

## **Gardens Group 2018**

Welcome to new and existing members of the Group. I'm writing this on one the wettest days this year/winter but plants are springing into life; daffodils, snowdrops, camellias and miscari are all out. I shall try to arrange roughly one visit per month between March and October. I am choosing a mixture of days, where I can, to try and be helpful, but I know that whatever I choose it won't be convenient for everyone, similarly for venues. We go whatever the weather forecast, we've a pretty good record, even during wet years.

I enclose details of the first four visits for this season. I hope there is something here to interest you. When it comes to directions, I give those from the Yellow Book or the appropriate website, the postcode and the map reference, so don't blame me if you get lost! Everything in italics I've copied from the literature.

I've managed again to arrange parking at The Toby Inn, Middlemoor for our first visit by coach. It is free and there is a loo if you slip in quietly. Parking is in the rear car park, off Rydon Lane **not** off the Sidmouth Road. The H bus and Sidmouth buses go out to Middlemoor. According to Google it's a 12 min walk from Sowton and Digby Station. As usual I've got lots of ideas for visits and I've tried to bear in mind that many of you say you like having a house to see as well. Not always possible though.

### **Monday 26th' March Caerhays Castle and Gardens**

Meet at **09.00hrs** in the rear car park at the Toby Inn and Carvery.

[www.caerhays.co.uk](http://www.caerhays.co.uk) <<http://www.caerhays.co.uk>> The castle is English Heritage Outstanding Grade 1 designed by John Nash and the 140 acre gardens were made famous by the Williams family. They hold the National Collection of magnolias containing over 600 species. The award winning Burncoose Nursery further west is also connected to Caerhays. There is also a beach so you could bring a bucket and spade if so inclined! Combined admission price for a group is £13, I have booked a 27 seater coach( the alternative was 49) and the price for that will be £16 per person. I have booked tours of the castle but not of the garden. The Magnolia café serves lunches and teas. The coach will leave from the Toby Inn at Middlemoor at 9.00am and return about 6pm. The Digby and Sowton station is 12 mins walk away and the Sidmouth bus, the 9/9A and H go to Middlemoor.

I must ask you to send me a cheque, made payable to the University of Exeter for £29 pp, as soon as possible as I have the bookings on a provisional basis .Please book as soon as you can, that would be really helpful ! If you email me first to check availability I can then tell you where to send the cheque.

### **Tuesday 17th April, Hotel Endsleigh Gardens PL19 0PQ OS 201 398783**

<https://hotelendsleigh.com/garden>

On the M5 heading south, turn off at Junction 31 and follow the A30 west signed to Okehampton. Take the Launceston (A388) turn off. Go round the roundabout and get back on

the A30 East towards Callington. Take the first exit and follow signs for Tavistock (B3362). Continue through Milton Abbot; at the brow of the hill next to the school turn right. Pass the garden centre and Hotel Endsleigh is the next right.

This is a new RHS Partner Garden (unfortunately there is no reduction for members though). *It is one of Humphrey Repton's last commissions and features 108 acres of fairytale woodland, follies and grottos. There are formal gardens and an arboretum which contains unusual trees from around the world. Some of the trees are national champions.*

Entrance is £5, unless you book lunch or tea, when it's free. Tea is £20, I didn't check lunch. Booking meals is up to you! I suggest we meet at the entrance at **14.00hrs**

**Please let me know if you intend to come**

**Wednesday May 2nd is East Lambrook Gardens South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5HH, [www.eastlambrook.com](http://www.eastlambrook.com) OS 193 431189**

Meet at 14.00 hrs at the entrance. Cost £5.50

*To find East Lambrook Manor Gardens and the Malthouse, please turn off the A303 at South Petherton in Somerset and follow the brown & white tourist 'flower' signs into the centre of East Lambrook village. A303 2miles 4 mins.*

Tea, coffee, hot chocolate and apple juice made from our own apples are available throughout the day along with a selection of high quality locally made cakes. Many local pubs and restaurants serve excellent food but you need look no further than the attractive 17th century Rose & Crown pub restaurant situated directly opposite the garden. It can get busy at lunchtimes, especially on a Sunday, so booking is recommended. Telephone 01460 240433 or visit [www.roseandcrownlambrook.com](http://www.roseandcrownlambrook.com)

*Margery Fish developed a style of gardening which was in tune with the times: the Second World War had made labour scarce and expensive and it was no longer a reality to have paid teams of gardeners. Gardens had to change. While the cottage garden style was already apparent at Hidcote and Sissinghurst, these were gardens that still required paid gardeners. What Mrs Fish created at East Lambrook Manor, was a grand cottage garden on a domestic scale, she wrote, "It is pleasant to know each one of your plants intimately because you have chosen and planted every one of them." For the first time a garden had been created to which anyone could relate. It was an 'approachable' garden and through her many books and articles, Margery managed to change gardening from a pastime of the wealthy to a passion for the whole population.*

### **Thursday 28th June Hole's Meadow South Zeal EX20 2JS**

4½m from Okehampton on B3260, 4m from Whiddon Down. Signed from main street when open. Half way between the King's Arms and Oxenham Arms and opp village hall. A minute's fairly level walk along private path.

Meet at the entrance at **14.00 hrs**. Admission £4, teas priced at the time.

*Hole's Meadow is a 2 acre hidden garden set within one of the various medieval burgage plots in the village of South Zeal. With fabulous views looking up to Cawsand Beacon, part of the northern edge of Dartmoor National Park, the village lies at its foot. From the village's main street, the garden is accessed by around a minute's fairly level walk along a private path.*

*With an emphasis on wildlife gardening it's partly dedicated to growing many herbs, including since 2013, 2 Plant Heritage National Plant Collections of Monarda (Bergamot, Bee Balm) and Nepeta (Catmint), of which there are around 100 forms of each. For example, the Nepeta is contained within an area akin to a more formal herb garden, edged in part with germander, chives and box with triangular beds meeting at the central bed, home to a Eucryphia. Numerous thyme, mint, rosemary, oregano, marjoram and no end of other herbs are planted nearby and are all much enjoyed by the bees in the garden's apiary.*

*The actual monarda collection specimens are grouped together in large planters to facilitate their care, but there are lots more growing in the young sizeable prairie garden, started in 2016. This is also designed to add to the planting diversity and interest within the garden, particularly during high summer.*

*Elsewhere in the garden, you'll find a small shade garden with the lawn edged by Conifers, Hostas, Acer, Camellia and Rhododendron. Vegetable beds, a large fruit cage, and orchard. Also ornamental trees including Magnolias, Catalpa, Liriodendron (Tulip tree) and Gingko. Then over a shallow stream with bog garden and Gunnera, to the young woodland area of native species, interspersed with mown pathways.*

Cream teas available.

This is another visit arranged just for us so I need a reasonable number. **Please let me know if you intend to come**

**(Both Inns have very good reviews if you're thinking of lunch beforehand.....)**

July 24<sup>th</sup> is Squirrels, Torquay

Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> is Sedgewell Coach House Gardens, Olchard, N.A.

Sept ? Plaz Metaxu

Oct ?Lukesland for autumn colour.

**For all visits please let me know by email first. [a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk)**