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Newsletter July 2025



Welcome to July's newsletter. Thank you for all your replies to the June newsletter and positive feedback. Do write to us by clicking [here](#) with your news for August. In this newsletter you will be able to hear about and book onto our trip to Ireland next year. See below for more details.

Plant of the month - the summer flowering azalea

Connor Ryan, International Branch Chair suggested this summer flowering azalea. Thank you Connor for a reminder of these late flowering plants and photograph above of “ ***an unnamed hybrid of deciduous azalea ‘Weston’s Lemon Drop’ x ‘July Joy’ presently in full bloom in the garden at the David G. Leach Research Station in Madison, Ohio USA***”.

More information about the garden can be found by clicking the view button below Connor said “I think it shows some of the endless possibilities for summer flowers using species like *Rhododendron aborescens* (late forms), *Rhododendron prunifolium*, and *Rhododendron viscosum* (including *serrulatum*) to extend the flowering season.

The species are great in their own right, as are the hybrids, and there is untapped potential to breed with other early and showy selections like the collections from Ghent, Knaphill, Exbury and Aromi to have really fancy late blooms, maybe all the way through to September”

The photograph below is provided by Dan Turner owner of Millais Nurseries. It is a late flowering cultivar ***Azalea prunifolium* ‘Ted’s Red’** a selection made by Ted Millais, with deep red flowers into August.

[View](#)



Evergreen Azalea Review - thank you for your response

Last month we asked for your help with this RHS review and thank you to all who responded. These responses have been integral to the outcome of the review discussions and we will report in a forthcoming bulletin and yearbook.



Gardens of Ireland 12th – 16th April 2026

We are very excited to be going to Ireland for a tour of fantastic gardens, this tour has been designed by Seamus O'Brien and David Millais.

The trip will start in Cork on Sunday 12th at 19.00 and finish in Dublin Airport on Thursday 16th at 17.00. We have nine gardens to visit including a couple of special private gardens. Members and guests will make their own bookings for travel to and from Ireland and book directly into the three great hotels we have chosen. These hotels have rooms available to us and free cancellation policies.

Thank you to Seamus O'Brien for this photograph of *Rhododendron davidsonianum*, one of our favourites at Kilmacurragh.

We will request a deposit of £150 each for the cost of the coach which will be required for booking. Places are limited and will be booked on a first come basis. Final coach costs will be known once final numbers are confirmed.

The approximate cost excluding travel to and from Ireland for one person would be around £980 and could be less depending on coach costs, your booking of rooms and meals.

For information about the route, gardens, and hotels and to book please email us [by clicking here](#) before 7pm on 17th August. Following that we will reach out to The Rhododendron Societies of The Netherlands and Germany and other societies of our genera.



Worth Park's Camellia Corridor awarded National Historic Collection status

Worth Park's iconic Camellia Corridor has officially been recognised by Plant Heritage as a National Historic Collection, affirming its exceptional horticultural and historical value. This prestigious designation celebrates years of research, conservation, and careful curation, placing Worth Park among the UK's most significant custodians of *Camellia japonica* cultivars.

The collection features rare and threatened varieties, many dating back to the 19th century, and is housed within a unique curved oak structure bordered by original Minton tiles—an architectural gem in its own right. The award acknowledges the corridor's role in preserving living history and its contribution to national plant conservation.

We thank members of our south east branch who helped with support and on site help with identification and provenance of the collection.

This recognition follows Worth Park's earlier success with its National Collection of *Achillea millefolium* and *Achillea filipendulina* cultivars, reinforcing the park's reputation as a leader in biodiversity, heritage preservation, and sustainable horticulture. The history of Worth Park can be read by clicking the button below

[View](#)

Nursery in South Devon UK for a Gold Medal display at Hampton Court. This was Jeremy's first time at RHS Hampton Court and he secured the medal for an educational display in the floral marquee on the care of Camellias.



RHS Wentworth Woodhouse

Congratulations to Head Gardener Scott Jamieson and the garden team for hosting their first RHS Show which finished last week. Wentworth Woodhouse is in Yorkshire and the historic Camellia House was recently restored. This 4 minute film is the story of the conservation effort.



Plant Committee News

The future of the RCMG Seed List was reported last month as a priority. This month through collaboration with Plant Heritage our seeds were successfully sold at the RHS Hampton Court Show.

A decision will be made about plans for future seed lists and we will update members next month.

A new plant committee chaired by Jack Aldridge is in its final stages of being shaped with working groups on key topics, its work will feature in every monthly newsletter and our Bulletins.



Irish Branch News - A newly registered rhododendron from Salterbridge Estate, County Waterford, Ireland

Each year members look forward to reading the notes of the International Rhododendron Registrar in our yearbook. This is a summary of new registrations from Sharon McDonald and we thank Sharon for all her work on registrations and keeping the database at the RHS updated.

Irish branch member and Head Gardener Colin Jones grew this cultivar to flower in 2024.

Named Rhododendron 'Salterbridge Starlight' *Rhododendron macabeaenum* x probably *Rhododendron calophytum* after the garden and it is now on the register. Colin shared this photograph and said " This is the first plant named after the garden and registered from it, a very special moment for me and the owners" Please [email us](#) if you would like the detailed registration description.



Celebrating our Genera in Art - RHS Botanical Art Gold Medal

On behalf of the RCMG, Philip Eastell our chair would like to congratulate Mayumi Hashi, an outstanding botanical artist for winning the Gold Medal at the RHS Botanical Art Exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery, London. Her stunning watercolours of magnolias native to Japan and China won the Best Botanical Art Exhibit.

One of her paintings is this *Magnolia delavayi* and Mayumi used the trees at Borden Hill and Nymans Gardens in Sussex as source material for her painting.

The exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery continues until 27th July and is free to enter.

Mayumi is on instagram and you can see more of her beautiful paintings by clicking the button below.

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Get Out For The Count

Butterfly counts are the absolute hallmark of citizen science. Conservation groups have declared a butterfly emergency and you can help. Our members have been counting butterflies in their gardens and around the world there are opportunities to take part in monitoring numbers.

Elliot Chandler Head Gardener and member at High Beeches Garden in Sussex UK keeps an up to date list of the butterflies he sees and this year around 21 different species in the garden including the following:

Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Marbled White, Ringlet, Speckled Wood, Silver-washed Fritillary, Dark Green Fritillary, White Admiral, Red Admiral, Large Skipper, Essex Skipper, Holly Blue, Common Blue, Peacock, Comma, Painted Lady, Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell.

Elliot sent this picture of a Marbled White seen in the garden.

For Rhododendrons, Camellia and Magnolia growers - butterflies look for open flowers, and ericaceous plants such as hydrangeas can help attract them

Elliot hopes this year is much better than last year when the count was alarming.

Details on how to take part in the UK can be viewed [here](#).

The count closes on the 10th August 2025

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Jobs for the garden in July

John Marston, our branch chair for the southwest branch has shared this short film taken a few days ago in his garden of *Magnolia* 'Maryland'.

His jobs in the garden this month have been deadheading roses, dahlias and cosmos and clearing brambles across the paths along with general weeding. John said that watering the garden eased off in the last week or so because of much needed rain.

[This RHS page](#) has more jobs tips for our gardens this month.

[View](#)

Summer is a time to admire foliage and in this video, we've gathered footage from across the UK and Ireland to celebrate rhododendron leaves. New growth on rhododendrons often have coloured leaves that can match the brilliance of their flowers and gives us even more reason to choose them for our gardens. The majority of rhododendrons are also evergreen, so they add year round interest and structure.

Thank you to all our contributors - Kevin Pratt (Gregarth Hall), Lucy Bidgood (Bodnant), Colin Jones (Salterbridge), Gary Long (Trewithen), Mark Bobin (Minterne), Tom Wells (Ramster), John Marston (Gorwell House), Mike Roberts (Ness Botanics)



Branch Activity - please contact branch chairs to book

South West - Autumn Meeting and AGM 27th September. Speaker is John Lanyon former NT Gardens Advisor

North West - Talk at Ness Gardens The Rhododendron Species at Hergest Croft by Rowan Griffiths 4th October

New Forest - Visit to Minterne Gardens and talk by Rosemary Legrand 28th October

Wessex Autumn Meeting at Ramster Hall Gardens on Japanese plants and walk around a garden 27th /28th November

UK Show Schedule 2026

Here are the dates of UK shows for next year

- 14th/15th March Early Camellia Competition RHS Rosemoor

- 11th/12th April Main Camellia Competition, Early Rhododendron Competition and SE Branch Show RHS Wisley
- 18th April North West Branch Show at Ness Gardens
- 25th/26th April Main Rhododendron Competition RHS Rosemoor
- 9th May Wessex Branch Show at Leonardslee Gardens
- RCMG Centenary Cup - Date and venue to be confirmed.

Communications, Bulletins and Yearbook

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter.

Our communication is a team effort and we are forming a brand new editorial team for the Newsletter, Bulletins and Yearbook. As a reminder our monthly email bulletin is usually the fourth Friday of each month, Bulletins are Spring, Summer and Autumn and our Yearbook is once again year.

Please contact us [here](#) if you would like to join in or have ideas.

The July newsletter has been made possible with the help of our chairman Philip, Vice Chairs Mark and Sian, Branch chairs Seamus O'Brien, Steve Peters, John Marston and Connor Ryan and members Dan Turner, Colin Jones and Elliot Chandler and others. Thanks all.



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