



The alpine meadow, as well as being a great area for plants, is also a haven for all kinds of wildlife including many insects such as these Cinnabar moth caterpillars. We would normally remove ragwort from the meadow but this one was left for now so the caterpillars can feed and go on to complete their life cycle.

The picture above was taken by David Green, one of our trainees who took various interesting shots this week. At the bottom of the rock garden one day a group of visitors were stood looking up into a tree and taking photos. As the tree was not in flower at the time, I wondered what they looking at so I went down to investigate. On a branch not more than a metre above our heads were three cute willow warbler chicks. The mother was coming back & forth bringing them tit bits of food and did not seem to care at all that there was a growing audience just feet away from her offspring. I did not have my camera at the time, but David managed to get a picture, though by then one of them had moved away to leave two in shot:



*Alchemilla mollis* grows all over the rock garden and while useful in places it can be an aggressive invader, seeding everywhere. As a result, we remove a lot each year. In places where we still want it, we cut it back after flowering to stop further seeding. David took these shots of such a clump:



*Alchemilla* before cutting back



*Alchemilla* after cutting back

Most plants on the crevice garden have finished flowering but one or two late flowerers are performing. First of these is the often short-lived *Gentiana saxosa*. This often grows in sand in the wild so has found itself quite at home in the sand of our crevices:



The first of the autumn-flowering gentians has just opened. This is *Gentiana farreri* 'Silken Star' group:



Continuing the blue theme, *Cyananthus sherriffii* seems happy in a north facing crevice:



Nearby but in sun, *Jovibarba heuffelii* 'Angel Wings' looks smart with upright yellow flowers:



Doing surprisingly well in the crevice garden is this *Ewartia planchonii* from Tasmania:



In the display house, there are several *Eriogonum*s at present. One of them is this *Eriogonum jamesii*:



Another is *Eriogonum nudum* which has yellow balls of flowers held on long stems:



But my favourite is the wonderfully coloured (on ageing flowers) *Erigonum umbellatum* var *polyanthum*:



Also in the house now are some *Eucomis*. This is *Eucomis autumnalis* (I'm not sure why it is called this as it always flowers in summer for us!):



Its smaller cousin, with slightly narrower leaves and more outward facing flowers, is *Eucomis autumnalis* ssp. *amaryllidifolia*



Finally for this week, *Eucomis montana* is particularly handsome:



Here is a close up of the flowers:

