

The Meconopsis Group

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Newsletter May 2013

Dear Member,

Welcome to the May 2013 newsletter.

RHS trial of big perennial blue poppies (2010-2013)

This is an exciting time as the RHS Trial is concluded this year. The weather has delayed the opening of the blooms throughout the country, but assessment meetings have been re-arranged to accommodate this. Information will be made available when ratified later in the summer and a full report made by Pat Murphy at the October Group meeting.

Meconopsis Open Day and Workshop at Harlow Carr, 3 June 2013

The RHS Trial for awards of garden merit (AGMs) at Harlow Carr of big blue perennial poppies finishes this June. Associated with this is an open day and workshop on 3 June. Ian Christie will demonstrate how to propagate and grow the plants. Evelyn Stevens will give a talk on the work of The Meconopsis Group in clarifying the identities and names of the big blue poppies in cultivation. Andrew Willocks and Amy Browning, from the garden, will give a talk on their experience of growing Meconopsis at Harlow Carr. There will also be guided tours of the garden's Meconopsis and alpines. The price for the Open Day and Workshop is £20 for members of the RHS, The Meconopsis Group, the SRGC, or the AGS. For non-members, it is £25. The price includes entrance to the garden and tea/coffee.

Program

9.30am Tea & coffee

10am Plant Propagation – Ian Christie will provide tips on how to propagate and grow these plants

11am Big Blue Poppies in Cultivation – Dr Evelyn Stevens will give a historical review of the plants

12pm *Meconopsis* at Harlow Carr – RHS gardeners Andrew Willocks and Aimee Beth Browning will provide a talk on Harlow Carr's experience and use of *Meconopsis* in the garden.

12.30pm Lunch (not supplied)

1.30pm Demonstrations and tours of the *Meconopsis* trial and Harlow Carr gardens with RHS staff and Rock Garden Plant Committee & Trials Forum members. Please book in advance by telephoning the RHS central booking line on: 0845 6121253 and quoting event reference: 10129. (Open weekdays 9am-5pm).

Gardens to visit now

The Woodland Garden at the **Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh** continues to thrive after being planted last year with *Meconopsis* recently given Awards. It is open daily at this time of year from 10am to 7pm. Garden entry is free, with a charge for the Glasshouses.

Branklyn Garden (NTS) in Perth has a range of outstanding plants - rhododendrons, alpines, herbaceous and peat-garden plants - under the care of Steve McNamara. View the National Collection of Himalayan Blue Poppies. There is also a *Meconopsis Trail*, with Fact sheets detailing the location of many of the named plants. Gardens open daily 10 am to 5 pm at 116 Dundee Road, Perth PH2 7BB.

There is a **Himalayan Blue Poppy Open Day on Sunday May 26th**. For further information please contact Steve McNamara on 01738 625 535

Holehird Garden, Windermere, Cumbria has now a National Collection. The Meconopsis Collection contains approximately 80% of the named blue perennial species and cultivars that are presently listed in the RHS Plant Finder, with the main display being in the Paddock. Details on their website at www.holehirdgardens.org.uk

There are other public and private Gardens to visit too - e.g. **Explorers, The Scottish Plant Hunters Garden** (Pitlochry), **Logan Botanic Garden**, (Port Logan), **Dawyck Botanic Garden**, (Peebles), **NTS Crarae Garden**, (Inveraray) and **Cluny House Gardens** near Aberfeldy.

Gardening Scotland 2013 Friday May 31st, Saturday June 1st and Sunday June 2nd

Gardening Scotland is Scotland's national celebration of gardening and outdoor living. The show will take at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, near Edinburgh.

The Meconopsis Group will once again have a stand this year. Sharon Bradley is the new Co-ordinator.

There will be a display of lovely plant material, a showcase of new photographs incorporating newly named plants, information about membership and of course the ever important seed sales....all in a 3 x 3 metre space! Please visit and say hello!

Next Group meeting - October 26th 2013

**The next Group meeting will be held in the Conference Room
at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) from 10.30am - 3.30pm.**

The provisional programme has been organised. This will include a report of the RHS Trial by Pat Murphy, amongst several other presentations. The detailed programme for the meeting will be sent out in the autumn.

Username and password changed for 2013

There has been a change of Username and Password for 2013, for access to the Members' Area of the website. The previous Username and Password has been discontinued.

Members' Contact List

This has been prepared and circulated just to those members who wished to participate.

It is not a full record of membership. Members paying by PayPal had to email me their details, and not all did so.

Mrs. Sue Sim and M. 'Susan's Reward'

We have been notified of the death of Mrs. Sue Sim at the end of March.

In 1971, Mrs Sue Sym was given some plants to take home after she had spent some time with Betty Sherriff at the Sherriff's home at Ascreavie in Angus, east Scotland. Among them was a big blue poppy, later (2008) to be named *M. 'Susan's Reward'*. The name was chosen by Sue. It thrived in her dry Peebles gardens in the Scottish Borders, and latterly in Edinburgh.

Reports from the meeting held on March 2nd 2013

I enclose with this newsletter a number of items in PDF format. Please note that the images on print copies are in black & white only. If you wish the colour version emailed please send me an email address to use.

- Newsletter May 2013
- 'Len Beer's expedition to Nepal' by Bob Mitchell
- '*Meconopsis* sp.' by Ian D. Scott
- 'The Meconopsis Group, the first 15 years' by Evelyn Stevens
- 'Meconopsis in Arunachal Pradesh 2012' by David & Margaret Thorne
- 'The importance of polyploidy.....' by Ian McNaughton
- 'Members' Contact List 2013' (for participants only)

If you do not receive any of them, please let me know.

If you have any problems with this mailing please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

Norma McDowall (Secretary)