

ISABEL MOTYKA SANDERS
NURSERY SCHOLAR 2024-2025
September 2024 REPORT



So much to get my eyes, head and heart around. Which is interesting, fun and challenging! Nobody clips anything!

Some things really really stand out from the very start like *Eryngium pandanifolium* 'Physic Purple' and *Malva canabina* but I am slowly starting to see and appreciate all of the carefully considered layers of planting.

The Kitchen drive is one of my favourite spots in the garden and that bit on the peacock garden close to the *Euonymus europaeus* "Red cascade". Also that little bit on the long border where the *Libertia peregrinum* has seeded into the path cracks! Oh, and the terrace! I think its because they are so dense with variety of types and sizes of plants. And have lots of nooks and crannies and varied hard landscape textures (walls to grow in or up, walls with indentations – as in not just straight, paving, enclosures → I would like to think more about this and make sure to keep going back and looking at these areas to appreciate their evolution.

Even the dwarf *Cynara cardunculus* are gigantic! Here is Shaun for scale, even though he is crouching a bit. The dwarf form is also much spinier! Bonkers comparing it to the wild forms in Greece, the ones I have seen are 1.5m max!



Collecting these seeds is quite treacherous, also need to cut the heads as soon as they start to floof out but before the seeds have blown away or been eaten.

It's been fun finding similarities and familiarities between here and home..



I enjoyed collecting and planting *Lilium lancifolia* var. *fortunei* which is a super gorgeous plant and I am very excited to be part of growing it! This was the first plant I propped!! Bulbils growing from leaf axils and some of them had roots forming already. We took the plumpest ones and I planted nearly 200.

Notes on Plants

Primula vulgaris 'Taigetos' <3 White with a yellow centre, cute to see that it is from *my* mountain but I still prefer the colour of the straight species...

Jasminum officinale "Clotted Cream" in kitchen courtyard <3 Lovely colour but curious if it does that annoying thing that some climber cultivars do where they don't drop their dead flowers..

All *Persicarias* are AMAZING!

Met some plants that I just want to keep returning to..

Clematis rehderiana



Rubus liniatus



Cirsium tuberosum



To explore plants for dry shade! And dry poor in general

On the 12th I was given my PIT! AKA sunken greenhouse.



Heating benches are for cuttings and some seeds, as soon as roots start to come through the base of the pots they get moved out to the regular benches to start hardening off before potting up.

Routine

***In mornings – open up doors and windows and plastic curtains for ventilation but also keep dousing heated benches and water things and also douse the path to keep humidity up when necessary. Dousing path also keeps pest control controller alive! At end of work damp down grit and path and

close curtains and door and windows (against Neil the cat who likes the heated benches). If it is going to get close to freezing should also close the top windows and put on heater..
SB pesticide for aphids! Or washing up liquid..

Learning

On walk rounds, I have been learning to take cuttings material in a way that won't affect the display, same with some seed collection (eg *Eryngium* seeds with a pencil)

Hydrangeas are also difficult because by taking cuttings you are either removing current flowers or next year's flowers → if this is done at right time of year couldn't it help to produce MORE flowers? Hydrangea cuttings are weird but fun!!!

MY PROJECT! To test things for dry poor soil, sun and heat and drought, wind and salt but that will also be hardy

→ Mon 30th was a great day, it was damp and rainy but we put on our waterproofs and went to the farm to sort out the gravel bed! Built up the sides using planks and bits of wood from the estate team's barn. We were very proud that we didn't need to use any screws! It looks suitably hodge-podge and Patrick would be completely horrified! Went to check out sand options from local place. Its same as what is already there which I think is a bit too wet. Could mix some of our existing grit through it or look further afield for other sand options.

Cool things I have learned!

Woolly plants into 50/50 perlite and sand

Lamiaceae cuttings can be internodal!

Apiaceae is much better from fresh and can be sown pretty green!

Ranunculaceae also best from fresh

Did LOADS of *Salvia* cuttings as backups

For *S. microphylla* types best to use this years growth (green), The woodier stuff would root but much more slowly (so use out of necessity) and speed is of the essence here because we have so many plants to prop!!!

Attended Prop Study Day on Mon 23rd Sep. which was great and parts were MINDBLOWING! Like how tiny they prick out seedlings and how when potting on they hardly bury the roots! Stuff to check out and think about
After this they felt they could let me start sowing!! Which is epic fun! Less so the mouse proofing. Fortunately they have a purpose

All the time thinking about and researching for the sand bed project!

Tue 1st Oct the scholars had an intro from Fergus. I got to experience my first mind map and it was for the whole year!

TRIPS!

Sep 14

Pelham Plants

SUCH beautiful planting.. And the most idyllic toilet I've ever seen and used!



Marchants
Hardy Plants –



Also had incredible planting and

a very impressive organised and tidy nursery setup

Sep 20

The Garden Museum Talk and Dinner Fergus spoke with Jo McKerr and Edwina von
Really enjoyed the planters designed by Mark O'neill <3



Sep 22
Rye Harbour Nature Reserve with Vicky!