

GARDENERS REPORT



HIMALAYAN GARDEN
& SCULPTURE PARK

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MARCH EDITION 2021 – ISSUE No. 1



STEPHEN J. WARD – HEAD GARDENER

Over the winter months the gardening team have been hard at it with seasonal maintenance and project work, making the grounds even more beautiful than ever. The Buddha Garden has had a makeover, butterfly areas and beds established, new areas of interest created such as the Meconopsis Valley, and the fairy homes have had a refit. We are all set up now for a brilliant year of plants, flowers, butterflies, magic, magnificent open spaces, and walks. All we need now to cap it all off is for you to come along and enjoy it. Please read on to get a glimpse of what the Himalayan Gardens & Sculpture Park team has to offer this summer season.

* NOTE FOR DIARY *
GARDEN OPEN
April 2nd – Oct.31st 2021

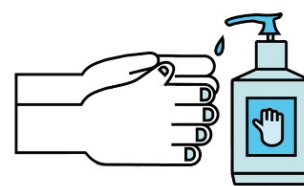
Christmas Cheer

CHRISTMAS MAY BE OVER BUT THE CHEER IS JUST BEGINNING IN THE GARDEN

After only a few nice sunny days in March and already nature is offering us presents in the garden. The Christmas Cheer Rhododendrons are in bloom, the Daffodils are on their way, the first butterfly was seen – a Peacock and the ducks and woodpeckers are busy preparing for the spring activities.



What to Expect When You Arrive



To open the gardens safely, we are putting important measures in place:

- Social distancing measures with 2 metre queueing stones guiding visitors from the carpark to the entrance.
- We have created a separate entrance and exit to avoid crossing paths. We are also encouraging visitors to use our hand sanitising stations upon arrival and departure.
- When you arrive at our ticket Office, please scan your pre-bought tickets as we will be limiting the number per day.
- We are only accepting card and contactless payment methods rather than cash in the tearoom & plant sales area.
- Our toilets will remain open for visitors in the car park & tearoom and will have antibacterial soap and we would encourage all visitors to wash their hands on both arrival and departure.
- We have introduced additional cleaning to our routine, particularly focusing on door handles, toilets, & surfaces.
- In the event of a first aid incident on site, our trained first aiders will respond wearing the recommended personal protection equipment of gloves and face mask.
- We are very much looking forward to welcoming all our members and visitor back to the Himalayan Garden & Sculpture Park and hope that you can enjoy your day here with the reassurance that we have your health and wellbeing in mind.

Will Roberts



Did Someone Say REFRESHMENTS?

Keeping in line with Covid protocols, the tearoom and horsebox will be serving a selection of takeaway refreshments initially, delicious light lunches and snacks, cream teas, sweet treats & Brymore ice cream.





MEET THIS YEARS GARDENING TEAM



Head Gardener
Stephen Ward



Senior Gardener
Joel Dibb



Garden Supervisor
Jago Wallace



Maintenance Gardener
Matt Shepherd



Student Placement
Harry Blades

The gardening team has seen a few changes over the winter and is ever expanding. Liam and Dominic moved on to great jobs and we wish them all the best in their new ventures. Joel is now our Senior Gardener, Matt our Maintenance Gardener and Harry is on student placement. Joel previously worked at Brodsworth Hall near Doncaster, Matt for Askham Bryan College in York and Harry is a student at Askham Bryan College studying a Level 3 award in Forestry. All have a proven track record of horticultural and forestry skills, talents and knowledge that will be most welcomed in the garden. Jago, the longest serving member of the team will continue his hard work in plant propagation, plant sales and being the Head of our Rhododendron Collection.



David Dollimore, Jack of all trades and master (not quite of the universe but) of many talents, has been busy with a host of important jobs on site from repairing paths, steps, drains and fencing to painting and pest control. Here he's doing a spot of archaeology, discovering Thors Hammer (Mjolnir) I believe, or was he putting in a new border? Either way it'll make him deservedly famous.

Volunteer Garden Rangers

What would we do without them? Legends, all of'em. We have a great little team of volunteers who join us on a Monday. They help with various duties and have made a massive impact on the Garden working in such areas as Coronation Drive and the Sunrise Butterfly Flower beds. If you would like to join them, then please read on for more details.



It's a pleasure having you all on the team guys



NEW GARDEN PROJECTS

Stephen Ward – Head Gardener



Throughout last year and over the winter, the gardeners have worked hard on planning and establishing new projects on the grounds. The reason for this is to add to our visitor experience and also to spread that experience over the whole of the open season. Giving a reason to want to come back to gardens to see how the projects develop.

Meconopsis Valley

At the top part of the Garden there is a little valley. It's location being moist but dry, protected from strong winds, acidic soils and dappled shade from the hot sun is a perfect location for the Meconopsis, the Himalayan Poppy. The area has been cleared of bramble and Lingholm, Baileyi (Blue) and Napaulensis (Red, White, and Yellow) poppies have been planted. Each year the stock of these plants will be increased to the point that we will have a real Himalayan wonder and along with the Rhododendron a major feature in the garden.

Butterflies & Moths

After undertaking a year of moth & butterfly surveying, our dedicated team of talented gardeners, have worked alongside Yorkshire Butterfly Conservation (specifically Dr Martin Partridge) to establish key areas within the grounds, for butterfly & moth preservation. With new woodland, grassland and flower bed areas being created. Butterfly & moth surveys will continue so we can observe the success of the work undertaken and the key areas will be developed upon from there.

As Head Gardener I believe that in doing this it not only enhances an already amazing visitor experience, but the success of these beautiful and fascinating creature is an indicator to the health of the garden as a whole.



Much tree work has been undertaken to improve safety and also the crown lifting of branches allows for better circulation and light for the underlaying plants. Along with the removal of many fences, this has allowed for more open spaces. A similar theme has been created in the Buddha Garden. A welcomed break after being couped up between four walls over lockdown. Plus, these areas are so much easier to maintain now.

Creating Space





GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT

Joel Dibb – Senior Gardener
Call Sign – Eagle Eye

RHS Qualified. Incredible garden maintenance and machinery experience with excellent knowledge of plants and care. Impeccable attention to detail, – hence his call sign – Eagle Eye. Previously worked at The Alnwick Gardens and at Brodsworth Hall with English Heritage. Loves his dog Nala and going for long walks at the weekend. Favourite quote; The sky's not the limit when there's footprints on the moon.

job.

Buddha Garden

Lots of big and exciting changes are happening at the minute, we have transplanted existing plants to other parts of the grounds, made the paths wider and added new material to really freshen the place up. As well as all of that, we have started propagating our own annuals for a formal bedding design in the Buddha garden – which will be in the form of a butterfly. Oh, and also not to be missed is the newly cleaned out pond there. We have crystal clear water and tidied up the water lilies, all that's left to do is add the fish! Shubunkins are on their way.



Path Repairs

Over the winter months we have been busy undertaking path repairs around the site, from topping up uneven steps and paths to total relaying of paths and edging boards. It's amazing how much a freshly laid path can brighten up an area!

Tree Care & Maintenance

One of our big winter maintenance jobs is looking after our trees. On our daily site safety checks we are always on the lookout for any dead or damaged limbs. As well as this we do tree surveys with Barnes Associates who help us identify any trees that require work done on them. For most of the smaller felling and pruning work we do ourselves, and those trees that are a little big for our team to manage we call upon our tree surgeons Arbortech – who have done an outstanding job.





PLANT PROPAGATION

Jago Wallace – Gardener Supervisor
Call Sign – Mow Hawk

RHS Level 2 in Horticulture. Excellent plant knowledge and all-round good guy. Head of the National Collection for Rhododendrons / Azaleas, and nursery plant sales. Jago was educated in Canada and joined the Himalayan Garden team 4 years ago. Although the youngest, he is the oldest serving member of the team. Has a fondness for Toads (*Bufo Bufo*) and Toad Stools.

What's Going on in the Nursery?

Due to various affects and circumstances relating to Covid, we will be offering a modest but interesting selection of plants for sale this year - all of which are superb for attracting butterflies and bees. They will be sold from the Buddha garden's tennis court, alongside a selection of specialist Rhododendrons, Meconopsis and Primulas.

In the nursery, work has begun on seed propagation, which have been sourced from plants in the garden. It's an amazing feeling to see the new generation of plants burst through the soil and knowing the joy each one of the seedlings will bring in time. We already have foxgloves germinating in droves, seemingly as fast as we can sow them, and *Ligularia przewalskii* (the leopard plant) has begun to poke its head up getting ready to fill the damp areas of the appropriately named Leopard Valley. Another plant we are propagating is the devil's-bit scabious or *Succisa pratensis*, which seems to be quite the prolific plant and popular with our pollinators in the garden.

Already in the garden Rhododendrons are beginning to bloom, with Rh. 'Christmas Cheer' starting the show off with its beautiful pale pink frilly flowers – Providing us with just a hint of what is to come. However, it will be a few weeks until the others begin to follow suit. Rhododendrons are often considered to be May flowering, which is true in most cases. However, some of them can flower as late in the year as June. This is one of their features that shows just how diverse a group Rhododendrons are, it's hard to come up with general rules for them as there is always an exception. It keeps you on your toes, but it means that you are always learning and there is a Rhododendron for any garden.



A selection of Himalayan
Primulas & Rhododendrons
sold from the Buddha Garden
Tennis Courts throughout April



Volunteer Himalayan Garden Rangers



YOUR HIMALAYAN GARDEN NEEDS YOU

**VOLUNTEER HIMALAYAN GARDEN
RANGERS WANTED**

No experience is required as full training will be given by our existing highly trained and experienced 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.

Duties include assisting with the annual garden maintenance routine - such as plant care, grass cutting, strimming, weeding, pruning, path construction and repair and nursery work

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

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.

Over the past few weeks, the volunteers have been working alongside the garden team, helping with numerous tasks in the gardens.

In the Buddha garden, Himalayan Geraniums were transplanted to the front of the ticket office. The area was then thoroughly weeded and a weed suppressing membrane and decorative bark chippings laid. The area near the tennis court is now ready for the display of the summer plant sales. Great team effort all round with an amazing and professional outcome!

In mid-March we had our eager and passionate volunteers back in once again, we started work on Coronation Drive, this area has not been maintained for a while, so we went through the whole border like a plague of locusts! Clearing all the leaves out from the edges and amongst the plants and shrubs, we also removed any dead or damaged plants and those that were hidden or did not look right we transplanted them in other areas of the gardens.

The Sunrise Butterfly beds have been completely transformed. A thorough weeding, new planting and an extension made to increase the size of the beds. All that is left to do now is wait for those sunny days and stand and watch the butterflies and bees fluttering from plant-to-plant basking in the sun! Champion job done guys.



APRIL PLANT OF THE MONTH

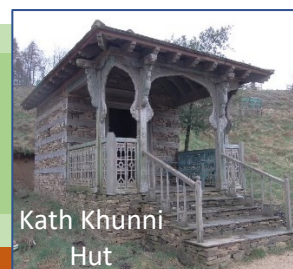
PRIMULA DENTICULATA

Primula denticulata, often called the drumstick primula, is a species of flowering plant in the family *Primulaceae*. It is native to most alpine regions of China, Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Kashmir, N Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan and is found in abundance in our very own Himalayan Garden. The primula is an herbaceous perennial growing to 45 cm tall and wide, with rosettes of oval leaves and sturdy stems bearing spherical umbels of colourful flowers in late spring and early summer. They like to grow in deep moist or but well-drained neutral to acid, humus-rich soil in full sun or partial shade.

Primula Denticulata available for sale in the Buddha Garden from April



Artwork of the Month



Kath Khunni
Hut



Tyto alba
The Barn Owl

Hamish Mackie's work has been featured a number of times before in the newsletters, specifically the Leopard and the Roe Deer. Hamish works with various metals and uses the lost-wax casting method. He is considered to be one of the world's foremost wildlife sculptors. Largely self-taught, Hamish captures his subjects - ranging from livestock to birds via wild animals - by observation in a natural environment.

Not far from his Owl sculpture positioned at the bottom of Leopard Valley, a Barn Owl has set up home in the Kath Khunni hut in the Arboretum. Evidence of this can be seen from the numerous owl pellets left on the floor of the structure. If you are lucky you will see it flying amongst the trees nearby like a ghost. Its beautiful white plumage contrasting against the green of the woodlands.

These Owls make a shriek when calling, which led to some labelling them the Demon Owls – However, when you see their lovely heart shaped faces, they give a completely different impression – one that matches Hamish's amazing work.

The OWL by Hamish Mackie



Moths & Butterflies



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Butterfly Conservation is a charity registered
in England and Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SC039268)

Stephen Ward – Head Gardener



As previously mentioned, over the winter we have been working hard with Butterfly Conservation to establish areas in the garden that will assist with butterfly and moth preservation. These have included woodland, grassland, and flower beds. Numerous plants and flowers have been planted, such as sedums, asters, and Himalayan buddleia bushes. To help you find these areas a large information map will be positioned at the ticket office and specific information boards (example below) will be placed around the site at the key locations. More information on how the plants fare and what butterflies we attract will be included in future newsletters. But for a start the first butterfly was seen on 15th March at 1pm in the afternoon, and that was a Peacock butterfly like the one pictured below. It is just the beginning, and many more will be seen over the summer months.



**HIMALAYAN GARDEN
& SCULPTURE PARK**

More and more of our native butterfly and moth species become extinct every year. In a bid to help prevent this, The Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park Gardeners are working together with Butterfly Conservation to help create a preservation area where butterflies and moths can find a happy home in which to thrive.

Specific species prefer specific habitats for reproduction, food sources and shelter. Therefore, areas around the garden have been created to accommodate this, such as 1. The Nursery Area, 2. The Flower Beds, 3. Woodland & Meadow areas, and 4. Grassland areas. With survey work and analysis, these areas will be developed and improved upon in the coming years.

At present though a varied range of plants, shrubs and trees have been planted, such as the Himalayan Honey Suckle, Himalayan Buddleia Bush, Sedums and Scabious to name a few (food sources). Along with this, changes have been made to the seasonal garden maintenance routines, such as:

1. Leaving areas for nettle, willow herb and brambles to grow (Larval stage - egg laying and caterpillar feeding).
2. Pruning shrubs at specific times and strimming the meadows and grasslands later in the year (Pupa stage - allowing Caterpillars a place and the chance to turn into chrysalis's or butterflies to hibernate), and
3. No weed/pesticide spraying in certain areas.

Taking this knowledge into consideration, areas of the garden have been established and are in development to accommodate the life cycle of the butterflies and moths that have chosen to live in the Himalayan Garden. For example, 1. The Butterfly Nursery area - in New Woods. 2. Flower Beds - in the Buddha Garden / Sunrise / Pinnacle. 3. Woodland areas - Hosta Bank and Leopard Valley. 4. Grassland areas - between the Kath Khuni Shelter and the Norse Hut.



Peacock butterfly

Butterflies and moths are both beautiful and important. They are excellent indicators of a healthy environment and eco-system, plant pollinators, and provide an important food source to other creatures such as birds and bats.

They have evolved over millions of years to have a life cycle that fascinates us, transforming from a simple egg to caterpillar, to chrysalis, to glorious adult butterflies.

Our ultimate aim is to produce a garden that is in balance with the lifecycle of these beautiful creatures. To help educate and share the knowledge of the species

that we have here and to provide a wonderful experience for our visitors and members to enjoy and to remember.

Please follow the Butterfly Trail indicated on the map. We hope that the butterflies make your visit a memorable one.

More information on butterflies and moths at www.butterfly-conservation.org



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



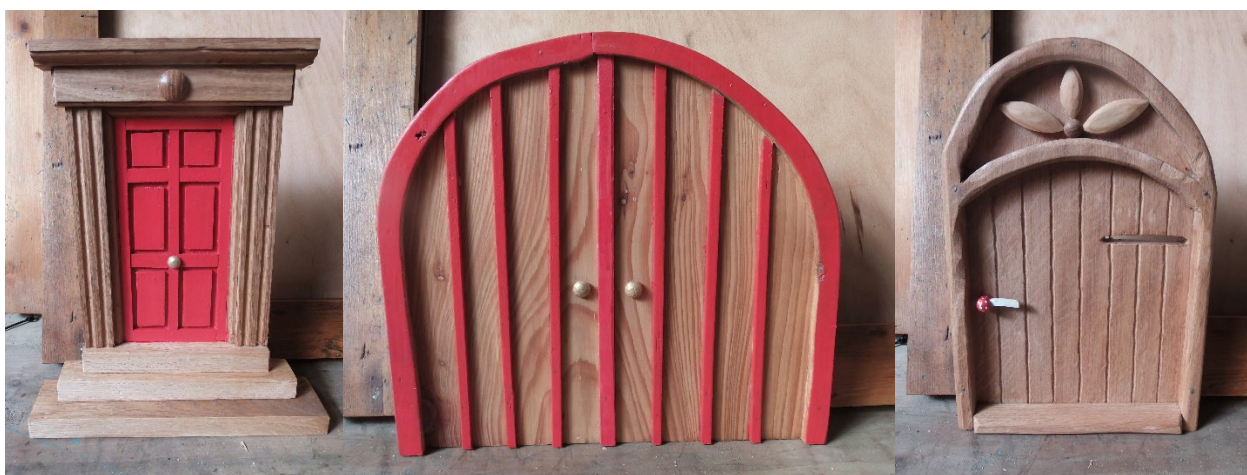
Follow the Fairy Doors

Last year the fairies discovered the Himalayan Gardens and Sculpture park and found it so amazing that they made their homes here.

Things must be going well for them as their homes are about to have a refit. Not only new doors, but also new windows as well.

On your next visit, see if you can find them all. But remember though, the fairies are very shy. If you make too much noise, then they will hide.

To help you find the doors, you will find location maps positioned throughout the garden. Take a picture of them on your mobile phones and follow the trail – More info on the fairies to come in future newsletters.



I do hope that you have enjoyed this edition of the Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Parks Gardeners Report.

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 over the summer months and hope to see you in the garden on your next visit.

Until then my best wishes to you all.

Stephen J. Ward

Head Gardener

(Contact – infohimalayangarden@gmail.com)



“WE’RE GOOD TO GO”

We are delighted to announce that the Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park will reopen on the 2nd of April until October 31st October 2021 (Tuesday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm).

We are certified as part of the “We’re Good To Go – Visit England Scheme” which certifies that the required actions have been implemented to welcome visitors in line with Government and Public Health Guidelines. This page and our procedures will be constantly updated in accordance with these guidelines.

The safety of our visitors, staff and volunteers is always our number one priority. To reopen we need all visitors to follow and keep to our social distancing rules. **Visitors must pre-purchase tickets online for a specific day in advance. A new calendar booking system will enable bookings throughout the 2021 season.**

<https://www.himalayangarden.com/visitor-information/admissions-tickets/>

We are limiting visitor numbers to maintain social distancing. Season ticket holders may visit at anytime but, must also reserve a place in advance.

What to expect when you arrive

To open the gardens and parkland safely, we are putting important measures in place across the attraction:

We have created a separate pedestrian entry and exit for the car park to avoid crossing paths.

- Social distancing measures have been set up with 2 metre-queuing points guiding visitors from the car park to the entrance.
- We are also encouraging visitors to use our hand-sanitising stations on arrival and departure, and throughout their visit.
- When you arrive at our Ticket Office, please scan the QR Code on your ticket. The scanner is located on a post opposite the Ticket Office. Once your ticket has been scanned you will be able to continue into the park and garden.
- Please keep left on the paths and follow the directional arrows. Observe No Entry signs.
- We kindly ask that visitors wear face masks in the Tearoom.

Our toilets will remain open for visitors.

Some important changes have been put in place to observe and maintain social distancing rules.

- Additional Portaloo toilets have been installed in the Car Park.
- All toilets are now unisex, and the disabled / baby changing toilet is available to all while giving disabled priority.
- Queue to left side using planters to indicate 2 metre distance.
- Only one person or family group in each room.
- Anti-bacterial soap is available, and we would encourage all visitors to wash their hands before and after.

Refreshments

The Tearoom will be open in a takeaway capacity initially, serving a selection of freshly made sandwiches, hot and cold drinks, delicious cakes, tray bakes, soup, hot food, picnics and treats to be eaten outside. We ask that masks are worn inside the Tearoom, when ordering your food.

A sheltered outdoor seated area has been created in the Buddha Garden, to allow visitors to enjoy their refreshments in any weather.

Our lovely refreshment trailer will be open during the weekends (Saturday and Sunday), located in the heart of the garden. Serving tea, coffee and soft drinks, as well as freshly prepared sandwiches, delicious Brymor ice cream, snacks and sweet treats, in an open, beautiful space. Tables are located nearby.

The woodland playground will be open.

The following has been put in place as per Government guidance to observe and maintain social distancing rules.

- Use hand sanitiser before and after use.
- Avoid touching your face / sucking fingers.
- No more than 1 family group on each station at any one time
- Head clockwise around the playground
- Always respect social distancing rules
- No food or drink in the playground area

Cleaning Schedule

We have introduced additional hourly cleaning schedule to our usual routines, particularly focusing on door handles, toilet areas, surfaces, seating areas etc. The areas used by visitors and staff are regularly fogged with a Pathogen Disinfectant at the end of the day to provide extra protection.

Staff

Our staff have been provided with personal protective equipment. We have asked our staff to wash and sanitise their hands often, especially between transactions and to clean their workstations regularly. In the event of a first aid incident on site, our trained first aiders will respond wearing the recommended personal protection equipment and using our Covid Safe First Aid Area.

Monetary Transactions

All purchases made while visiting (refreshments, plant sales and merchandise) must be paid for by card and contactless payment methods. We are not accepting cash.

Accessibility

Sadly the park is not suitable for wheelchair users, mobility scooters or people with limited mobility. We are continually improving our paths however, the topography of the area dictates that the paths are steep in places, with some paths having a number of steps.

General

Normal terms and conditions apply to all visitors. Dogs must always be kept on a lead. Please do not bring in BBQs, picnics, light fires or use drones.

Please note: An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. By visiting the Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19

We are excited to welcome all visitors to the Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park and look forward to seeing you soon.

Himalayan Garden team