



The Scottish Rock Garden Club



# PERTH SHOW & PLANT FAIR

**Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**11am – 3.30pm**

PLANT SHOW, SPECIALIST NURSERIES

PLANT SALES, SEEDS, BOOKS

TEAS & HOME BAKING

North Inch Community Campus  
Gowans Terrace, Perth, PH1 5BF

**All Welcome**



# Scottish Gardeners' Forum Newsletter

PROMOTING SCOTLAND'S GARDEN CLUBS



*Orchid Fair (see p10)*

Spring 2026

Vol 24: Issue 1

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## Letter from the Chair

I often think of March as being the start of my New Year – all the signs point to increased activity in the garden and suddenly there is a lot to do to catch up. There are so many gardens to visit to see the early Snowdrops, and the spring bulbs



are eager to follow on. The weather is warming slightly and despite the gloomy news and incessant rain there have been sightings of the sun and lengthening days.

It is time to take stock of my potted bulbs and decide which ones will need a little encouragement to get them ready for the Spring shows or if they should be held back. The Narcissi have been sitting outside but in a sheltered spot and most of them seem to have survived the winter. I have Tulips and Alliums in an unheated greenhouse which will have to be opened during the day to prevent them being overheated. The Hellebores in the garden are clumping up nicely, and now I have removed the old leaves I will reward them with some mulch. It's astonishing to find the numbers of seedlings resulting from last year's flowers, and there

is the anticipation of finding something new to add to the collection.

Over the winter Tom Campbell has been looking at the distribution of member clubs throughout Scotland. There have been some revisions to

even out the workload for the Regional Co-ordinators. Your Co-ordinators will be in touch with their allocated clubs to follow up on the survey that was sent out at the end of 2025. The results of this work will help the council decide where best to concentrate their efforts. Please return your survey if you haven't already done so.

Uptake of the e-News has been gradually increasing since it was introduced last year. As individual members can subscribe, it has proved to be an excellent medium for sending information in a more timely manner. We can publicise events, shows, plant sales or special meetings and it means that there is no waiting for a print copy to be passed round.

At our Winter Gathering last November, we discussed the cost of printing and posting a print copy of the *News-*

## Your Council

Honorary President: Jim Jermyn  
Honorary Vice-President: Brian Cunningham

### Chair:

Kathryn Pitts (West Linton HS)  
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### Acting Secretary:

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### Council Members:

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Tom Campbell (Brighter Bervie)  
Hazel Mulberry (Stewarton Gardeing Club)  
Anne Vincent (Nairn and District Horticultural Society)  
Catherine Wright (North Berwick in Bloom)

### Registers of Speakers and Judges:

registers@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

### Newsletter and Website Editor:

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editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

## Regional Co-Ordinators

Region	Coordinator	SGF email
Highlands & Islands	Anne Vincent	Highlands_Islands@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk
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Fife & nearby	Mike Rossi	fife@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk
South East	Cathie Wright	SouthEast@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk
Lothian & Borders	Kathryn Pitts	LothianBorders@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk
West - Central	Andrea McDowall	westcentral@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk
West & South West	Hazel Mulberry	WestSouthWest@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk

## Garden for Life Forum

### Notes from the meeting held on 12th February 2026

I represent the SGF on the Garden for Life Forum (GLF), the body which formerly coordinated the tented village at Gardening Scotland at which constituent members set-up marquees and ran activities including the Pocket Garden Competition. More recently, the GFL has morphed into a network which spans diverse Scottish gardening, nature and environmental related interests involving the professional, commercial and voluntary sectors.

Following a recent review of the GFL's purpose, last week's meeting reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to its core aims:

- To increase enjoyment and understanding of biodiversity
- To support action by gardeners for the benefit of Scotland's biodiversity.
- To promote the benefits of gardening for health and well being

Please take a look at the web page which contains many useful resources and references.

[tinyurl.com/Garden-for-Life-Forum](https://tinyurl.com/Garden-for-Life-Forum)

This is a very useful network for the

SGF to be in as it provides us with access to resources and expertise which are complementary to our purposes and those of our members.

If anyone has questions or suggestions relevant to the GFL, please pass them to me.

**Tom Campbell**

[northeast@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk](mailto:northeast@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk)



*Bee on teazel on the GFL web is the link to expert advice*

## Dunkeld and Birnam Community Orchard Group

The **Big Apple Day** will take place on **Saturday 26th September**. We do a bit of apple pressing, sell cakes and have talks and children's activities. It is usually very well attended.

**Jane Bremner**



*letter* to clubs and the general view was that the *e-News* was an acceptable alternative. Let me know what you think.

We have started receiving applications for Pallets and Planters to be exhibited at the Scone Palace Garden Fair in May. As this year is the 25th Anniversary of Scottish Gardeners Forum we are looking forward to having a bumper display. If your group would like to mark the occasion by submitting an entry we would be delighted to hear from you.

Once again, we are appealing for volunteers to take on the roles which will become vacant this year. Ideally we would have people in place to shadow the existing office holders to ensure a smooth transition. Most of the current office bearers have exceeded their constituted five-year tenure. We can provide job descriptions to anyone interested in this enjoyable work; it

isn't too demanding of your time, but it is fun and rewarding. Please get in touch for information about the various roles on offer.

As always, we are keen to hear your news, so please let us know if you have a special show, occasion or event planned\* and don't forget to forward names of speakers\*\* you have enjoyed so that we can pass on recommendations.

I would like to wish you all a happy and productive new gardening year.

**Kathryn Pitts**

[chair@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk](mailto:chair@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk)

\*Please send news, or news of events to Alison at:

[editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk](mailto:editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk)

\*\*Please send suggestions of Speakers or Judges to:

[chair@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk](mailto:chair@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk)

## Peebles Horticultural Society

The Annual Flower Show will take place on Saturday 29th August 2-4.30pm in the Community Centre (Drill Hall), Walkershaugh, Peebles.

**Anne Dodds**



## My Favourite Plant: *Primula denticulata*

Each spring, there is one plant for which I wait with particular anticipation: *Primula denticulata*, the drumstick primula. It never fails to lift my spirits, and I've found myself making space for it in almost every corner of the garden. From a single original plant, I now have generous drifts dotted throughout the beds. It is easy to divide in late summer and seeds about with enthusiasm, so it's wonderfully easy to build up a collection.



important early source of nectar and pollen for bees and other emerging insects, making them as beneficial as they are beautiful.

Completely hardy, *Primula denticulata* returns faithfully each year with fresh mounds of foliage. Native to moist alpine regions, it is perfectly suited to Scotland's cool, damp conditions, thriving in moist soil with light shade and coping well with heavier ground. For me, it is a reliable, low-maintenance highlight of early spring.

**M.T. O'Donnell**  
Editor  
*Scotland Grows*



From a basal rosette of bright lime-green leaves, sturdy stems rise topped with perfectly rounded clusters of florets in shades of white, pink, and rich purple. Those neat, globe-shaped blooms have a pleasingly architectural quality, yet they still feel soft and joyful. By this stage of the season, they are almost in magnificent full flower.

The name *Primula* derives from the Latin for 'first', which feels entirely appropriate as the first buds begin to show from mid-February, offering a welcome splash of colour just as the garden begins to stir again. They also provide an



care, children's garden activities, crafts and goodie bags. We also have tea/coffee/juice and cakes on the day.

For some years we have supported the local school in their horticultural pursuits with advice and demonstrations. We donate seeds, plants and compost, and show the children how to plant their tomatoes; then they plant and water them. We also give plants and seeds to local community gardens throughout the season.

We attract members throughout the area: Ayrshire, Inverclyde, Argyll & Bute and Glasgow. Our membership is only £2.50 per year. Our members range from beginners to expert gardeners; all possess gardening knowledge to share. Members enjoy several benefits – discounted seeds and plants, events and outings, mixing with like-minded enthusiasts. They are able to expand their knowledge and plant collections. Membership brings confidence in gardening skills which they then share with others. Another benefit is that members can have as many entries in the Flower Show as they wish, but only one per class.

At the Flower Show in August we include the local community gardens and allotments, and Schools and Nurseries. We always try to have something different to engage people. We have had fantastic displays of flowers and plants, horticultural-themed tapestry, a live beehive, wormery, hens and ducks, giant cabbages, a yellow snake, the



Brisbane Queen, Viking Festival Mascot, and a 100 year-old bottle garden which drew great interest and stories. We have celebrities: performers from the local theatre, and the famous Daniela Nardini from Largs who presented prizes at our 175th anniversary. (This Show was Victorian themed; the young exhibitors dressed up in Victorian costumes and prepared a posy to present to our star.)

We always try to have something different. This year we celebrate our 185th anniversary with a display of artefacts, memorabilia and photographs in Largs Museum (opening on 4th April); a History of the Largs Flower Show (to be launched late June/early July); and various special activities in between.

Keep up-to-date with our news:

Website: [www.largshorticultural.org.uk](http://www.largshorticultural.org.uk)

Facebook: Largs Horticultural Society

**Etta Strachan**  
President/Secretary  
Largs & District Horticultural Society  
[president@largshorticultural.org.uk](mailto:president@largshorticultural.org.uk)

## Largs & District Horticultural Society

In 1840 like-minded gardeners, both amateur and professional, decided to form a horticultural society in Largs, as was the trend at that time. Their purpose was to promote horticulture and to hold an annual Flower Show. The following year they duly held the inaugural Largs Flower Show, at the Brisbane Arms Inn (now the George Hotel) on 18th September 1841. It was a great success. One hundred and eighty five years later the Society retains the original aims – sharing knowledge, and specimens and growing practices.

We continue to evolve the Society and its events to keep up to date with current practice, and to make our Society and its events relevant to today without sacrificing the traditions of our predecessors back in 1840.

Our Flower Show schedule, although simplified after Covid, still closely resembles the original classes back in the day, alongside 'new' introductions. The only difference is in the quantity exhibited in a class, even for amateurs: e.g. "11 heads of Celery" – that would be a challenge and a sight to see! (It wasn't just the celery class.) Of course, the Show was for the big estates then, combined with farmers and shopkeepers. Our show schedule this year will include some historical classes.

Over the years, in addition to the Flower Show we have had talks, presentations, outings and hands-on demonstrations. Hands-on demonstrations are really popular now, as well as access to plants, bulbs, seeds – something to get our gardeners started.

Our Spring Workshop this year, on 18th March, takes those attending through the jobs of Spring, demonstrates seed sowing and propagation, how to lift and divide, through to feeding and growing mediums. Attendees can take cuttings of plants and help themselves to a wide array of seeds, potatoes, bulbs; tubers and plants ready to take home – salad crops, all the veg staples, flowers and herbs. This gives people a start. All can be grown outside, in containers, raised beds or put into the garden border. We also have young plants to take away – bush tomatoes, sweet peas, etc. – and this year we'll include seeds and tubers for the historical classes in our show schedule.

The Summer Workshop is a hands-on demonstration. It focuses on preparing exhibits for the Show, how best to present them, plus hints, tips and advice. Entry to all our workshops, talks and demonstrations is free and open to all. These events are paid for by our fundraising activities and kind donations from garden centres and seed suppliers. Local businesses support our legendary raffles at each event.

In addition to our workshops and as part of our fundraising we attend the local Car Boot Sale, selling plants grown and donated by members. When selling a plant we always advise on how to care for and propagate it. We get a lot of enquiries about the Society events and our Flower Show.

In May this year we will be celebrating National Gardening Week with demonstrations, plants for sale, advice on plant

The Scottish Bonsai Open Exhibition will again take place in in Troon on Sunday 10th May between 11am and 4pm.

### Featuring:

- an extensive display of over 100 bonsai trees
- advice and information on the hobby
- traders selling trees, pots, tools etc

Due to popular demand the exhibition will again include a "Japanese Village" displaying examples of Japanese culture and crafts, including:

- Ikebana (flower arranging)
- kintsugi, (repairing ceramics with gold, silver or brass)
- origami (art of folding paper into decorative shapes)
- calligraphy (Japanese lettering and design)



- sumo (Japanese wrestling)
- kyudo (traditional Japanese martial art that involves archery)
- boro stitching and sashiko (Japanese practice of repairing and stitching textile items)
- shiatsu (Japanese massage technique)
- Kimono dressing (the art of dressing in a kimono)

As a special feature our Japanese Village will also include musical interludes on Japanese instruments such as the koto and shamisen.

Refreshments will also be available.

Entry is £2.50 for Adults, £1.50 for Seniors and free entry to accompanied juniors.

**Jeff Banning**

## A Year in the Life of a Pallet

In North Berwick we have an area in front of the Abbey Church where our pallet has found a home for the last few years, so that we are able to exhibit a pallet all year round. The base of the pallet is the same size as used for the Planter and Pallet Challenge.

In January a small wooden church set in the conifers, part of the Christmas scene, is used to help the transition to Spring and you can see the snowdrops coming through. By using plants and bulbs in small square pots and a bit of moss, it is easy to lift and replace the pots as the seasons change. The conifers are very versatile and then, as spring comes, crocuses, primroses, and Tête-à-tête and Jetfire daffodils replace the snowdrops.



At our annual planning meeting in February, those who express interest in the pallet come together; now is the time to start thinking about next year's pallet. Meantime as many different varieties of daffodils come out, pots are placed around the pallet to enhance the impact. By April tulip bulbs are ready for the pallet. These bulbs were planted in No-

vember and had been left over from the main planting for the Tulip Festival, and again, being in pots, can easily be placed in the pallet so the display will keep going until May. Not long now before going to Scone to construct this year's entry.

In June the pallet exhibited at Scone is reconstructed outside the Church. It will continue to perform over the summer into early October. Use of succulents helps reduce the watering requirement and as it is densely packed, weeding is minimal.

As autumn approaches, the area beside the pallet is used to help enhance the Hallowe'en theme with many carved pumpkins, apples and various cones. Children from the local primary school are invited to bring along a carved





# Glasgow Botanic Gardens

# Orchid Fair 2026

**Saturday 9 May  
10am - 6pm**

**Sunday 10 May  
10am - 5pm**

Displays by The Scottish  
and visiting Orchid Societies

Orchids and growing  
accessories

Expert orchid  
growing advice



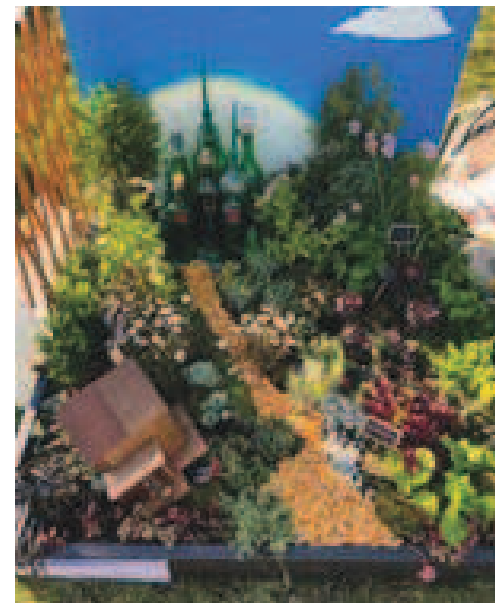
Full event details  
and traders at:

[www.scottishorchid.org/orchid-fair](http://www.scottishorchid.org/orchid-fair)

Glasgow Botanic Gardens,  
730 Great Western Road, G12 0UE



pumpkin. The conifers are still growing, and some are added, having been looked after elsewhere over the summer. They will stay in place until the Spring. Many parts of the Scone pallet are still in place; the shells, the succulents.



On to Remembrance Sunday, with the help of knitters in the town. Then it is the time to find the Christmas buildings and put the Christmas display together in time for the Christmas lights switch-on, with the bulbs in hiding (in pots) until they replace the Christmas buildings!

**Cathie Wright**



Event	Venue	Date
Spring Bulbs Show	Saughton Park	April 4th & 5th
Members Bonsai Tree Display	Cowden Japanese Garden, Dollar, FK14 7PL	April 11th
Edinburgh & Lothians SRGC Show	Liberton Kirk Centre, Edinburgh EH16 6RY	April 11th
Perth SRGC Show	North Inch Community Campus, Gowans Terrace, Perth PH1 5BF.	April 18th 11am-3.30pm
Annual Show and Plant Sale	The Gibson Hall, Garelochhead.	April 25th
Members Bonsai Tree Display	Japan Sakura-Lauriston Castle Edinburgh, EH4 5QD	April 25th & 26th
Glasgow SRGC Show	Baljaffrey Parish Church, Grampian Way, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 4RN	May 2nd 11.30am-3.30pm
Auricula and Primula Show	Saughton Park	May 3rd
Coffee Morning and Plant Sale	Dalkeith Art Centre	May 9th
Aberdeen SRGC Show	David Welch Winter Gardens, Duthie Park, Polmuir Road, Aberdeen AB11 7TH.	May 9th 11.30am-3.30pm
Annual Plant Sale and Coffee Morning	Callander Pavillion, Pathhead	May 9th 10am-12 noon
Annual Coffee Morning	Dalkeith Library and Art Centre	May 9th, 10am-12 noon
Plant Sale & Coffee Morning	John Knox Church Hall, Stewarton	May 9th 10am-12noon
Plant Sale	Thornhill Community Hall	May 9th 2pm
Annual Plant Sale	Market Square, Stonehaven AB39 2BN	May 16th 9am-12noon
Plant sale, tea and cakes.	Killlearn Village Hall	May 16th 10am-12noon
Coffee Morning and Plant Sale	St Mirrin's Cathedral Halls, Paisley	May 16th 10am-12noon
Coffee Morning with some plants for sale	Mauchline Church Hall	May 23rd
Annual Exhibition of club members bonsai trees, open section, traders and talks	Strathbrock Centre, Broxburn, EH52 5LH	May 24th
Scottish Bonsai Association display of Bonsai trees	Scone Palace Garden Fair, Perth, PH2 6BD	May 29th & 30th
Cacti & Succulent Show	Saughton Park	June 7th
Auchtermuchty Open Gardens 2026	Various streets in Auchtermuchty	June 27th & 28th 2026
Member Bonsai Display (date in July TBC)	Scottish Koi Show, Veitchs, East Calder, EH53 0ET	July 25th & 26th
Annual Summer Show	Stonehaven Town Hall, 32 Allardice Street, Stonehaven AB39 2BU	August 8th 10.30am-3pm
Pitlessie Flower Show	Wilkie Hall, Pitlessie	August 15th 1.30-4.30pm
Flower Show	Ormiston Community Centre	August 15th 1.30pm
Largs Flower Show 1841- 2026 185th Anniversary	Dunn Memorial Hall, Bath Street, Largs.	August 22nd 10am-4.30pm
Flower Show	Community Centre (Drill Hall), Walkershaugh, Peebles	August 29th 2-4.30pm
146th Annual Show	Balerno High School, 5 Bridge Road, Balerno EH14 7AQ;	August 29th 1.30-4pm
Annual Flower Show	Community Hall Main Street, Pathhead	August 31st 2-4pm
Gardens Open Daily to the Public	Montrose Road, Inverbervie, Montrose	Daily
Monthly talks open to non members	info at <a href="http://www.fcbgaberdeen.org.uk">www.fcbgaberdeen.org.uk</a>	Monthly

Please send further news or news of events to Alison at [editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk](mailto:editor@scottishgardenersforum.org.uk)