

Baldernock Gardening Club: November 2023 Newsletter: Let's hope November is a bit drier!

Good (?!) afternoon,

We have certainly had some rain over the past few weeks, but fortunately not as much in our parish as all those poor souls around Brechin have had to suffer. Even as I type away here, the rain is falling with some force and intensity, making the ground even more soggy with puddles forming in the usual places; the ferns, though, seem to be quite happy! The wind and the rain have whipped many of the leaves off the trees denying us the pleasure of the early autumn colours. Certainly one of our acers, for a few days, had a wonderful bright orange/red display, which was almost dazzling to look at, but the rain has stripped the leaves very quickly and created a surrounding carpet of autumn brightness. Most of this covering will have to be swept up before too long. The weather and a myriad other distractions have meant that I have sadly neglected the garden for too many days in October. Parts are appearing more dishevelled than usual and other tasks have just not been accomplished let alone attempted. I just managed to dig up my dahlias, but that was after the frost, which fortunately was not too severe, so I reckon they will survive now that they are in the garage, which no car has entered for over 30 years.

Having suggested that the autumn colours have not been wonderful, I think it is only in November that we get the real brilliance of all the season's end hues. We think of October as being the month of the autumnal bloom, but it is really now, which is the end of October, when the richness of the palette is such an attractive feature. In my own garden, and in the neighbouring woods, the autumn chiaroscuro is evident, even through all the rain-drops. It is still a funny old period with roses blooming profusely, especially one climber at the front of the house flowering fairly heavily when it has never done so before at this time of year. The cosmos are still going strong as are many of the other bedding plants in pots, so I am loath to remove them and plant my bulbs. I still have the coming month to do that. Hopefully, the grass will not require another cut, but it probably will need a trim. My usual groups of fungi have not appeared in their customary profusion; those that have have been a little solitary, whilst others have simply declined to appear. I have not noticed many in the woods either. The apple crop has become tedious. we just can't cope with the volume and have given at least 50% of it away, so be warned there may (and I stress "may") be more horrible looking, but very tasty cookers available at the next meeting

Enough about Crossburn, now down to matters concerning the Club. Our recent meeting at the beginning of October was a fascinating talk about ferns given by Andy MacGregor. His talk, perhaps, elicited the most questions and queries from the audience experienced for some time. I did detect a gasp of collective horror when he stated that Horse Tail and Mare's Tail were amongst his favourite ferns (weeds I think), with, admittedly, a greater preference for the former and best in a pot where their spread can be limited. A good few of the subsequent questions were about trying to eradicate these; this appears to be impossible.

Our Speaker on **Wednesday 8th November 2023 at 19:30 in Baljaffray Parish Church** will be **Leonie Paterson** who is Head Archivist at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. She has been at the RBGE for over 23 years and claims she is still getting to know the archives. She is from an archaeological background, which has proven to be of much more use than would be imagined, as she digs through the piles of documents. Her talk will centre on the achievements of Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour who was Regius Keeper of the Botanic between 1888 and 1922. Judging from the email communications I have been receiving from Leonie, this will be a fascinating and interesting talk. One problem is that she asked me for directions, not via the M8, from Edinburgh and I am not very good with my right and lefts when advising people, so I am hoping her personal Sat Nav guide from the ether will prove to be far more reliable.

Our Meeting **Wednesday 13th December** will be for **MEMBERS ONLY** and it will be our Annual Christmas Party, to be held in Baljaffray Church. The Committee is meeting in the coming week to organise it all, but be assured that the Extremely Difficult Quiz will be renamed as the Quite Easy I-Know-Something Confidence Booster. Apart from that there will be feasting, wine, non-wine, chat and laughter. You will be able to sign the Intending to Attend list at the door on **Wednesday 8th November**, with full details of the evening being published (👉) later on in the month. Whilst on the subject of the "door" your usual Meet and Greet pairing of Marjorie and Colin will be absent. This absence has been granted as they will be attending their daughter's wedding; some events are more important than even the Gardening Club. I am sure you will join me in wishing them and their daughter, Amy, a fabulous day.

There is a short pause in the rainfall, which gives me the ideal excuse to cease my ramblings for this month. The road outside the house is not flooded this time (so far), but I think I will give any attempts to do gardening a miss until tomorrow. I will just have to finish off repainting the bathroom instead -- great! I am presuming you all managed to get an extra hour in bed this morning and that all your clocks and timers have been reset. Just look forward to March when the clocks go back again and you can start to enjoy more hours of daylight. Stay well and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the 8th.

Best wishes

Willie



