

GARDENERS REPORT



HIMALAYAN GARDEN
& SCULPTURE PARK



STEPHEN J. WARD – HEAD GARDENER

Photography by Dominic Daniel

Autumn is well upon us now and such a wonderful time heralds the closure of our doors after a great season under difficult circumstances. Thank you to everyone who has visited the Garden and for all the lovely comments that you have offered which fuels us up to continue the work that we love doing. Much maintenance work and new exciting projects will be worked on over the following months and the gardening team will keep you all updated on our progress in future newsletter. Until then please read on to discover what we have been up to in Garden in the month of October – National Collections, Fern Dell, Flying Carpets and Batman.

Himalayan Garden’s Own Autumn Man

Dominic having far too much fun – Remind me to half his wages



The Autumn Man

The Green Man’s origins date back to Pagan and Roman times and can be found on Medieval Churches across Europe. He represents new birth and regrowth. Our own Autumn Man, Dominic, originated under the magnificent Hungarian Oak tree in the Garden (Although I’m sure his parents may have a different opinion on this). Tasked with clearing the fallen leaves, he literally got wrapped up in his work. Autumn usually indicates a sign for all to prepare for the harshness of winter. But in this case Dominic (or should I say Autumn Man) demonstrates the joy of the moment that we all feel after completing a great season in the Garden.



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The Fern Dell

Our new place of wonder for next season

Stephen J. Ward – Head Gardener



The Himalayan Garden Fern Dell -

Has now been established below the NEW Acer Bank north of Magnolia Lake. It starts from the stone bridge at the Sunrise Lake, with ferns lining the banking of the stream all the way down to the Oriental Red Bridge. From there the Dell opens out to reveal a long avenue of Tree Ferns, different type and sized ground Ferns, Himalayan Maidenhair Ferns, Giant Himalayan Lilies, Gunnera and Hostas.

The location is simply perfect for these plants – Shaded, well drained, moist and protection from strong and cold winds. They should thrive in their new environment and each year the area will be added to to improve on the collection.

There are over 600 different species of tree ferns around the world, many becoming extinct through human population expansion. The three tree ferns we have are the *Dicksonia antarctica* variety, which as the name suggests will do well in cooler climates. But they can also be found in the islands of South Asia, Australasia, and Hawaii.

Moving them was not as difficult as it may seem, as there are no roots to these trees. New growth occurs from the crowns. If the fronds there are damaged, then the tree dies. The crown is where we apply a feed in late spring and summer months. But for now, the trees have been wrapped up in hessian sacking for extra winter protection and supported with stakes to prevent them from falling. However, tree ferns have often fallen over for one reason or another, re-rooted and continued to grow. We will do our best to make sure this does not happen though.



Lifting a Tree Fern from its original location on Coronation Drive



Transporting it to the Fern Dell



Located in its new home and being supported



Himalayan Maidenhair Ferns

Volunteer Himalayan Garden Rangers

Stephen J. Ward – Head Gardener



Working Their Socks Off

During October, the volunteer Garden Rangers have worked their socks off helping to clear the new Rhododendron National Collection Bed and the new Fern Dell, and continued on with last month’s work in the Sunrise flower beds to clear weeds, split plants and establish new plants for next year’s butterflies. The standard of ‘gardenmanship’ (Have I invented a new word there) by them has been outstanding. If I did not know better, I would suspect that they are all highly trained specialists, who have come to spy on our horticultural techniques – or have I been watching too many James Bond movies. Nevertheless, I have asked Liam to note their foot sizes and new socks will be found by all come Christmas morning.

Joining us this month is young Rob, Harry, and Jasmine. Rob has much farming talent behind him. Harry is studying a Level 3 in Forestry at Askham Bryan College, and Jasmine has a wealth of skills from strimming to Caribou hunting – WOW! Never mind defeating the weeds in the Garden, with a team like this we can take over the World. OK, maybe I’m being a tad ambitious – Just England then.

Both Emily and Jasmine passed their in-house training with us in the use of RTV’s, Ride-on and Pedestrian Lawn Mowers, Hedge Trimmers and Strimmer’s. Certificates and documentation were exchanged, which will help them both gain full time horticultural work in the future – Well done girls. Gold stars for the both of you.



JOIN OUR TEAM

Become a VOLUNTEER

WANTED

VOLUNTEER HIMALAYAN GARDEN RANGERS

We are an exceedingly small, but merry band of gardeners. However, we are tasked, in a very nice way I may add, to take care of an area of land that would make even the legendary Sherpa Tenzing Norgay’s knees go weak at the thought of what needs to be done each day.

Therefore, we intend to increase the size of our valuable team of volunteers.

So, if you have intensions towards forging a career in the horticultural industry, want to become a park ranger/gardener, looking for a chance to change your career, a student wanting work experience, retired and looking for a place to demonstrate a lifetime of exceptional skills, or just want to be part of something special, then the Himalayan Gardens & Sculpture Park is waiting to hear from you.

No experience is required as full training will be given by our existing highly trained and experience staff. If you have the ability, the right aptitude, and a willingness to help with the gardening tasks mentioned below, then we want you on the team.

Take the opportunity to become a: -

Volunteer Himalayan Garden Ranger

Duties can include patrolling the gardens helping the visitors with enquiries, attending to first aid situations, helping the hospitality staff and ticket office, giving garden tours, completing wildlife surveys, helping at events, assisting with the annual garden maintenance routine - such as winter clearance, grass cutting, strimming, weeding, pruning, path construction and repair, nursery work and for a select few assisting with the National Collections.

If you can help in any of these areas and require more details, please contact the Head Gardener – Stephen Ward by email infohimalayangarden@gmail.com

If you could add why you are looking to work at the gardens and what experience or interests you have, that would be helpful. Stephen will then contact you and arrange for a site visit for a tour and a chat.

Please note - We have covid-19 protocols in place at present to protect our staff and visitors. Training regarding this will be given at your induction.



GROUND S MAINTENANCE REPORT

Liam Webb – Senior Gardener

Undertaking clearance work in October – removal of weeds, leaves and cutting back dead vegetation (in a garden the scale we work in), can be a back breaking operation. However, with a proper plan of action and a well-motivated team the job doesn’t seem half that bad. The end results can look impressive and the compost bays are full of lovely mulch for the following season. More interestingly though, we have introduced new plants to certain beds such as the Himalayan Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia crisp*) and the Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), which not only increases our Himalayan plants list, but also helps Stephen in his bid to develop the garden into a Butterfly and Moth conservation area.



Himalayan Butterfly Bush

Native to the Himalayas

Facts about *Buddleia Crispa*

- Their scent attracts all types of UK Butterflies and Moths and the plant becomes a major feeding station for them.
- Can grow 4m wide by 4m wide
- Can flower Spring, Summer & Autumn

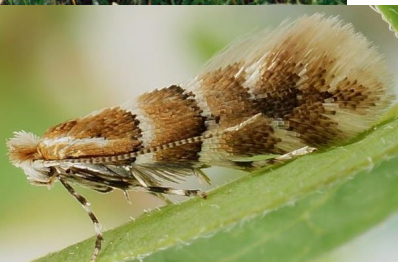


Himalayan Honeysuckle

Native to the forest lands and mountain ranges of the Himalayas.

Facts about *Leycesteria Formosa*

- Attracts Bees, Butterflies & Moths, especially the Large Midget Moths.
- A shrub that can grow over 2m in height
- Flowers July to October
- After flowering purple berries appear that taste like caramel and are highly sort after by bird life.





Aladdin - It's the only way to see all the wonderful inaccessible plants.
Princess – Not if Stephen has anything to do with it.

FLYING CARPETS

SEEN FLYING OVER THE GARDEN



CARPET MOTHS - The geometer moths belonging to the family Geometridae of the insect order Lepidoptera. Their scientific name derives from the Ancient Greek GEO "the earth", and METRON "measure" in reference to the way their larvae appear to measure the earth as they move along in a looping fashion. There are around 23,000 species of these moths, some of which are notorious pests which chew up your carpets and clothing, while others exist in more exotic locations such as lime and pine trees.

Although we haven't undertaken any moth survey nights this month, hundreds of these carpet moths have been found attached to the outside windows of the staff and tearooms or seen flying about the grounds. This has given me a chance to capture a few in order to identify them. Common, Green, Autumn Green and Pine Carpet Moths were identified to name a few. Interestingly, species like the Autumn Green and Pine Carpets can be seen out up until November.

ORANGE SALLOW *Tiliacea citrigo* - is a species of moth of the family Noctuidae. It is found in Europe as far east as the Caucasus Mountains and the Urals. However, several were also found by Chloe attached to the outside glass on the back door of the tearoom – Nice catch Chloe.

These moths love lime trees and there is a row of them over the hedge from the tearoom in the Buddha Garden. They also have a fondness for light and sugar, hence its tearoom location. Probably after a bun or a piece of cake – I do not blame them at all.



For more information regarding recording moths and butterflies visit the Butterfly Conservation Trust website <https://butterfly-conservation.org/>



PLANT PROPAGATION REPORT

Jago Wallace – Garden Supervisor



Rhododendron National Collection



Preparing for ground layering



Planting the new collection

Throughout October, I have continued with my work on achieving national collection status for the Rhododendron subsection Fortunea. The genus Rhododendron is an exceptionally large and diverse group of plants with around a thousand individual species, these species are categorized into subgenus', sections, and subsections to help with identification.

Lepidote Rhododendrons have small scales on the underside of the leaf and are in the subgenus Rhododendron, these are generally small leafed plants. The Subgenus Hymenanthus is the larger leaved group and usually has a bigger growing habit, these lack scales on the underside of the leaf and is the group which our subsection Fortunea is categorized under. Plants in the fortunea subsection are rough barked, around 1-5m tall shrubs or trees with white/pale pink to purple flowers and when young the underside of the leaves are sticky, with most species found in China.



Checking the specifics and location of each plant

We have recently started work on the national collection bed, this is an area we have dedicated to the collection with the aim to help us display and maintain the plants. We have already started propagating plants in the collection so that we can have all the species represented in the national collection bed.

However, Propagating Rhododendrons from this group can be hard; their large leaves mean cuttings tend to lose too much water before they've developed substantial roots. Therefore, we have resorted to ground and air layering as it's a more reliable but lengthier process. To help us with this task we acquired part of the collection from the Glendoick nursery in Scotland, a large and reliable source of rhododendrons. We planted the Rhododendrons as soon as they arrived, so they can start to develop some roots over winter, which will benefit them greatly. And with that our national collection bed is established and well under way.





OCTOBER Plant of the Month

Japanese Anemone



Japanese Anemone - Also known as Japanese Thimbleweed. It is still blooming in our Garden in late October. We have a pink variety - *Anemone tomentosa* 'Robustissima' and the white variety – *Anemone Honorine Jobert*. Both colours greatly complimenting the vibrant autumn gold, oranges, and reds offered by other plants and trees at this time of year.



ARBORIST’S TREE REPORT

Dominic Daniel – Head Arborist

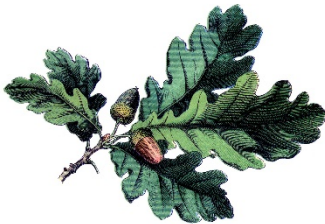


From Little Acorns

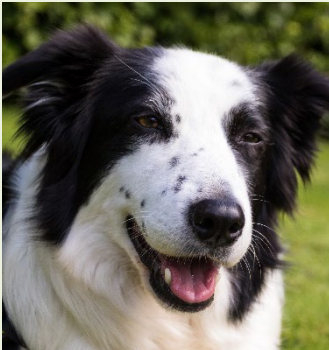
Autumn is officially upon us - the season of fires, mushrooms, and all-round cosy-ness. Here at the gardens we are certainly embracing the season and just like the squirrels, we are hunting for acorns! With the expansion of the gardens over recent years and the large clearance projects that have been undertaken I’m looking to begin the process of re-forestation. Among the larch forest we have here, there are also many native, deciduous trees that thrive and often self-seed! So, continuing our theme of reduce, re-use, recycle, this month I have been down in the wood looking for Oak tree saplings that have self-seeded. We have dug them up, potted them up and are re-planting them in areas to continue improving and growing our much-loved forest. Why Oak trees I hear you say? Well, to answer that one we need to look at some facts...

- Oak trees are often large in size. They can reach 70 feet in height and 9 feet in width. Even their branches can reach 135ft in length!
- They can take up and process up to 50 gallons of water each day, which is brilliant for nutrient exchange in the soil and oxygen in the air.
- A single oak tree can support more wildlife species than any other single tree in the UK. This ranges from the smallest insect to large owls, squirrels and even pigs!
- Without Oak tree wood to make barrels, the wine and whiskey industries would be non-existent and that oak age characteristic that we have come to know and love in our whiskey wouldn’t be there.

As you can see, the benefits of oak trees are truly endless, and we look forward to caring for these trees for years to come.



FATTUS RATTUS



HEAD DOG REPORT

NANA
Gardeners Mascot



Rats – no, not despicable people, but big fat hairy mice like things. Since time began, wherever a human has been you will find even more rats. Dirty smelly things they are – and the rats aren’t much better either. There are 56 different species of the wee beasts you know, the most common being the Black and Brown variety – I have no preference, seeing as I’m colour blind. In some places they are seen as gods and people actually pray to them, but in most regions they are seen as pests – Think the black death and weils disease has given them appropriate bad press. In the garden we have some big compost bays, you may have one in your own. If waste food is placed here (which it isn’t in ours), then the rodents see it as an easy meal and will flock to the mounds like people to McDonald’s on a Bank Holiday Monday. My job is to keep guard of these places for the gardeners, which I love doing, and to encourage Fattus Rattus to go and eat elsewhere. Tips for my human friends – stop being wasteful, scoff what’s on your plate, I do, and don’t put leftover food in your compost bay.

Poets Corner - Autumn



Fall of the Autumn Leaves

So high in their unified splendour
Much glistening like gold in the sun
It seems like they'll last there forever
But they fall from the tree one by one

In silence they make their tall journey
Much beauty abandoned to decay
But first a last dance with the weather
And then to huddle and to quietly lay

Reprieved in children's excitement
New purpose for hedgehog and for worm
Then to yield to the courses of nature
Returning to the terra that is firm

Stephen J. Ward

Autumn Fires

In the other gardens
And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!

Robert Louis Stephenson

Autumn

I Love it!

How the colours come,
And the chrysanthemums grow.

October is putting on a show
But the gutters are a mess
And the trees less and less

Adele aged 5 (Genius!)

Sculpture profile

The Roe Deer

By Hamish Mackie

Hamish Mackie is a British wildlife sculptor who works in bronze, silver and any other castable metal using the lost-wax casting method. He is one of the world's foremost wildlife sculptors. Largely self-taught, Mackie captures his subjects - ranging from livestock to birds, by observation in a natural environment, taking detailed photographs and sometimes modelling in plasticine. From this he creates a highly accurate anatomical core covered with a loose, almost impressionistic skin that captures the essence of the animal's personality. He has won numerous commissions including works for Jilly Cooper, Charles Saatchi, Ronnie Wood (private) and RSPCA, National Trust, Woburn Abbey, Merrill Lynch, Hiscox and most recently the Berkeley Group Holdings (public). He has travelled to places including Antarctica, the Falkland Islands, Australia, across Africa, and the United Arab Emirates in search of subjects. We are proud to have several of his sculpture in the Garden, the most noticeable being the Leopard in Leopard Valley which was featured in the August newsletter. From next season you will be able to see his 'Roe Deer' sculpture smartly positioned in a more prominent place that will be called the 'Roe Deer Bed' – The area that Liam (Senior Gardener) recently planted up with Himalayan Buddleia, Himalayan Honeysuckle and Actaea Simplex.



BATMAN



No, unfortunately not the comic book hero, but our very own dark knight David Pollard has joined the team. David an environmentalist came to visit the garden and was so impressed that he offered to undertake all our bat survey work for us. A bat survey is basically a professionally recording of the bats living in a certain area in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines. The survey checks the number of bats living in the space or if the area may be hospitable for bats. From there changes to improve bat habitation can be made. Bats are of major environmental significance due to being important indicators of how well an ecosystem is doing. They are warm-blooded, suckle their young, and only have one pup a year, which means the population growth can decline dramatically if their habitat is affected in anyway. David has a trip to Africa first to wrestle, tag and record various species of crocodiles, but will then get back to us in 2021 to don his cape to undertake our bat surveys – then we will be able to tell you what species we have in the Garden. Best of luck in Africa David. Now, how do I ask him to get me a couple of abominable snowmen?



Autumn Highlights

If you missed them

Flaming Red Bridge over Sunrise Lake – *Helen Linfoot (Ripon City Photographic Society)*



Himalayan Fir Cone Sculpture by John Simpson – *Photography by Dominic Daniel*

I do hope that you have enjoyed this edition of the Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Parks Gardeners Report and are looking forward to reading further accounts over the winter months. In the meantime, if you have any questions specifically relating to the gardens or volunteering, then please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address provided below, and either myself or one of the gardening team will get back to you as soon as we can.

I look forward to providing you with further accounts of gardening events in the future, and hope to see you in the gardens on your next visit in the New Year.
Until then my best wishes to you all.

Stephen J. Ward
Head Gardener
(Contact – infohimalayangarden@gmail.com)