

The Knoll Gardens Foundation



Winter Newsletter 2010

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The Foundation

I can't believe we are in December already, where has the year gone! It may come as a surprise to know that the Knoll Gardens Foundation has been established now for 17 months and we are slowly making progress in this very difficult economic climate.

Friends old and new

For old Friends, thank you for renewing your membership and for new Friends, welcome! Your membership fee and donations are vital to our work and the fact that we can reclaim Gift Aid helps us too.

We would love to see our Friends membership grow and go from strength to strength. With Christmas only weeks away, why not get someone a year's membership as a gift? If you would like to request a Friends membership form, you can send an e-mail to foundation@knollgardens.co.uk or telephone us on 01202 873931.



A volunteer's view

My husband and I have been coming to Knoll Gardens for 13 years and love the gardens, which are a joy in all seasons. We believe in the Foundation's ethos, vision and commitment and so, after 31 years of working I unexpectedly found I had time on my hands, I volunteered to help with the Foundation. I can't quite believe it's been a year!

My role is office based and thoroughly enjoyable. I look after the Friends and Donations information, claim back the Gift Aid, work on projects (see page 2) and look at potential funding opportunities. Oh, and now the Friends Newsletter!

As you can imagine in this economic climate, things aren't easy but the commitment, drive and determination that I see from Neil Lucas to move the Foundation forward is inspirational.

It is very rewarding and a lovely place to work. Neil and the team have welcomed me and made me feel right at home. I really feel that I am contributing to a worthwhile cause and enjoying every minute!

I hope you enjoy this newsletter!

Anne Crotty

P.S. Knoll Gardens will be closed from December 19th 2010, re-opening February 2nd 2011, so Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us!



Butterflies and Dragonflies of Knoll Gardens

Meadow Brown



At Knoll we are passionate about the wildlife found in the garden and as part of our ethos, we want to ensure we sustain what we already have as well as encourage more species.

We are very grateful to Keith Powrie, an expert in lepidopterology and odonatology, who has undertaken surveys at Knoll Gardens in 2009 and 2010. The objective was to ascertain which species were present and the areas and plant species, or wet areas in the case of dragonflies, which they preferred. Keith has provided us with in-depth reports which will be used to compare and contrast in future years as we develop and change the borders within the garden.

Here are what I hope are some interesting facts from the surveys:

Butterflies

A total of over 500 individuals of 21 species of butterfly were counted during the 2010 season. This produces a grand total of 23 species occurring in the gardens.

The most numerous butterfly, with a count of 71, was the Meadow Brown. Tying for second place, at 62 each, were Green-veined White and, very surprisingly Holly Blue, which was the one of the highest counts in Dorset. These were closely



followed by 53 Large White, 48 Gatekeeper, 42 Comma and 30 Brimstone.

If you want to learn more about butterflies and what you can do to encourage them into your garden, go to the Butterfly Conservation website: www.butterfly-conservation.org

Odonata - Dragonflies and Damselflies

The overall count of odonata was in excess of 1,500, consisting of 15 species (4 damselfly and 11 dragonfly).

Of the damselflies the most numerous were the Azure Damselflies with a total count of 1,245 and of the dragonflies the most numerous were the Common Darter with a total count of 46.



Azure Damselfly



Common Darter

Bumblebee research project



As you may be aware, the Knoll Gardens Foundation has been approached by Dr Nikolay Bogatyrev, from the University of Bath, to undertake a joint research project to:

- Place nest box sites within the gardens for bumblebees and solitary bees
- Planting of additional "bumblebee friendly" plants to ensure there are flowering plants from Spring through to Autumn
- Monitor the population within the gardens, with a view to seeing it increase and benefit the gardens as well as the research being used for wider application
- Provide educational information:
 - How gardeners can practically apply the Knoll Gardens ethos of planting to benefit bumblebees and other wildlife in their own gardens
 - Talks and guided tours
 - Educational material including a DVD

We will be actively looking for funding to move this project forward so that we can commence the research in Spring 2011.



The Garden

This newsletter is possibly a little later than we have been used to and it is rather down to me finding the time to write some notes! Of course in reality this is rather a good thing as we have been so busy with the nursery and garden that this is almost the first opportunity I have found to sit down and write.

The garden is known to be at its peak from late August to the end of October and so over the years we have seen a gradual increase in visitors and customers over this period. It is when we have our grass masterclasses and are visited by photographers, cameras and other members of the media. As our reputation slowly grows we seem to get busier and busier and so the autumn, which is still my favourite time of year, seemingly goes quicker and quicker! I am not complaining; in times such as we find ourselves presently I am grateful that so many people are coming to visit us and to buy from the nursery.



Although the nature of our Friends group is slowly evolving along with the gardens, and perhaps this new style newsletter typifies this gradual change, the very essence of all that we do is intended to enhance and preserve the gardens. It is still my over-riding interest and the reason for the Foundation's existence.

As always we have a whole list of projects we would like to get done in the gardens; and always we shall doubtless run out of time to do them all! Friends have been very generous in their gifts to the Foundation and while our fundraising activities are still in their infancy I am very much hoping that we may be able to have some interpretation boards placed in the gardens next year which will begin to tell the story of garden and its plants and the ethos behind it all.

We have learnt that the autumn and winter improvement work can actually start in August and this year was no exception as the newly re-soiled Damp



garden was planted pretty much during this period. The soil is warm and the plants in active growth, so as long as we can supply a little extra water if needed it is actually a good time to plant. Lots of spring flowering candelabra primulas as well as a later flowering favourite astilbe of mine, Astilbe 'Purpurlanze' have a new home along with groups of evergreen azaleas that are showing every sign of settling and preparing for their first spring display.

Our gardener, Luke, has worked hard in the garden this season and has already cleared out a rather overgrown corner at the bottom of the Lower Lawn. As often happens with overgrown corners, the area that he has ended up clearing is in fact quite large and has turned into quite a significant area for re-planting - a nice job I am hoping we might get done before Christmas.



The boundary between the Holly Walk and the Gravel Garden has also become a bit wider than intended and many of the shrubs have happily covered a lot of what was once Gravel garden. I have been deliberating over this area probably for a year or so as it contains many nice woody plants, some of which I had collected on my travels, but eventually I decided that the area has to be cleared. Although this project has only just started already we can see how much space we have 'recovered' ready for replanting with sun loving plants next spring.

Possibly uppermost in my mind this winter is the Water garden and the next door Summer garden. Both areas have seen better days and I know at some point we are going to need to re do both these areas. In my 'grand plan' I had

wanted to work on the Eucalyptus lawn which is long overdue for attention as our next major project but the condition of the Water garden may force a change of priority. We have known for sometime that the top pond in particular leaks in a way that cannot be easily fixed and as this leak is significant this alone means we will need to do something before long. However a report from the pump engineers earlier this season suggests that the main pump may need replacing very soon. This is a major item of expenditure and I am not at all sure we should spend such a sum of money when so much else of the area is not up to standard. With this in mind I have been considering merging the Summer and Water Gardens in one larger area and while rather exciting it is also a huge amount of work. At this

moment I am not really sure what we will ending up doing, or be forced to do.....watch this space as the saying has it !!

Neil Lucas

In Appreciation

We want to thank all our Friends for their support in 2010 and look forward to seeing you in 2011!

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:

- Anne
- Brenda
- Karen
- Renata
- Anita
- Helen
- Julia

Broadsheet Newspapers

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!

Feedback

We would like you to let us know what you think of this newsletter and if there are any projects you'd like more information on.

Please send an e-mail to foundation@knollgardens.co.uk

Opening Times for 2011

We are making some changes to our opening times for 2011.

We will be open:-

Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm (4pm November to March).

Last entry to the Gardens is 30 minutes before closing.

Also open Sundays in September & October

Closed Sundays & Mondays. except Bank Holidays

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

Board of Trustees

Neil Lucas — Chair

Amanda Walker

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Colin Clark

Andrea Flude

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