



A day out at York Gate - Charlie Philpotts.

A friend of mine and myself went to York Gate garden late September to plant some orchids and other wild flowers in the new meadow. As those of you who went on the AGS visit last year will know, it fully deserves the reputation it has as one of the finest small gardens in the UK. Our very own Ben Preston, the head gardener, led us around the gardens that day and gave us a slide presentation afterwards. I did not realise until recently that the charity had purchased the adjacent property. This has not only greatly increased the size of the garden but also allowed for a much bigger café and plant sales. The new entrance is seen below left and is being planted up in a mediterranean style. The soil has been topped with two feet of sand which means it is free draining but also remains damp under the surface. The area is mostly in full sun and a new hedge will help provide a micro climate as well. The preliminary building work is to a very high standard and when finished the area will be a stunning entrance to the gardens.



Above is view of the new entrance, right is *Fascicularia bicolor* from the Atacama desert in Chile.

The left photo is a view with several large olive trees planted. These were bought from a reliable source which guaranteed them to be virus free. There are large gaps to be filled and my imagination was stoked at the possibilities of what could be done. I passed on a *Dierama pulcherrimum* 'Alba' I had spare and this should take off quickly and become an attractive addition to this area. I will have some continental orchids big enough to be planted out next year. I got the seed from rough ground in the south of France a few years ago and believe they are some *Orchis* species. A number of *Serpis lingua* (tongue orchid) have already been planted in this area with tubers bought from a reliable source. The environment should suit these and hopefully they can establish themselves and spread themselves around.



Above *Agave* and right a mature olive tree.

The meadow area contrasts greatly with the above area and much work was done manually scything the grass to remove the fertility. The photo below left shows *Camassia leichtinii* bulbs before planting and it is interesting to see how much the roots were developed in September. They had been potted up after dying down and left in a cool shady area. I had a number of native wildflowers spare from my own garden which we planted out next. These included greater knapweed, lesser scabious, betony and wild marjoram all of which should add diversity to the existing meadow.



The orchids in the photo above right had been sown from seed and were taken from their pots for planting. It was very satisfying to find a home for these where their site will be well managed. We broadcast other orchid seeds around the meadow and will plant more species next year when I have more reaching maturity. I look forward to next year and seeing the results of our efforts.

Some autumnal photos from Anne Wright's garden



Cyclamen intaminatum pale form



Cyclamen intaminatum pink form



Crocus pulchellus above



Clematis "my angel"



Crocus ex purple heart

Right shows warm colours of *Prunus sargentii*,
Rudbeckia and *Hesperantha* combining to make
a lovely colourful scene.



Pictures from Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh – Roger Backhouse



Roger's photos brought back fond memories of my first visit with our local AGS group a few years back. We visited Edrom nursery on the way there so it was a day of treats for alpine lovers. The top two photos show the tufa house where cliff dwelling plants grow in similar conditions to their natural ones. The roof keeps off the winter wet but the sides are open to allow the cold dormant period the plants need.



The above two photos show miniature landscapes in troughs, crevice and scree where the planting media can be controlled. The photos below show pots plunged into sand beds in the alpine house, the left one includes a fine pot of *Crocus Serotinus*. The right photo is mainly *Dionysia* cultivars with a few still in flower.

