

Dorset AGS Secretary's report
AGMs for March 2020 and 4th March 2021.

This is a report of 2 years and 2 halves. We started in April 2019 with a full house of members, full programme of speakers and a thriving group. Christine Hughes had arranged a full programme of fascinating talks starting with Richard Horswood on Alpine Gardening and then our own Chairlady Caroline Seymour gave a fascinating talk on her trip to Ecuador. At the end of May Dorset and Hampshire ran the Rocky flower show which was as ever well attended and a huge success. After that we were released to travel the world so Christine and I made off to Eastern Turkey, the border with Iran.

Autumn 2019, still calm and going well, Micky Little talked on bulbs to an audience of 75 then Anna Pavord gave a fascinating talk on "Bulbs for all Seasons", and we were delighted that Iain Robertson brought his Farrer winning Cyclamen to show us. John Mitchell came down from Edinburgh to talk on Central Asia, followed by Christopher Bailes on gardening with Hardy Orchids.

The first meeting on 2020, our own Graham Poynter took us to the Picos de Europa, then Paul Tout gave a dissertation on the Alpine plants of the Northern Adriatic. After this Covid came onto the scene, we cancelled our meeting in March but did have the local Allendale show on 14th March. This was well supported in plants and photographs, with 3 nurseries, so we went home well laden with new alpiners for the rock garden.

Then cancellation, no more meetings at Corfe Mullen no more Rocky Flower Show, but we did manage an outdoor meeting and bulb sale in Horton Village Hall which has good outside space and is a lovely hall for future reference but is rather far from Western Dorset.

We had to cancel our AGM in 2020 and combined with Hants and West Sussex for monthly Zoom talks. Zoom has been the saving of lockdown we have been able to have our committee meetings by Zoom as we will be having our AGM the same way. We have frequent and very good Zoom meetings from the main AGS and groups around the country. Our own programme has been a huge success, Jon Evans set the ball rolling in September with some lovely pictures of Paxos, then it was my turn to take the groups around Yunnan in Western China. In November we take advantage of Zoom with an overseas speaker. Jenny Wainwright who manages Munich Botanical garden alpine section, gave us an excellent talk on Schachen garden high in the Bavarian Alps. In January Michael Myers gave a detailed account of Snowdrop species and varieties.

So, we go on with more Zoom talks, but no personal contact, no garden visits, no visits to nurseries, we are reliant on mail order from the nurseries. It is vital to keep up our enthusiasm and keep our groups together. We look forward to seeing you all when Covid has been controlled. In the meantime when allowed we will have some garden visits in the summer, and another plant sale at Horton, please come.

David Hughes, Hon Secretary, Dorset AGS