

A Reflection on my alpine adventure to The Schachen Alpengarten

Itinerary-

Throughout my trip I chose to share my experiences, thoughts, projects and travel plans with followers on Twitter @Horti_Tim https://twitter.com/Horti_Tim This gave me the opportunity to instantly record my thoughts and inspire others. I have used the Twitter records as a basis for this presentation as it received wonderful engagement, attracting new followers and furthering the reach of the Merlin Trust.

This record starts with my first botanical visit and tracks my journey of discovery within the Wetterstein Mountains and on a memory lane journey in the Wilder Kaiser area of Tyrolean Austria. My record of accommodation and travel can be found at the close of my record.

•Friday 22nd July 2022

Depart Edinburgh airport bound for Munich via Paris (Delays on arrival at Paris CDG resulted in an unexpected overnight stay in Paris before a replacement Munich bound flight on Saturday 23rd July 2022) Originally flights booked from Edinburgh to Munich via Amsterdam Schiphol. This was cancelled by KLM due to well publicised staffing issues at Schiphol and reorganised with Air France.

•Saturday 23rd – Monday 25th July 2022

Explore Munich and acclimatise.

•Monday 25th July – Thursday 5th August 2022

Schachen Alpengarten. Accommodation Monday – Wednesdays in Schachen Haus, Thursday – Sunday in the Alpengarten.

Shadowing staff at the garden and individual working with time to explore local flora and hiking opportunities.

•Thursday 5th August 2022

Depart Schachen to Klais by car. Train replacement bus Klais to Innsbruck via Mittenwald. Regional train and bus to Ellmau.

•Thursday 5th – Sunday 7th August 2022

Hotel Hochfilzer, Ellmau.

Revisiting family holiday destination from childhood to explore Wilder Kaiser Mountains and revisit Alpenblumengarten am Kitzbüheler Horn after 20 years.

•Sunday 7th August 2022

Depart Ellmau for Munich. Regional Bus and Train to Innsbruck. Train to Munich.

•Sunday 7th August – Tuesday 9th August 2022

Return to Munich for further exploration and revisiting gardens of interest.

•Tuesday 9th August 2022

Depart Munich bound for Edinburgh via Paris CDG.

A Pre-Schachen meeting with Jenny at The Munich Botanic Gardens

Bullet points:

- An introduction to Munich Botanic Gardens
- Ericaceous planting on lime...
- A rock garden to envy

Upon arrival in Munich I arranged with Jenny Wainwright Klein (Alpine Propagation and Schachen-Munich Botanic Garden) to meet at Munich Botanic Garden to discuss final arrangements for our travel to The Alpengarten, this gave me an opportunity to view the garden with an expert guide before being let loose to explore at my leisure.

On a tight time schedule, Jenny kindly gave me a brief overview of the development of the garden and the various areas allowing me to use my time effectively.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

Here begins my journey [@MerlinTrust](#) [@botmuc](#). After a somewhat prolonged outward journey to Munich I was greeted by Jenny for a whistle stop tour of the Munich botanic gardens. An exciting and informative introduction to my Alpengarten experience. [#m800](#) [#schachen](#)



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The Alpine House

Jenny kindly took me 'behind the scenes' allowing me to see the interior of the Alpine House. This area has strict climatic controls which differ greatly from those of the tropical house. In this instance the aim is to maintain a cool and dry airflow to emulate that of a mountain top, not easy in a central European city. The house features timber roll blinds externally which are manually lowered over the roof and sides. Covering the side windows is a contentious issue as it prevents visitors seeing the collection however, without adequate protection the collection would be at risk of being lost entirely. Fans operate laterally to maintain a fresh air flow through the space keeping the air dry and preventing mould and rotting of sensitive plant material.

I was particularly interested to learn that a flour and water mix was used for whitewashing as it dries translucent reducing solar gain in the house however when the surface is wet on overcast rainy days, and more light is required, the surface becomes more transparent.

Bullet points:

- Keeping Cool
- Ventilation
- Flour as a whitewash



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

The alpine display house @botmuc looking wonderful despite the flowering season having come to a close. Jenny tells me for a whitewash they use a flour and water mix providing translucent shading in the sun and transparency in rain to maximise light. @MerlinTrust #m800 #schachen



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A fascinating display of Plant Families

- Rare sight
- Wonderful educational tool
- Plant families laid out

Having first seen order beds at St Andrew's Botanic Garden I immediately appreciated their importance in identifying family traits and aiding in the education of plant families, I was very excited to explore the beds in Munich.

This feature is sadly rapidly disappearing from botanic gardens, often seen as outdated and no longer relevant feature (potentially due to constant changes due to phylogenetic research).

Sadly the St Andrew's Botanic order beds have been replaced with a wider new development. Cambridge University Botanic Garden in contrast appear to have modernised this concept and it forms an integral part of the visitor experience including a high level walk providing an aerial overview.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

A sadly lesser seen feature of botanical gardens these days, I still don't underestimate the value of order beds [@botmuc](#) in the understanding of family traits from breadth of genus within Ranunculaceae to the uniqueness of Cercidiphyllaceae [@MerlinTrust](#) [#m800](#) [#schachen](#)



An acidic woodland in a lime rich area

Jenny and I had discussed the challenges of creating a woodland garden with such alkaline base conditions and much to my astonishment Jenny explained the lengths to which the founders of the garden on this site went to in order to establish a woodland garden with acid soil loving flora. A rail route was constructed across the country to an area of ericaceous soil. Soil was imported via the rail to backfill a 7-8m hole created to the South of the site thus creating an area suitable for woodland planting adjoining the established woodland of the Schlosspark Nymphenburg. I noted some specimen *Rhododendron spp.* were planted above ground in large pots tucked behind lower growing species. In an effort to combat the climatic challenges placed upon *Rhododendron spp.* each plant is carefully deadheaded after flowering to channel energy away from seed production. This approach appears to be working given the lush greenery on display in late July 2022.

Bullet points:

- Lime rich soil
- Excavations
- Backfilled with low pH soil



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

The Rhododendron collection @botmuc looks incredible in spite of the climatic challenges, this could, in part be down to the patience required to dead head each and every flower to encourage new growth to break faster and more effectively.



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A yard worthy of displaying

Bullet points:

- Respected workplace

As if a scaled down version of the main service area the rock garden's potting shed and growing media bays are immediately adjacent to the rock garden itself. With paths to all sides there is no room to hide untidiness. This area showed a workforce with a refreshing level of respect for the workplace and work being carried out. The individual bays of aggregates and growing media were immaculately presented



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

More from [@botmuc](#) lovely to see the rock garden tool supply shed so neatly displayed. Especially enjoyed seeing the miniature gravel and soil bays. [@MerlinTrust](#) #m800 #schachen



The Alpinum

Bullet points:

- Geographical
- Rock types
- Specialised habitats

The Alpinum stands on a hill created beside the Garden's main pond. The rock garden is created using a variety of rock types providing unique growing conditions which in turn dictates the planting. Beneath the rock garden is a display providing interpretation to visitors of the different rock types and their geographical and geological significance. The planting itself, as the differing rock types suggests, are predominantly geographical. On display were some existing favourites such as *Berkheya*, *Hypericum* and a variety of conifers.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 24

The alpinum @botmuc has geographical areas including Europe, S Africa and the Himalayas etc. The rock formations include lava, tuffa, conglomerate and 'Zellenkalk', a limestone that erodes to form planting pockets, as shown by *Sempervivum nevadense*. #merlintrust #m800 #schachen



Weihenstephan - Sichtungsgarten

On Jenny's recommendation I travelled around 40 mins North of Munich by train to Freising, home to Weihenstephan brewery and University of Applied Sciences. The Sichtungsgarten, which curiously translates as Sighting Garden forms part of the horticultural teaching department and focuses on perennial planting with areas dedicated to rock, gravel and woodland gardens but of particular interest were the herbaceous border displays where a number of circa 50m facing beds were planted in colour themes, each featuring an interpretation board displaying the particular cultivars used.

Experimental beds were used to show variation within a given genus or species. Approaching its peak during my visit was the display of over 50 cultivars of *Hydrangea paniculata* with heights varying from shin to waist and differing hues within the flowers from greens to pink reds. Other experimental beds included *Hemerocallis* spp. and mulch mat comparisons.

Bullet points:

- Educational garden
- Themed displays
- Cultivar comparisons



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 27

Sunday - A huge thank you goes to Jenny @botmuc for telling me about Weihenstephaner Garten - Sichtungsgarten. This school for herbaceous gardeners is filled with inspiration and experimental displays. All thanks to @MerlinTrust #schachen



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To the mountains!

As planned Jenny collected me from my hotel, Super 8 Munich West. As I awaited my lift I could see a sign opposite for Garmisch-Partenkirchen which was to be our next major stop for supplies and breakfast.

Before too long we found ourselves heading South on the autobahn, a first for me. It was exciting to see the bluey grey limestone of the Wetterstein Mountains begin to come into sight with Jenny pointing out a glimpse view of our destination.

I was very fortunate to be able to travel with Jenny as my alternative would have been to travel by train to Garmisch-Partenkirchen from where I would have had to climb the mountain on foot, bags, shopping and all.

The town is best known for its winter Olympics in 1936 which saw the merging of the two towns which make up its name. Whilst in town we had a light breakfast at one of Jenny's favoured cafes and a shopping trip before heading on.

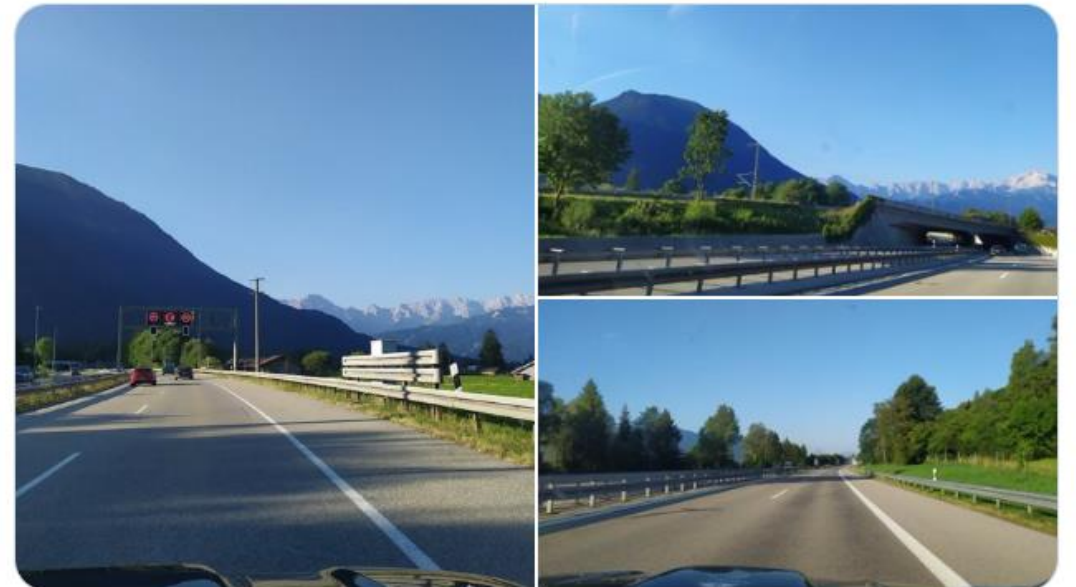
Bullet points:

- 6:30 start
- Autobahn
- Supplies



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 27

Monday - today we set off early to beat the Munich traffic. In the @botmuc Jimny I had my first experience of the autobahn 🤯 thankfully Jenny had no intention of keeping up with the Audis and BMWs! @MerlinTrust off to the #schachen



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'Climbing' to the Alpengarten

At the small village of Klais we left the main road to the Austrian border and drove up metalled roads as far as Schloss Elmau, which had recently played host to the G7 Summit of 2022. From this point on we drove up forestry roads relying heavily on the 4 wheel drive capabilities of the car. As we climbed Jenny pointed out how the flora changed, something I would be utterly fascinated by for the entirety of my visit. As we climbed the chalk faces soon loomed above us, onwards we climbed. We soon broke through the tree cover crossing the upper meadows before reaching the Alpengarten.

After a brief tour of the garden and hut and some lunch it was time to familiarise myself with my accommodation for some of my visit. The Schachenhaus is located a five minute walk up from the garden and overnight accommodation and meals. I was lucky enough to book a solo room for most of my stay before being transferred to a bunk room for one night of each week I was staying.

Bullet points:

- 4x4 only
- Interest at every corner
- First glimpse of the alpine cattle



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 27

Off the beaten track we climbed (in the car!) Up into the mountains leaving [@botmuc](#) far behind. We arrived at the alpine garden to the sound of numerous cow bells of the delightful alpine cows. Jenny pointed out numerous plants of interest on the way. [@MerlinTrust](#) [#schachen](#)



On with the work.

Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 29

The area was re-soiled with a mixture of grit, sterilised garden soil, manure (thank you alpine cows) and ericaceous compost. Once in place the rockwork was replaced using a bed of grit and pieces of stone hammered in below to prevent rocks moving in the future when stood upon.



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An area of *Primula waltonii* was in need of dividing and replanting. After carefully lifting, cleaning out weeds and

dividing the plants, the remaining soil from the planting spot was removed, ready to be sent back to Munich to be sterilised. Loose stonework was reset with Jenny's instruction, using gravel and small stones to provide steady bases. The soil was backfilled with a grit, sterilised soil, manure and ericaceous compost mix.

Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 29

Replanted with their leaves halved to reduce water stress the *P. waltonii* now fill the space nicely, hopefully I'll get some pictures next spring when they bloom.



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Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 29

Update my [@MerlinTrust](#) trip to the [#schachen](#) alpine garden of [@botmuc](#) Wednesday saw me replanting a bed of *Primula waltonii*. The work involved the removal of the dense clusters of plant, one barrow's worth of soil and any loose or disturbed rockwork.



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Bullet points:

- Splitting *Primula waltonii*
- Resetting the rockwork
- Replacing spent soil

A bed of my very own.

The edge of a prominent bed had been overtaken with an invasive species leaving the resident *Geum rossii* all but invisible and struggling to compete. The *Geum* were lifted and set aside in a shaded spot. The remaining weeds were carefully removed using a hooked hand tool to access between rocks. The soil was removed for sterilising and all rocks assessed for stability. Once the weeds and *Geum* were removed it was clear to see there was scope for further rock work in the bed, a selection of rocks were chosen to provide a terrace between the upper and lower areas of the existing bed. A handful of self seeded *Parnassia palustris* were found amongst the weed material and the plan was to allow these to naturalise over the new terrace. Once the rocks were positioned and secured the backfill process began, similarly to the *Primula waltonii* however without the use of the manure or ericaceous compost. The *Geum* were cleaned, divided and replanted and supplemented by *Clementsia rhodantha*, *Luetkea pectinate* and *Rhodiola rhodantha*.

Bullet points:

- *Geum rossii*
- Space for more rocks
- Differing backfill mixes



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 29

Onwards to a bed of *Geum rossii* var *turbinatum* at the [#schachen](#) garden of [@botmuc](#), infested with weeds leaving the poor *Geum* near invisible. Same method was used for *Primula waltonii* but the soil mix didn't have manure or ericaceous compost mixed in. Thanks again [@MerlinTrust](#)



A trip to Garmisch-Partenkerchen

Aware I had somewhat 'cheated' the Schachen experience by getting a lift up, I felt the need to give myself the full experience, albeit without baggage, in reverse and both directions in one day!

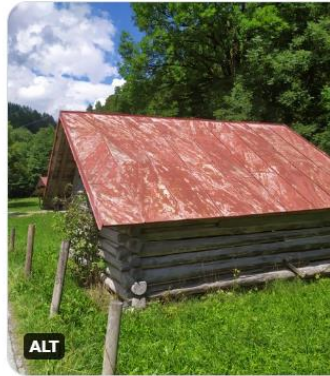
On my first leisure day whilst at the Alpengarten I decided to

hike the Kälbersteig down to Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The route effectively straight-lines down the hillside allowing clear sight of the varying flora by altitude. From the meadows that surround the Alpengarten down to the *Pinus cembra* woodlands which in turn drop down into *Fagus sylvatica* deciduous woodland before reaching the Partnach river and the fascinating Partnachklamm gorge with its precarious walkway alongside. Once out of the deafening gorge I found myself walking between meadows and traditional architecture before reaching the Olympic ski stadium.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 31

The kälbersteig is not for the faint hearted or unfit. As I previously mentioned it effectively straight lines the 1100m+ change in altitude



ALT



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 31

Saturday saw me venture down from #Schachen to Garmisch-Partenkirchen a bit closer to @botmuc via the kälbersteig path and through the Partnachklamm. Flora changes rapidly on this route as you straight line down through meadows, conifers and eventually deciduous. @MerlinTrust



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Bullet points:

- True Schachen Experience
- Kälbersteig trail, once hiked, but never again
- Partnachklamm gorge

Saturday – down..... Sunday up!

For my day of rest after my hike to Garmisch-Partenkirchen I decided to hike the other direction, my aim, the Austria-Germany border with lunch at the Meilerhütte. In stark contrast to yesterday's walk where vegetation became lush as I lost altitude, today's walk blew my mind. This felt like I was experiencing true alpine vegetation. Leaving the Schachenhaus and climbing towards the chalk faces the vegetation including *Gentiana lutea*, *G. purpurea*, *Lilium martagon* and *Pinus mugo* gave way to ground hugging genera including *Saxifraga aizoides*, *Alchemilla alpina*, *Gentiana germanica*, and *Campanula alpestris* to name but a few.

After scaling the first face of limestone the path opens out onto a high level meadow with damp substrate, home to the illusive chamois, a small goat/antelope and herds of alpine sheep.

On my approach to the border and the summit of my hike (and my lunch!) I spotted a number of clumps of *Papaver alpinum*, *Noccaea rotundifolia* and *Oxytropis montana* through the limestone scree.

Bullet points:

- Last remaining snow
- To the orange arrow!
- Meilerhütte



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Jul 31

For today's 'rest day' I took up suggestions by Jenny and @JimJermyn to hike to the #meilerhütte perched on the Austria-German border at 2300m. Reaching the high alpine meadow, cowbells are replaced by those of sheep and the flora changes once again. Enjoying my @MerlinTrust trip!



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Track storm drain clearance

Week 2 began with the opportunity to explore the forestry track that leads to the Alpengarten. Using an intriguing tool, part pick axe, part draw hoe I cleared drainage rills of stone and gravel to ensure efficient rainwater clearance during storm events. This took longer than expected owing to my ease of distraction, admiring and researching vegetation as I went, using my trusty Alpine Flowers of Britain and Europe book by Grey-Wilson and Blamey donated by a kind friend. I was able to identify a vast variety of meadow and understory plants (*Carduus defloratus*, *Plantago media*, *Cirsium spinosissimum*, *Adenostyles alpina*, *Silene vulgaris*, *Anthyllis vulneria* and the list goes on) as I wound my way to the Wetterstein Alm, home to the local farmer who's cows surround the Alpengarten.

As I reached the Wetterstein Alm I found myself feeling like an extra from Lord of the Rings carrying my 6ft tall staff!

I was greeted like a long lost friend when I introduced myself and gorged on Kaiserschmarrn.

Bullet points:

- Just the tool for the job
- Botanising as I go
- Wetterstein Alm kaiserschmarrn as a reward



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 3

My second Monday at [#schachen](#) I worked my way towards the Wetterstein Alm clearing storm drains as I went. Stopping to remove debris allowed me time to absorb further flora (and decide what I should have for my lunch once I reached my destination!) Wonderful times [@MerlinTrust](#)



Returning via the Schachentor

I chose to return from the Wetterstein Alm via the Schachentor which took me round the back of the Alm and along the base of the rock face. I was not disappointed with my decision as I immediately spotted a group of nodding *Gentiana asclepiadea* adjacent to the path. After helping guide a large group of seemingly lost American tourists in the right direction the pathway opened out to a meadow where a large deposit of scree had been left after a slide the previous year, resulting from heavy rainfall which washed away the bridge at the Alm. The result was an almost snow covered appearance against the *Pinus cembra*.

Once successfully navigated, I climbed up from the rock fall towards the scree, visible from the Alpengarten, I was fascinated to see so many *Carlina acaulis* dotted throughout the grassland alongside *Gentiana aspera*, *Daphne alpina*, *Orobanche minor*, *Juniperus communis* and *Pinus mugo*. The scree section of the path is somewhat precarious but provides a further habitat to explore.

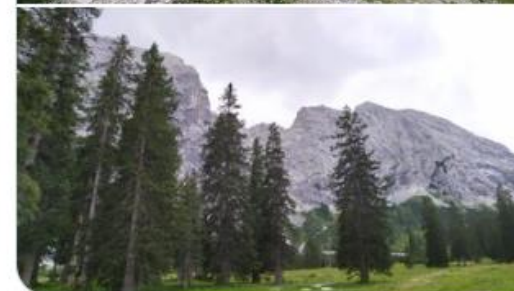
Bullet points:

- Rockfalls
- Woodland
- Scree slopes



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 3

My way back from Wetterstein Alm to the [#schachen](#) took me through grassland and over limestone scree. I cannot stress how grateful I am to [@MerlinTrust](#) for the opportunity to view such flora in the wild.



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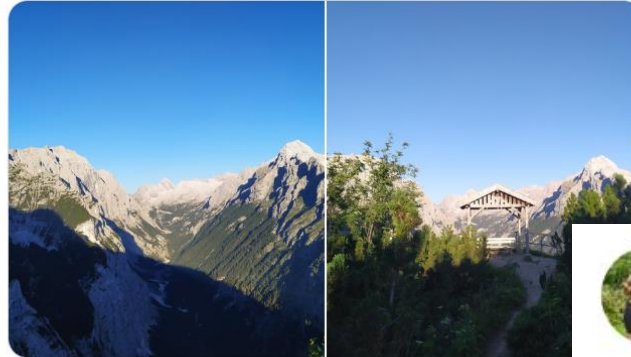


The immediate surrounds of the Alpengarten



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 4

A couple of early morning shots, looks like a different landscape with the sun from another angle



With the day time jobs focused mostly on weeding, watering and avoiding the risk of sunburn we ventured out as a team post dinner, with Jenny highlighting features of interest immediately surrounding the garden. We took a walk to the Reintal viewing pavilion giving a sense of scale to our presence within the mountains. I revisited the following morning to photograph how the sun's direction can highlight the depth of the valley.

Of particular interest to Claudia and I was the secluded rock face just off from the path, we would have explored further but for the discovery of a loose slab of limestone rock face causing our retreat.

Bullet points:

- Reintal valley
- Morning / evening light
- Expert guides



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 3

Tuesday and Wednesday focused on weeding and keeping out of the high altitude sunlight. Jenny of [@botmuc](#) took Claudia and I for a walk from [#schachenalpengarten](#) to the Reintal viewing pavilion which offers views up the uppermost reaches of the Reintal. [@MerlinTrust](#) I thank you



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Final thoughts from the Alpengarten

My experience extends far beyond the fence of the garden. I found myself overwhelmed with excitement and emotion at exploring the alpine habitat that leads to and surrounds the garden. I cannot wait to revisit the garden and to reconnect with Jenny and Claudia, who made me feel so welcome. Despite my best efforts my German language skills did not show themselves to their best, especially given my education had focused on 'High' German rather than Bavarian. My hosts were most accommodating and willing to share their knowledge and experience.

Once we had loaded the car and attached the trailer Jenny and I bid Claudia a fond farewell. We retraced our steps from a fortnight earlier to Klais, where Jenny and I were to part company.

At Klais I picked up a rail replacement connection to Mittenwald owing to a tragic rail accident earlier in 2022 I then took a further train replacement over the Austrian Border to Innsbruck. From here I wound my way back in time to a former family holidaying spot in the Tirol.

Bullet points:

- Rail replacement
- Emotional goodbyes
- I'll be back!



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 4

Today, Thursday, marks my last morning at the [#schachen](#) Alpengarten of [@botmuc](#) this experience has been one I will remember for my life, even if some of the German never stuck! Jenny and Claudia made me feel so welcome. I hope to return one day. Thanks again [@MerlinTrust](#)



Ellmau

After checking into my hotel and having an enormous dinner, I decided to explore the hills surrounding the village of Ellmau.

I had last visited in August 2002 so I was interested to see how my memory related to the reality and how things had changed. From a botanical perspective it was clear to see the effects of human interaction especially around the ski slope areas which appeared devoid of natural flora at this time of year. The Southern face of the valley had always been our focus on family visits as the location of the majority of ski slopes and walking routes. I felt drawn to the the Wilder Kaiser limestone rocks faces opposite.

Aware I was on a tight time schedule I decided to traverse towards the Astberg, an adjacent hillside to reminisce about skiing joys and failures, as well as family walks. I was however lulled into a false sense of security by the beautiful sunset. By the time I reached the summit of Astberg it was near pitch black so I had a somewhat interesting walk down to the village of Going through woods and meadows.

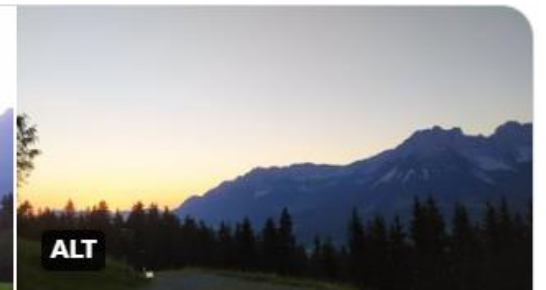
Bullet points:

- 20 years since my last visit
- Sunset explorations
- Skiwelt



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 5

I decided to treat myself to a few nights in the Tyrolean hills. Retracing childhood footsteps, it has been quite an emotional experience given that I was a fresh faced 17 year old last time I was here. [#ellmau](#)
[@HotelHochfilzer](#)



Kitzbuhel – Kitzbüheler Horn and The Alpenblumengarten

Unlike the Schachen Alpengarten where visitors either hike or cycle some distance to visit the garden, The Alpenblumengarten on the Kitzbüheler Horn is accessible via cable car with the station a mere 5 minutes walk up the hillside. This, combined with a free entry and apparent short cut means the garden fills up with a wide variety of visitors. The range is from enthusiastic professionals such as myself, through local gardening groups to those seeking a route other than the metalled road. All this said the flowers and plants on display attracted the attention of all from toddlers to the elderly. The garden had been established by the current gardener Barbara Schmidt's parents and on my previous visit some 20 years ago they were still in charge of the maintenance. I was able to speak with Barbara and was interested to learn how the garden had developed and also the affects of plant movement restrictions following Britain's exit from the European Union, which had resulted in Barbara having trouble in sourcing *Meconopsis horridula* for example

Bullet points:

- Cable car
- Barbara Schmidt
- A very different Alpengarten



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 5

Catching a gondola and old school cable car from kitzbuhel (think 'Where eagles dare')I reached the Kitzbüheler Horn and looked down to my destination, the Alpenblumengarten. What's more Barbara, who is now head gardener was there to speak to. [#alpenblumengarten](#) [#KitzbühelerHorn](#)



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In pursuit of the Wilder Kaiser

Bullet points:

- The North side of the valley
- Woodland flora
- Back to the wild

I discovered a bus route which took me to the Wochenbrunner Alm just on the edge of the deciduous forest which skirted the base of the Wilder Kaiser Mountains. From here I climbed through *Fagus sylvatica* woodland in search of the rock faces and scree I had seen from the other side of the valley. My chosen route was not to disappoint. I had great fun spotting *Hepatica nobilis* a firm favourite of mine, even when not in flower. Other plants of interest in the wooded area included *Polygonatum verticillatum*, *Lamium album* and *Galium* spp.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 6

As I climb from Wochenbrunner Alm toward the Gruttenhütte. I'm greeted by *Hepatica nobilis* in the beech woodland, always great to see a personal favourite, and it's friends, living life on the wildside. [#wilderkaiser](#)
[@MerlinTrust](#)



Stepping out of the woodland

Bullet points:

- Sudden transition to scree
- Scree
- Different view on Ellmau

I felt a sense of comfortable familiarity when I stepped out of the woodland onto the scree. Plants I had been admiring the previous weeks showed their faces alongside some new ones such as *Linaria alpina* showing a beautiful pop of orange in their flowers. Plants such as *Bupthalmum salicifolium* brightened my way along with *Thymus serpyllum*, *Clinopodium alpinum*, *Sedum album*, *Teucrium montanum*, *Kernera saxatilis* and the berries of *Rubus saxatilis*. As I climbed higher the scree turned to denser vegetation once more playing host to such delights as *Helianthemum nummularium*, *Prunella grandiflora*, *Daphne mezereum*, and *Anthericum ramosum*.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 6

From the woodland onto the lower limestone scree with some familiar faces, and some new to me. [#wilderkaiser](#) [@MerlinTrust](#) [#alpineplants](#)



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Back down we go

Bullet points:

- Inset road giving better views
- Clinging on
- Varied genera

After passing the Gruttenhütte I began my descent on the forestry track used for servicing. The road surface was cut into the hillside meaning vegetation was overhanging allowing an alternative view on many such as *Streptopus amplexifolius*, *Chamaemespilus alpina* and *Centaurea scabiosa*, both the usual purple and the less expected pale pink.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 7

Before I begin today's adventure I should draw yesterday to a close. Reaching the highest point at Gruttenhütte I began my descent on a forestry track, cut into hillside this gave a great perspective on the flora. My trip is drawing to a close [@MerlinTrust](#) ❤️



Back to Weiherstephan



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 8

The parterre garden @weiherstephan is a modern take and has given me a new found appreciation for weeping beech, it adds a whole alternative dimension



Having visited Weiherstephan before my Wetterstein adventure in somewhat of a hurry I made sure to allow plenty of time upon my return to Munich to explore the full site. The campus is set around the education buildings and brewery with a complex combination of natural topography, built environment and woodland. The Oberdieckgarten is positioned on a wooded hilltop which overlooks the town and provides a habitat for many of my firm favourites such as *Podophyllum versipelle* 'Spotty Dotty', *Heracleum* spp. and *Asarum* spp.

Bullet points:

- A full day to explore
- Learning establishment
- Foliage



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 8

Once more I find myself @weiherstephan this time exploring some of the smaller gardens across the site. First up, the Oberdieckgarten filled with a variety of herbaceous and rose beds with a leaning towards shade lovers.



Weihenstephan - Hofgarten

Bullet points:

- Inspiring
- New Job Research
- Interpretation

As I start to think of my new position, as Gardener at Aberdour Castle, awaiting me on my return I find myself being drawn to the dramatic borders created across the Weihenstephan site. Of particular interest was the combination of contrasting colours, heights and textures within the Hofgarten created using a mixture of herbaceous perennials and annuals. I particularly welcomed the interpretation, visible across the gardens, which visually laid out the 'ingredients' for making such a display. I hope in time, as the Walled Garden at Aberdour develops, to incorporate some of these ideas, adding to the visitor experience but also aiding their understanding.



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 8

The Hofgarten @weihenstephan shows real confidence in colour combinations and the height provides definition between path and grass



Munich Botanic Glasshouses

Bullet points:

- Glasshouses
- Fernery
- Tropical ponds

On my penultimate day in Munich I explored the city, yet found myself drawn back to the Botanic Garden. Having ticked off most of my Munich checklist I was able to take my time to explore the finer details of the garden alongside a stroll through the glasshouses admiring the foliage and flowers of *Nymphaeae hybrid* 'Foxfire', marvelling at the flowers of *Crinum natans* and the immaculate foliage of *Pistia stratiodes*. Sitting in my dining room reflecting on this trip, I look at our staghorn fern (*Platycerium spp.*) sitting on his shelf remembering fondly the otherworldly display of *Platycerium spp.* at Munich Botanic Garden



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 8

I couldn't think of a better way to bring my adventures to [#schachen](#) to a close than to revisit [@botmuc](#) this time venturing into the glasshouses before a gentle stroll through the garden. Thanks once again to [@MerlinTrust](#) for inspiring and funding much of this trip.



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4



Homeward Bound



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 9

Couldn't resist one last visit to [@botmuc](#) on my way to the airport. I hadn't spotted these wee details previously but there's one here for you [@rbgedipgh](#)!



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I couldn't resist one last visit to the Munich Botanic Garden, so whilst I waited for my transport to the airport I headed across town rucksack and all. The peace of the garden allowed me time to reflect on the people I had met, the knowledge I had accumulated and the places I had experienced

Bullet points:

- Broadened horizons
- Don't judge, experiment
- The start, not the end



Tim Heatherington @Horti_Tim · Aug 9

This trip has broadened my understanding of alpinism but I also found myself often wanting to start messages with 'not usually a fan of...' I realise now my perspective has been broadened by [@botmuc](#) [#schachen](#) and [@MerlinTrust](#).

For today's 'not usually a fan of'... annual planting



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Reflections on my journey

Flights - Edinburgh-Munich Return Via Paris	£317.05
Munich Accommodation – Super 8 Munich West 3 nights	£100.75
	(€119.37)
German Public Transport €9 Monthly Pass x2 -	£15.19 (€18)
Schachen Haus – 4 nights in single room	£77.65(€92)
2 nights in dormitory	£30.39(€36)
Transport to Ellmau –	£15.87(€18.80)
Accommodation Ellmau –	£376.66
	(€446.28)
Munich Accommodation Part II – Hotel Am Moosfeld 2 nights	£94.34
	(€111.78)
Exchange rates based on 8 th August 2022 1 EUR = 0.844 GBP (exchangrates.org.uk)	