



**The Scottish Rock Garden Club
SHOW REPORTS
STIRLING 2011**



**Forrester Medal &
Institute of Quarrying Quaich
- Best Non-European Plant
Trillium rivale 'Purple Heart'
shown by Cyril Lafong**



**Certificate of Merit
Corydalis popovii
shown by Cyril Lafong**



**Spiller Trophy for
Best Primula
Ben Ledi Trophy
for Best European Plant
Primula 'Nightingale'
shown by Cyril Lafong**



Carneigie Dunfermline Trust Trophy - most points Sec I



Stan da Prato



Gill Lee



Fife County Trophy - most points Sec II



The second record cold winter in a row challenged growers. Plants which we might have expected to see were well behind but we did have a chance to see others which might otherwise have been missed.

Bulbs are well catered for at this show with the classes being widely defined to allow exhibitors to bring many different plants, even several plants of the same species if they choose the classes carefully eg there are two classes for 6 pans of bulbs. In one the pans must contain distinct genera but in the other they pans need only differ from each other. Then there are classes for three and two pans. Genera which have proved to be popular in the past like *Corydalis* and *Fritillaria* have 3, 2 and 1 pan classes.



6 PANS DISTINCT GENERA

There is a Tulip, Narcissus, Scilla, Erythronium, Pushkinia and a Crocus



6 PANS DISTINCT

3 Narcissus and 3 Muscari
All different from each other



**The supreme trio from Glenrothes, together in Class 1.
All three won for Cyril Lafong**



The Forrest Medal and Institute of Quarrying Quaich for Best non-European Plant in the show were awarded to Trillium rivale 'Purple Heart'; The Spiller trophy for best Primula and The Ben Ledi Plants Trophy to Primula 'Nightingale'; a Certificate of Merit to Corydalis popovii



SRGC Folk



Ranunculaceae



Thank goodness for the family
Ranunculaceae!

The family includes lots of genera with fabulous flowers and most of them 'easy' to grow here in Scotland. We all know how beautiful is a wild meadow full of buttercups but can you imagine a meadow full of Pulsatillas? To see them you have to travel to alpine lands where depending on timing and altitude you can find them in bloom.

Above is *Pulsatilla halleri*, 'Budapest Seedling', a descendant of Molly Sanderson's original plant. As I understand all plants true to name in Scotland have been vegetatively propagated from a plant given by Molly to Fred Hunt. A percentage of seedling come nearly true but I have sown supposedly true seed and my plants had the correct big flowers but were purple.

Right Above is *Pulsatilla vernalis*, a seedling from Cyril's Forrest medal winning. This is the Norwegian version of the species and this one scores 'douze points' wherever it appears.



Below *Hepatica nobilis* white form and *Callianthemum anemonoides*

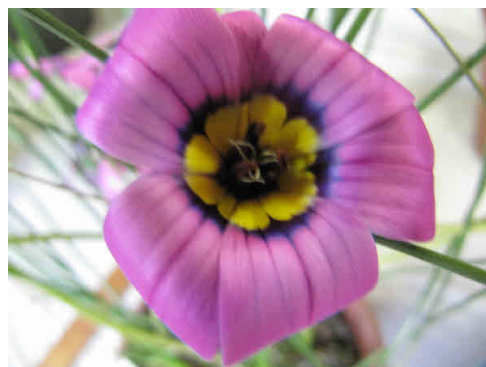


A look at the Spring Bulbs



Fritillaria chitralensis

Grows in Chitral, N. Pakistan at very high altitudes. It is one of the rarest and most beautiful dwarf relatives *F. imperialis*, the crown imperial. Altogether *chitralensis* is a smaller more refined plant with fewer flowers in its flower-head. In cultivation it needs a very gritty loam based compost and is given a dryish summer rest. [Shown by Cyril Lafong]



Jean Wyllie's *Romulea atrandra* had the brightest flowers in the show. Rush-like foliage supported ten or twelve blooms in various stages of opening, backed up by several buds. This South African bulb has smooth bright magenta petals with a silken sheen. The flower centres are an equally bright yellow and these two opposite colours are separated by a feathered band of deep navy blue, perfect for party frocks. Quite a stunner! And .. What about Jean's *Cyclamen alpinum* below right





EASTER SNOWDROPS

I found Ian Christie's the two green-tipped snowdrops, with marks like *G. viridipice* very interesting.

On the left is Dreycote Greentip and on the right Galanthus Cinderella

To my mind Cinderella has the better marking because they are better defined and darker. Greycote's marks are a bit more diffuse and paler olive green. Both made super potfuls.



C. vernus x tommasinianus



Crocus vernus albus



On the left two pans of Crocus photographed at different times of day. At the top, early in the morning and at the bottom about 5 hours later. It shows the difference that a few hours in a warm hall can make.





*The class for 2 pans of Narcissus
Take a closer look at the smallest entry
from Margaret and Henry Taylor.
Two pans of their own cross Narcissus
luteolentus x triandrus pallidus.
You can see the similarity between the two
seedlings but one is lighter in colour, has
longer tepals and its cup is deeper and has
straighter sides*

Narcissus watieri
has long been a favourite al-
though few people seem to
manage to keep it in cultivation
continuously.
The late SRGC
past president,
Sheila Maule
regularly showed
a large pan as
did more recently Kath Rimmer. Kath's
daughter Carole Bainbridge also has he
secret. It is a delightful plant with crystal-
line white blooms, 1.5 cm across. Perhaps
it needs the cold brisk Edinburgh air to
remind it of its home in Morroccon Atlas
mountains where it is a snow melt plant



Narcissus luteolentus x triandrus pallidus



Beside them sat
a wee Spanish
Narcissus from
the Picos de Eu-
ropa, *Narcissus
asturiensis* was
formerly known
as *N. minimus*



Fritillaria raddeana and F. edwardii



Corydalis solida and its many selected forms is one of the best plants for springtime. As soon as conditions are ready the stems pierce the ground and elongate almost as you watch them. In no time at all they are in full flower and the blooms last for several weeks. If you are lucky, they set seed and die back down to their wee corm just as quickly. Janis Ruksans from Latvia has mastered them and selected the most wonderful

forms. Each generation is more complicated and delicately tinted than the previous. Send for some and brighten up Scottish gardens. Here is one of Janis' new hybrids 'FRODO'. I love the pink markings outlining the mouths of the flowers.



Primulas come into their own at the Edinburgh show but we had a foretaste at Stirling

Hybridizing primulas is a rewarding and fascinating hobby. You may start by sowing seeds from your own plants. All the cultivated hybrids have been selected for one reason or another, so any seedling from a 'garden cross' has the potential to become a good plant. You should at least get a variety of flower colours in your seedlings. We have already seen Cyril's *Primula* 'Nightingale' [*P. allionii* x *hirsuta*.] Tom Green showed an older hybrid x *miniera* (*allionii* x *marginata*) 'Joan Hughes' in splendid form. It has lovely pale lilac flowers, each with a wide white eye. Tom's *Primula megaseifolia* x *juliae* was an interesting plant; very floriferous, holding its magenta flowers up on fifteen-centimetre multi-headed scapes (*is there name for this?*) like a refined polyanthus.



***Primula* 'Joan Hughes'**



***Primula* 'Gabrielle'**

The names of eminent rock gardeners from bygone days are preserved with *Primula allionii* 'Anna Griffith', 'Raymond Wooster' and 'Clarence Elliot'. These older selections still hold their own against more modern clones such as *P.* 'Lindum Moonlight' and *P.* 'Gabrielle'. *Primula* 'White Lady', shown by James Cobb in a twelve inch pan, was quite superb; it promised to be wonderful the next week and, if held on during a cool fortnight, to be excellent at the Edinburgh show. This is a plant for every aspiring rock plant exhibitor.



Primula megaseifolia



***Primula* 'White Lady'**



***Primula* 'Anna Griffith'**



Some open garden plants can be coaxed into flower for an early show with just a little protection. Thus we were rewarded at the show with three primroses and a gold-laced polyanthus. I love the gold-edged black flowers of the latter; they seem to have been designed rather than grown. One of the primroses was a delicate white double named *Primula* 'Dawn Ansell'.

Something bad seems to have beset petiolarid primulas in recent years. Many people used to grow and show them but they are now the preserve of a few gardeners who are able to provide the conditions to survive hot, dry summers. Ian & Carole Bainbridge and Tom Green succeed, and between them showed three beautiful forms of *P. x irregularis*. The 'two doctors' also showed the Chinese *Primula knuthiana*, a sturdy wee beauty with farinose leaves.



Another spring genus which almost any rock gardener can bank on is Saxifraga. The kabschia species and hybrids can be found in almost any colour except blue. Some are more difficult to please

than others but all are worth trying. You don't need to grow a huge pan-full to enjoy them, try some in a trough and they will look good all year round.

Saxifraga 'Your Smile' left



There were lots of great plants including a magnificent display from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Thanks to everyone who took part in his our 30th Show.

Sandy Leven

