

The Knoll Gardens Foundation



Autumn Newsletter 2011

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The Foundation

It has been quite a busy summer organising the Open Days, working on the interpretation panels project and the general day to day running of the Foundation. Sometimes I just don't know where the time goes!

Foundation Open Days

We have held six Foundation Open Days since June, with the last one being held on Friday 25th November from 10am to 3.30pm.

We've had approximately 1,400 people visit us and it has been wonderful to greet so many new and past visitors to the gardens. Lots of locals have visited for the first time, which is wonderful! We've had visitors from as far a field as Germany, France and America and in the UK, from Scotland.

From left to right: Keith Powrie (Butterfly & Dragonfly survey), Marion Davies, Neil Lucas, Anne Crotty, Anne Morris



So many people are surprised at the gardens and how beautiful and interesting they are - of course, that's no surprise to us!

The RSPB have been at all the open days, holding competitions and wildlife quizzes. We have built a great rapport with Sarah-Jane and look forward to working with them in 2012.

Interpretation panels

In the last newsletter I told you about the interpretation panel project to enhance

our visitors experience with the aim being to

- to educate by explaining what you see, the benefits and how you can do the same in your own garden
- to visually demonstrate the ethos of the gardens
- to blend in with the gardens

I am thrilled to tell you that we have installed 3 panels explaining Naturalistic, Shady & Dry and Wildlife, with the Sunny Dry & Drought waiting to be installed once we have finished the Gravel garden expansion and refurbishment. We think they look fantastic and are so pleased with them.

The plan for 2012 is to have panels for each area of the gardens and planting plans for key areas, but of course this will very much rely on funds being available to undertake this work.

I hope to see you soon!

Anne Crotty



Volunteering at Knoll

We are pleased to welcome five new volunteers to Knoll and here are the thoughts of two of them...

Marion Davies, Volunteer Project Co-ordinator. (Tel: 01425 471694)

For the last four months I have been Volunteer Project Co-ordinator with The Knoll Gardens Foundation. My role is to encourage others to volunteer at Knoll Gardens and also to help the Trustees move the charity forward to the next stage in its development, including identifying possible funding streams and helping to develop new partnerships with both the local community and further afield.

It is a privilege to work with Neil Lucas, the Trustees and staff and to become part of an extended family which is committed to educating people to the benefits of sustainable, environmentally friendly gardening where animals, insects and plants share the whole

garden with us. We work hard but have fun even when the rain occasionally pours down on our free open days because we are committed to promoting the “Knoll” style of sustainable gardening to anyone who is interested in learning how make their own garden environmentally friendly.

If you share our commitment to sustainable gardening and would like help us develop the The Knoll Gardens Foundation we currently have vacancies for volunteer garden guides and volunteer fundraisers/event organisers. Do get in touch with us if you would like more information about these voluntary roles, you won't regret it!

Anne Morris, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Knoll Gardens

As the first frost hit my own garden this week, my thoughts turned to Knoll Gardens and how the plants, grasses, shrubs and trees would take on a new beauty.

Since July, I have been ‘helping out’ at Knoll Gardens on a Friday morning with Judy and Val.

What have we been up to?
We have cleared the gravel garden of unwanted weeds and plants in wrong places in readiness for that section's

refurbishment. This has been hugely rewarding – getting to know the plants, talking to visitors about the project – and feeling that we were actually doing something to help in this beautiful garden.

What else? - tidying up the fallen eucalyptus bark, clearing an overgrown shady corner and spot weeding in the Dragon Garden.

Obviously Neil is never too far away if we hit a problem, or help is at hand from Luke or the nursery staff. Our plant knowledge is increasing weekly as visitors frequently ask for help with identification. Between the three of us, sometimes we can help, otherwise we refer them to the nursery, but it is so rewarding when we can actually help.

Do you want to join us? It is only for a couple of hours a week in a truly beautiful garden.

If you are interested, we have the following opportunities:

- Garden volunteer
- Nursery volunteer
- Garden guide volunteer

If you are interested then please contact us for a full description of the role you are interested in and an application form by e-mailing us at foundation@knollgardens.co.uk or telephoning us on 01202 873931, or contact Marion Davies.



In The Garden

Summer may not have been all that it was cracked up to be (again!) but autumn has made up for some of that lack of summer sunshine by providing us with some beautiful warm days which reminds me just why autumn is my very favourite time of year.

Not only are so many of the 'wow' factor grasses looking their best, with the promise of several months more interest to come, but a significant number of the gardens woody plants choose this time to make a special show. There are so many plants to choose from, and a thousand different subtleties of foliage and stem colour to observe now that I feel just a little like a 'kid in a sweetshop' – hardly knowing where to turn first! I don't get the chance to spend much time in the garden just looking, or taking pictures, but this is the time of year when I redouble my efforts to spend time with my camera.

Still amongst my very favourite woody plants, I have several, are the spindle trees or *Euonymus*. Best known for their smaller evergreen cousins these larger versions drop their leaf in autumn but with such aplomb and procedure that they are a constant joy to watch. We have several different species and



forms all as good as each other but one that is taking my eye at the moment is a pink fruited seedling that produces such a generous number of fruits it is reminiscent of a heavily laden fruit tree. We really must get around to giving this a name it is so distinctive.

The magnificent specimen of the willow oak with its long narrow very un-oak like leaves is deep shiny green all summer and then gradually, bit by bit, the first warm russet brown autumn colours can be spied in the canopy, soon to turn into an avalanche of gently cascading leaves that coat the ground. Not to be wasted Luke will sweep these onto the borders to make a useful and very decorative mulch. The famous plantsman, and friend, Roy Lancaster thinks it is one of the best trees of its type the whole of the UK.

Another famous plantsman and well known TV personality Tom Hart Dyke of Lullington Castle fame came to visit this summer and was very enthusiastic (as he can be), about so many of our plants. Especially keen on the uncommonly seen yellow wood,

Cladustris lutea, which he spotted from some distance away Tom is also expert in eucalyptus and enjoyed our large specimens which obviously like our sandy dry soils.

As always we are undertaking new projects to keep the garden fresh - and of course to find more space for the constant supply of new plants the nursery produces. The Gravel garden extension is nearly re soiled and I am hoping we get this new section all covered with a fresh coat of gravel and at least part planted before Christmas. I have new fountain grasses and the stunning *Jarava ichu* planned for the full sun and dry conditions the new section will have to offer.

Luke and I have been working on the final sections of the Shady garden and again we were able to start planting in August as the weather was damp and of course the ground warm and so great for establishment of new roots.

The Summer garden still concerns me as it is looking tired; so if we are lucky enough to get our others jobs finished in time I think this will be our next target. Needless to say we don't need heavy snow and ice again this winter. A small dusting on Christmas Day to sparkle in the sunshine would be fine....

Neil Lucas



Events

Saturday 3rd December 2011

The Knoll Gardens Foundation presents.....

The Garden as a Community

The Allendale Centre, Hanham Road, Wimborne, BH21 1AS
Saturday 3rd December 2011,
2:30pm to 5pm

Tickets £8.00

Main speakers:

Neil Lucas MI Hort, the UK's leading ornamental grass specialist, and owner of Knoll Gardens

Clive Farrell, who is at the cutting edge of shaping British butterfly habitats, and has fashioned the richest wild flower meadow in Dorset, specifically for indigenous species and owner of Butterfly World

Panel discussion: with RSPB and Dorset Wildlife Trust

Supported by:

The Hardy Plant Society and Plant Heritage



Join us for an afternoon of Chelsea Gold Medal winning expertise, butterflies, birds, wildlife & glorious grasses.

Ticket price includes admission to Knoll Gardens from 10am - 12:30pm on 3rd December 2011

Tickets available now. Call 07500 863577 or e-mail foundation@knollgardens.co.uk

2012

We will be holding Open Days on the last Friday of every month, commencing in April.

As events are added to the calendar, we will keep you informed.

Friends information

We want to thank all our Friends for their support and look forward to seeing you in 2012!

Friends and Donors

"Thank You" to all our Friends and Donors, we couldn't do this without you!

Volunteer support

"Thank You" to our wonderful volunteers:

- Marion
- Anne Morris
- Brenda
- Anne Crotty
- Renata
- Helen
- Judy
- Val
- Mary

Christmas present ideas:

Why not buy a Friend of Knoll Gardens Foundation membership for someone this Christmas for just £30? You already know what a lovely place Knoll is to visit, so spread the joy in 2012! Just send an e-mail to foundation@knollgardens.co.uk or send us a letter and we'll send you a form to complete. We'll aim to get you the membership card before we close on 17th December in time for Christmas.



Neil's Book - Designing with Grasses

Beautifully illustrated, Designing with Grasses shows you how to bring the magic of grasses to even the smallest of gardens creating show-stopping appeal for remarkably little work. With over 200 photographs, it not only provides expert advice at your fingertips, but also offers

an essential guide to the many ways that grasses can be used to best effect, frequently at low cost and always with an incredible beauty.

Signed copies are now available direct from Knoll Gardens for just £18 +P&P. Order online at

www.knollgardens.co.uk or call the nursery on 01202 873931.

URGENT - Broadsheet Newspapers Wanted

We need your **broad sheet** newspapers! Our stocks are getting very low and we use the newspaper as packing material for our mail-order boxes. The broad sheet size is a perfect fit, which is why we don't want the tabloid size newspapers. Its great recycling and a very worthwhile cause! Please tell all your friends and neighbours.

Opening Times for 2011 & 2012

2011

We will be open:-

Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 4pm to 17th December. Last entry to the Gardens is 30 minutes before closing.

Closed Sundays & Mondays

Closed from December 18th 2011 Re-opening February 1st 2012

2012

We will be open:-

Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm (4pm From 1st November to March). Last entry to the Gardens is 30 minutes before closing.

Closed Sundays & Mondays, except Bank Holidays

Closed from December 16th 2012 Re-opening February 1st 2013



Board of Trustees

Neil Lucas — Chair
Amanda Walker
Ross Humphrey
Colin Clark
Andrea Flude

Contact Us

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