa fragrans* while spectacular clumps of *Xerophyta viscosa* are found at the base of cliffs. The spectacular Sani Pass is the gem of the southern Drakensberg. Basalt cliffs support tufts of brilliant red *Gladiolus flanaganii*, while bogs on the plateau have a carpet of pink *Rhodohypoxis baurii*. A host of endemic helichrysums, *Jamesbrittenia lesutica* and spectacular orange-red *Gladiolus saundersii* adorn the Black Mountains.

Three endemic species of 'old man' *Huttonaea* orchids hang from damp rock faces in mist-belt forests. Indeed we'll see a range of orchids: *Corycium*, *Habenaria*, *Satyrium*, *Schizochilus*, *Disperis*, *Brownleea* and both green devil orchid and death orchid.

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*Iris mariae* in a meadow and, right, *Iris haynei*



## BULBS OF GALILEE & THE NEGEV

March 10-19, 2018

Leaders: Oron Peri & Kurt Vickery

Cost: London to London, £2,465; Tel Aviv to Tel Aviv, £2,215

Israel offers the perfect conditions for bulbous plants to proliferate and they have, with more than 200 species. On magical Mount Hermon are clumps of elegant green and purple *Fritillaria hermonis*, richly-hued forms of *Hyacinthus orientalis* and some gorgeous irises, including white-topped *Iris hermona* and the beautiful *Iris lortetii*.

Israel has no less than eight species of *Oncocyclus* irises, these with perhaps the most spectacular blooms in this genus. On Mount Gilboa we'll find the impressive dark purple-pink flowers of *Iris haynei* and near Nazareth the

wonderful *Iris bismarckiana*, the white, purple-lined standards lighting up the slopes.

Everywhere we go the names resonate through the ages: Nazareth, Judea and Upper Galilee, and indeed the Jordan Valley, where we'll visit the Dead Sea en route to the desert environments of the Negev. Along roadsides are the tall yellow-flowered spikes of *Fritillaria libanotica* and we'll also find *Gladiolus atroviolaceus* and strange *Dipcadi erythraeum*. Here are three more stunning *Oncocyclus* irises: the bright, clear purple *Iris mariae* and two almost black species, the well-named *Iris atrofusca* and the recently described *Iris hieruchamensis*, together putting on an unforgettable show.

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*Crocus biflorus* subsp. *crewei* and, right, *Crocus calanthus*

## CROCUSES OF THE TAURUS MOUNTAINS

March 10-22, 2018

Leaders: Yasemin Konuralp & Osman Erol

Cost: London to London, £2,375;  
Antalya to Dalaman, £2,150

A staggering 28 species of *Crocus* are on the agenda for this tour. Your Turkish leaders have helped make many new discoveries in western Turkey; indeed Yasemin has one named after her, *Crocus yaseminiae*.

We'll seek *Crocus roseoviolaceus*, *Crocus beydaglarensis*, ice-blue *Crocus baytopiorum* and *Crocus fleischeri* with its brilliant reddish style. On the high pastures of Gembos Yayla egg-yolk yellow *Crocus gembosii* and purple-striped blue *Crocus mavii* hybridise

freely producing a kaleidoscopic array of colours. The gorgeous, large and very rare *Crocus calanthus* inhabits cedar of Lebanon forests and, in more open locales, we'll see *Crocus xanthosus* and lilac *Crocus katrancensis*.

Close to Antalya we'll find *Crocus* aff. *tauri* and another *Crocus* discovered so recently it doesn't yet have a name. Here also are *Crocus antalyensis* subsp. *antalyensis* and *Crocus ziyeretensis*. There will be plenty of other spring bulbs on show with stands of *Galanthus elwesii* blooming under oriental planes and the blue stars of *Scilla bifolia* everywhere.

Two special bulbs we'll encounter on Baba Dağ are *Fritillaria forbesii* and *Scilla forbesii*. Alongside paths are *Orchis sezikiana*, yellow *Fritillaria carica*, blue *Chionodoxa forbesii*, pink *Anthemis rosea*, *Corydalis paschei*, *Cyclamen alpinum*, rare *Iris pamphylica* and attractive *Iris stenophylla*.

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*Ophrys drumana* and, above, *Cypripedium calceolus*

## THE VERCORS

May 25–June 1, 2018

Leaders: Stefano Doglio & Paul Green

Cost: London to London, £1,695; Lyon to Lyon, £1,525

A panorama of the snow-capped Alps forms a splendid backdrop to the Vercors, an entrancing mosaic of subalpine meadows, karst, gorges and mountain forests.

This is one of Western Europe's foremost wilderness areas – a limestone masterpiece whose origin lies far back in coral reefs that flourished in the Cretaceous period. The Vercors offers some of France's most beautiful scenery and a wonderful range of fauna and flora, including meadows full of colourful

finery with massed displays of elder-flowered, lady and military orchids accompanied by cowslips, oxlips, wild tulips and pasque flowers.

We'll encounter two very special orchids, the renowned lady's slipper and the endemic bee orchid *Ophrys drumana*.

Globe and vanilla orchids are two of over 60 species of orchids known from the Vercors. Butterflies will be starting to really come into their own. Both purple and lesser purple emperor frequent tranquil wooded valleys, and twin-spot and Niobe will be among a host of fritillaries.

Idyllic Vercors is home to some of the finest flowers and butterflies in Europe and is an area of great natural beauty encapsulating the very best of the French countryside.

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*Glaucidium palmatum* in Hakuba-jiri's famous snowy valley



## JAPAN & VLADIVOSTOK

May 26-June 9, 2018

Leaders: Ian Green, Shigeto Tsukie & Seda Soylu

Cost: see Greentours website

Though the south of Japan's memorably scenic archipelago experiences a sub-tropical climate, the northernmost parts of the island chain have more in common with Siberia. A visit in June thus allows us to find many early spring bulbs where the snows are still receding and the more exotic flora of lower latitudes and elevations.

Hakuba-jiri's famous snowy valley on the slopes of Mount Shirouma (almost

3,000m) hold *Glaucidium palmatum*, *Anemone flaccida*, *Primula jesoana*, *Paris japonica* and the delicate, palest pink *Pogonia japonica*. A cable car allows an easy ascent of Mount Nyugasa in the centre of the Honshu Highlands. Here are *Convallaria keiskei*, *Primula japonica*, *Rhododendron kaempferi*, *Polygonatum humile* and *Rhododendron japonicum*. At Oyomi Bog deepest blue *Iris laevigata* is found with *Iris sanguinea*.

Lilies will be a major feature of this tour, as on Niigata we'll see *Lilium rubellum* growing amongst *Rhododendron japonicum*, while Oonokame hosts both *Hemerocallis middendorffii* var. *exaltata* and *Lilium maculatum*. *Primula nipponica* and *Geum pentapetalum* are two of Mount Zaou's many beautiful flowers.

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*Gymnocalycium capillense* and, right, *Trichocereus terscheckii*



## ARGENTINA CACTI

October 1-17, 2018

Leaders: Willy Smith & Ian Green

Cost: London to London. £5,595;  
Buenos Aires to Buenos Aires, £4,845

A vast array of cacti species are found in the mind-boggling landscapes of north-western Argentina, ranging from 300-year-old *Trichocereus pasacana* growing 3m tall, to the improbably tiny *Blossfeldia liliputana*.

The extraordinary growth forms of these cacti are many and varied and so are the often magnificent blooms. Tall, white-hairy *Cleistocactus hyalacanthus* has beautiful tubular pink flowers while the impressive orange-yellow blooms of *Lobivia aurea* dwarf the plant itself. We'll see saguaro-like *Trichocereus terscheckii* and exquisite *Parodia mesembrina*, the globular ball of spines overtopped by brilliant yellow blooms. *Soehrensia formosa* is a study

of brilliance, its scarlet blooms obvious from afar, and we'll see the extraordinary *Rebutia senilis*, a beauty whose squat little body is garlanded with magnificent blooms of red, yellow or orange.

Hieroglyph-engraved menhirs sit among dry Chaco forest where the arching columns of *Echinopsis grandiflora* serve as a vase for their red flowers and *Rebutia jujuyana* is encircled with jubilant orange blooms. We'll find plenty of evidence of the Inca's Empire of the Sun and other cultural wonders include picturesque Purmamarca, nestling at the foot of the Mountain of Seven Colours, its church adorned with cactus woodwork!

Call Greentours on 01298 83563, email enquiries@greentours.co.uk or visit the website at www.greentours.co.uk

# Invite a friend to join the AGS

Introduce a friend to the benefits and services offered to members of the Alpine Garden Society. All they have to do is fill in their personal details, together with payment instructions (or call AGS Centre to arrange payment by Direct Debit), and return this page to the address at the bottom of the page. A reduced subscription rate is offered to those paying by Direct Debit. Please allow 28 days for processing this application.

I/We wish to apply for membership as indicated below. Rates valid for 2018.

	UK & Ireland	UK Direct Debit	Overseas
Single	£35 <input type="checkbox"/>	£32 <input type="checkbox"/>	£37 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family (two at same address)	£38 <input type="checkbox"/>	£35 <input type="checkbox"/>	£39 <input type="checkbox"/>
Student/Junior (under 18 years)	£15 <input type="checkbox"/>		

Subscriptions of members joining after July 31 are valid until the end of the following calendar year. The membership year runs from January 1 to December 31 and subscriptions are renewable on October 1 for the following year. Direct Debit subscriptions become due annually in the quarter that you joined.

Your details (block capitals please):

Title Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If family membership, name of second member \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

County/country \_\_\_\_\_

Post/Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

If under 18, please give date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

If student, please give date of expected end of course \_\_\_\_\_

To pay by Direct Debit, please contact AGS Centre. To pay by cheque or credit/debit card, please complete either of the sections below.

## CHEQUE

I/we enclose a remittance of £ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to the Alpine Garden Society.

## CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD (Visa/MasterCard/American Express)

No extra charge for paying by credit card

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Card number                      Security code

Start date \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_ Issue No. (some debit cards) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CUT HERE

All information is protected by the Data Protection Act. Your information will not be disclosed to a third party. However, the AGS may wish to pass your details to our local groups. If you do not wish to receive information from our local groups then please tick this box.