

Scotland Garden's Study Tour

June 2026



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Introduction

Myself and two colleagues Will and Holly, are first year Level 2 Horticulture apprentices at RHS Harlow Carr (or rather *were* at the time of the bursary trip, we have just entered our second year!). We regularly visit gardens as a trio and decided to undertake a bursary trip to further enhance our learning and plant knowledge.

We are all completely immersed in learning everything about horticulture but noticed that we each have slightly different interests: Will is particularly interested in woodland, streamside and more shady planting. Holly is intrigued by more tropical and exotic planting, whereas I am particularly keen on growing under glass and propagation.

So, after much deliberation, we settled on a tour of 5 gardens in Scotland; each garden with very different climactic conditions that piqued all our interests.



A – Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

B – Glasgow Botanic Gardens

C – Benmore Botanic Garden

D – Logan Botanic Garden

E – Dawyck Botanic Garden



Garden Choices

We chose these 5 gardens in Scotland, not only as they interested all three of us for different reasons, but with sustainability also in mind. Staying in the UK meant that we were able to use public transport, hire a hybrid car and not travel too far between each garden, to help reduce our carbon footprint.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

We wanted to visit this inner-city garden to view their glasshouse collection, see the new palm house (due to open late 2026) and learn about building on such a huge scale. We hoped to see their collection of true alpine and the Meconopsis in flower and learn about their conservation efforts within their woodland collection.

Glasgow Botanic Gardens

The main reason for visiting another inner-city garden was to learn about the historical Kibble Palace and its large collection of tree ferns, orchids and carnivorous plants. We were also interested to hear how this being a council-run garden differed from other charity funded gardens.

Benmore Botanic Garden

We were keen to visit Benmore to learn about the plants they can grow in such varied terrain up and around the mountains. We hoped to see later flowering Rhododendrons, non-native tree collections from Chile, Bhutan and Tasmania and the Victorian fernery.

Logan Botanic Garden

Visiting this garden was a must as we were very intrigued to learn how tropical plants could be grown in Scotland. We were also excited to learn about the seed and plant collecting expeditions undertaken by staff here, and see some of the specimens grown on from these trips.

Dawyck Botanic Garden

We wanted to visit Dawyck to learn more about Scottish native trees, the ancient trees they have here, alongside the fungi, algae and bryophytes. We were also keen to learn about how they are helping with plant conservation through seed saving.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

We had two very informative tours here, Aaron from the herbaceous team kindly showed us all the outdoor areas, the alpine house and rock gardens. He told us about the history of the garden and that the new glasshouse build may take another 10 years to complete! He told us about how climate change is affecting what they can grow here and that they're now adopting the 'right plant, right place' philosophy to try reduce their water usage.

We then met Bruce from the glasshouse/nursery who gave us a very in-depth tour of the (now closed to the public) glasshouses, nursery and a sneak peak of the new palm house. Conversely, he mentioned their temporary increase in irrigation as palms, ferns and other plants waiting to go back into the new palm house, are under a lot of stress in pots.

Robert Sibbald and Dr Andrew Balfour originally founded this garden as a Physic Garden at the Palace of Holyrood House in 1670. It is the second oldest botanic garden in the UK and has moved 3 times, with the final move being to its current location in Inverleith in 1820.



A photograph of the garden in 1965, shown to us by Bruce.

You can see the old diesel boiler here which was used to heat the glasshouses. Under the new renovation, this is being changed to ground source heat pumps to become more sustainable.

We were lucky enough to be able to see behind the scenes in the alpine area and Aaron showed us their seed storage collection – with seeds in here dating back to 1928! A member of the alpine team mentioned that he had just germinated some that were from the 1960's.

We learnt lots about their plant conservation efforts here (see next page) and Aaron mentioned their latest project is micro-propagating endangered *Rhododendrons* by exposing meristematic tissues from new shoots and rooting this in agar jelly.



Plant Conservation

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (and their related gardens) are part of various global programmes for plant conservation; teams regularly go on expeditions to collect seed from places where plants are in decline, then propagate and store them for future use. They work with teams across the globe to share resources, expertise and help mitigate climate change by increasing habitats and biodiversity.

The RBGE are also working in partnership with the Scottish Government on a 3-year project to help increase numbers of native plants that are on the verge of extinction, and that have substantial benefits to the wider ecosystem.

To help share this information with visitors, they have a colour-coded labelling system:



Red labels mean that a plant is endangered in the wild. Lots of *Rhododendrons* had red labels.



Green labels are for Scottish native plants. Lots of trees such as *Hedlundia pseudofennica* had green labels.



Yellow labels are for plants that are being monitored for phenology, to help see the effect climate change is having on certain plants.



Blue labels are used for trees that are champions, whether for height, girth, rarity or historical significance.

All other labels are black with white writing but often have letters 'V' or 'W' on them too. These letters are linked to plant conservation; 'V' means this plant has been grown by vegetative propagation, either from material brought back from expeditions, or propagation from specimens already in cultivation in the UK. 'W' is for plants that have been grown from seed that has been wild collected, from their native habitat. These all link to the numbers and letters in the bottom-left, usually an accession number, date of planting out and/or expedition – along with the expedition number, initials of the expedition leader and the native country.

All of this information is uploaded onto an app that all curatorial staff and other botanical gardens have access to. They also regularly upload pictures and information to this app to help with phenology monitoring, pest/disease monitoring and allow other botanical gardens to request propagation material to help with conservation.



Acineta superba



Agave vilmoriniana first and final flower



Glasshouse plantings



Cupressus cashmeriana



Strobilanthes dyeriana



Cibotium schiedii



Hibiscus cooperi (v)



Nymphaea in the glasshouse



Brownea grandiceps



Leontopodium nivale



Queen Mother's Garden & view of the new Palm House



Tropaeolum speciosum is a weed here



Holly with a *Lodoicea maldivica* seed



Astragalus angustifolius



Meconopsis sp.



View of the Rock Garden



Tree canopy in the Conifer Grove



Rhododendron indicum



Musa sp.



Primula bulleyana and *Primula vialii*



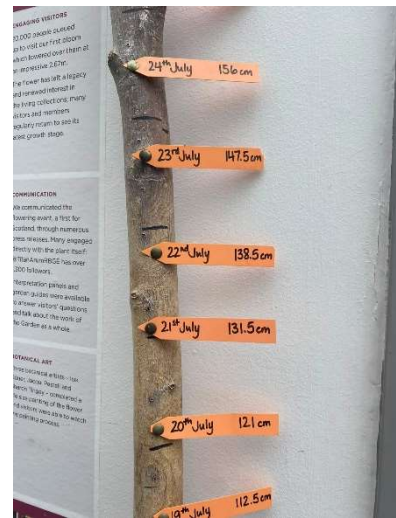
Raoulia haastii



Etlingera elatior



New palm house



Amorphophallus titanum flower measurements from 2024



Holly, myself, Will



Streamside planting in the Rock Garden



Physoplexis comosa

Glasgow Botanic Gardens

Ishbel, from the Friends of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, gave us a fantastic tour here. She showed us everything from the public spaces, glasshouses, kitchen garden and even behind the scenes, where we then met Christine who gave us an in depth talk on propagating orchids.

In 1817, Thomas Hopkirk, a botanist from Glasgow, founded this 8-acre garden in Sandyford along with the University of Glasgow to provide students with plants for medical and botanical classes. From 1821, a botany professor (William Jackson Hooker) at the University, along with David Douglas (collector of the first *Pseudotsuga menziesii* seeds) expanded the garden collections so much that they had to relocate to the current 50-acre site in 1842.



Kibble Palace was acquired by the Botanic Gardens in 1871. After 2 years re-locating it from John Kibble's home in Coulport, Loch Long, it opened to the public in 1873, originally as an event space, then the National Collection of Tree Ferns, that we saw was planted in the 1880s.

It was completely restored in 2003-2006, alongside a 16 year refurbishment project of the Main Glasshouse to replace the teak frame with metal; this was completed in 2004.



Ishbel showed us a disused train station platform that ran underneath part of the gardens, but closed in 1964. It is now home to a colony of bats and is associated with the Kelvin Biodiversity Network. This network, along with the gardens and The RSPB have created a wildlife corridor and increased biodiversity along the River Kelvin.

Glasgow Botanic Gardens have links to the RBGE and regularly grow plants for conservation purposes, such as a collection of *Araucaria araucana* growing here from seed collected by RBGE. Another interesting tree here is the *Ginkgo biloba* which was grown from seed of the mother tree in Hiroshima that survived the 1945 bombing. It was germinated, raised and planted out by Hiro (the Curator) whose mother lived through the bombing, as a symbol for peace.

Orchid Propagation

We felt very privileged that Christine allowed us into her Orchid world, where she manages 3 glasshouses, propagates thousands of orchids and cares for the National Collection of *Dendrobium* Orchids. We learnt the difference between terrestrial and epiphytic orchids – terrestrial grow in the ground, such as our native *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, whereas epiphytic orchids grow on another plant, such as *Dendrobium spectabile*.

She showed us lots of her collection and how certain types have evolved to mimic their (female) pollinators in looks and scent, so the male pollinator believes it's going to mate and in doing this, pollinates the flower. Others have evolved to have moving parts that can trap their pollinators until successful pollination, and some even smell of rotting flesh so flies are attracted to them for pollination



Christine then showed us her office/lab where she does all the Orchid propagation.

Orchid seeds do not have an endosperm, meaning they will not germinate in soil like most other seeds. Instead, they require a nutrient solution, which, in their native habitats would be provided by mycorrhizal fungi. The fine seeds are sown on the surface of an agar jelly solution which must be contained in a sterile, airtight jar until germination. Christine has various tried and tested agar jelly recipes for different Orchids; some

with banana, potato, oats and varying amounts of sugar. Seeds can take up to 8 months to germinate and could take up to 5 years to produce their first flower.



It is all done in this Autoclave, which is a contained, sterile environment; any contamination can cause the seeds to rot.



Monstera deliciosa 'Variegata'



Carnivorous plants in Kibble Palace



Glasshouse plantings



Woodwardia unigemmata



Orchid propagation



Sarracenia sp.



Acalypha hispida in the Glasshouse



Cacti in Kibble Palace



Orchids and Ferns in the Glasshouse



Inside the Long Pit



Glasshouse plantings



Thunbergia mysorens



Inside Kibble Palace



Propagation for the Kitchen Garden



Tree Fern National Collection



Sarracenia purpurea subsp. *venosa*



Kibble Palace



Xerosicyos danguyi



Orchid propagation



Myself, Will, Holly



Working with the local community



RSPB Wildlife Garden



Acer pseudoplatanus 'Variegatum'



Araucaria araucana



The Long Pit



Casualty of Ash Dieback



Fagus sylvatica 'Asplenifolia'

Benmore Botanic Garden

Benmore Botanic Garden was acquired by the RBGE from the Younger family in 1928, as the climate in Edinburgh wasn't suitable for new plant collections and *Rhododendron*'s, that were being brought in by George Forrest from China and the Himalayas; they needed much more rainfall. Prior to this, in 1863, James Piers Patrick owned the estate and planted 'Redwood Avenue'. Shortly after this, James Duncan bought the estate, continued to plant conifers, and also built the Fernery in the 1870s. Unfortunately it fell into disrepair but was restored by the RBGE, over 18 months, which concluded in 2009.

We were very grateful that Sean (one of the Garden Supervisors) spent almost all of his work day showing us around Benmore, where we started at the iconic Redwood Avenue, then explored the lower parts of the garden, where we were also given a tour of the back-of-house areas and nursery. Benmore is completely self-sufficient in timber, but being on such steep mountainside and having trees up to 57metres tall (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), can make collecting and processing this timber difficult. Sean showed us their latest technology – a portable saw mill that hitches onto their tractors!

Here you can see some of the damage caused by Storm Eowyn back in 2025. These are just 2 of the 270 trees that came down in this storm. The task of clearing this damage is still ongoing as there are only 11 members of staff on this 120 acre site.



There's a walled garden here that was built by James Duncan in 1875 with a kitchen garden, glasshouses, formal paths, lawns and herbaceous plantings. Unfortunately it fell into disrepair and storms damaged most of the glasshouses, but a re-design of this space is currently in development, to be in-keeping with it's heritage and the local landscape; we will definitely be visiting in the future to see the progress.

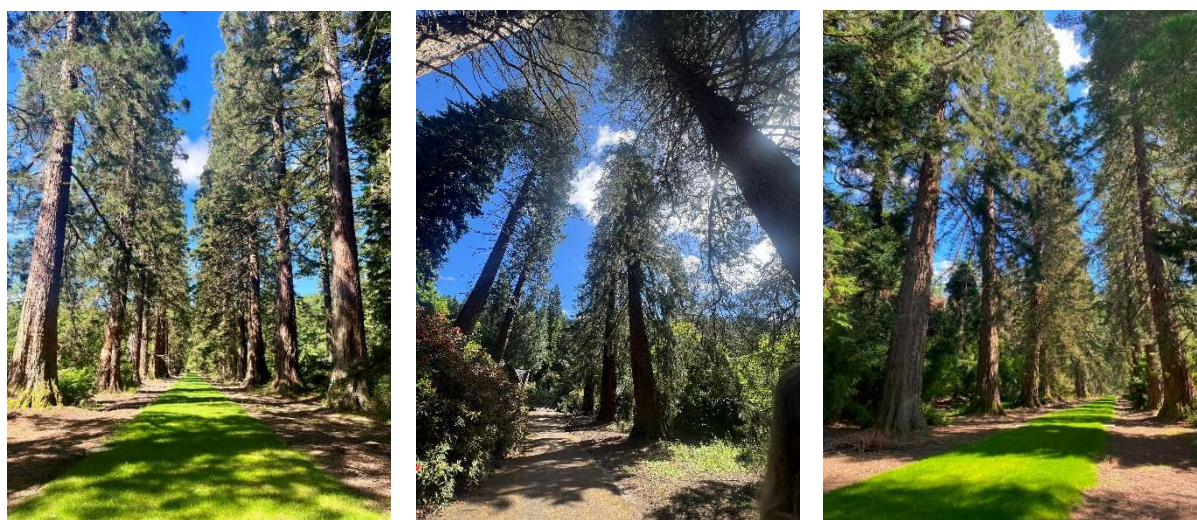
Sean continued our tour up through the Bhutanese Glade to the Chilean Rainforest Glade, where he showed us *Drimys winteri* and told us it's historical significance – in 1577, Captain John Wynter and Sir Francis Drake sailed around the world. Wynter's crew developed scurvy, but after drinking a tea made from the bark by the Mapuche people of Chile, they were cured! They brought it back to the UK as a medicine called Winter's bark. We also learnt that all of the plants in this part of the garden have been grown from wild collected seed (as is the same for *almost* all of the plants in the garden)!

We then came down the *Eucalyptus* lined Tasmaian Ridge to the fernery that was almost hidden in the hillside, with amazing ferns and mosses inside. Unfortunately, all of the original ferns were lost before RBGE took over the site.

Redwood Conservation

This is one of the most spectacular garden entrances that I have ever seen; 49 *Sequoiadendron giganteum* trees standing at over 50 metres tall and at least 163 years old! But 163 years sounded like nothing when Sean told us that they can live for more than 3000 years.

50 saplings were originally planted by James Piers Patrick in 1863, unfortunately 1 tree was lost in a storm in 1968. The trees are thought to have been grown from seed collected in California in 1855 by a Scottish landowner named Patrick Matthew, as records show this is when the first *Sequoiadendron giganteum* seeds reached the UK



Unfortunately, in 2020, it was noticed that these trees were struggling, Sean mentioned that some had almost no foliage, especially on lower branches, and that they were dropping branches. With diseases such as *Phytophthora ramorum* on the rise in the UK, it was important to make sure these trees were as healthy as possible, to be able to resist diseases and pathogens.

Soil analysis tests concluded that compaction was the primary problem, as this avenue was originally, and still was being used as a driveway, along with the footfall of 50,000 visitors admiring the trees every year. The heavily compacted soil was also preventing the trees from being able to uptake nutrients, making them more vulnerable to diseases.

A 10-year project to rejuvenate these trees began by using a geo-injector to blow air into the soil around them; perlite and a slow-release soil fertiliser called Vidi Funda were then injected into these air channels to help improve drainage and stimulate new root growth. The grass pathway has purposefully been narrowed to encourage visitors not to walk near the base of the trees, to prevent more compaction in the future.

At the time of our visit, 6 years after the renovation works began, you can see new, vibrant green growth on the trees, very little branches dropping, and Sean noted that the crowns look fuller than they did before.



Dicksonia antarctica



Pilgerodendron uviferum



View from the Tasmanian Ridge



Myoporum sp.



Cornus kousa



Sean & Will identifying ferns



View up to Chilean Glade



Meconopsis 'Inverleith'



In the shade tunnel



Nothofagus cunninghamii



In the Fernery



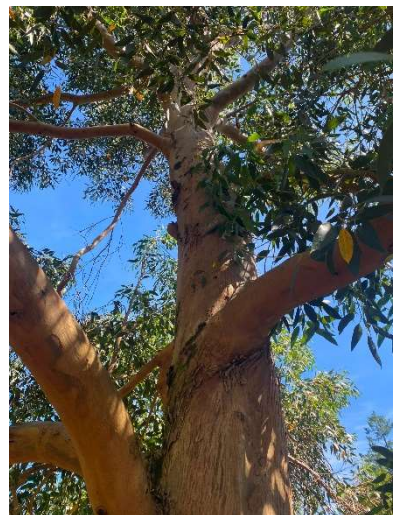
View from the Chilean Glade



Araucaria araucana



Rodgersia sp.



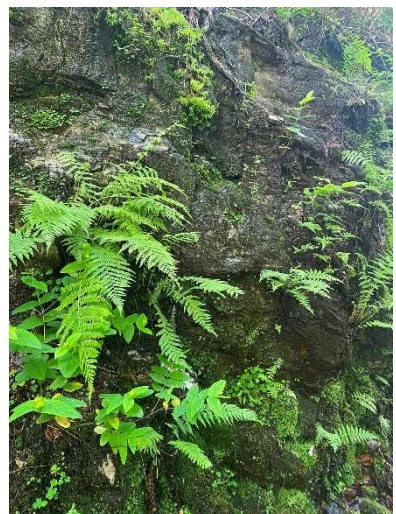
Eucalyptus sp.



Pinus coulteri Propagation



The Lost Walled Garden



In the Fernery



Pondside planting



Inside the Fernery



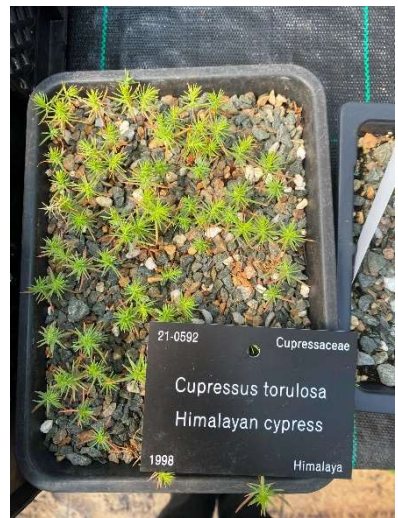
Melaleuca lophantha



The Pond



Primula vialii



Cupressus torulosa Propagation



Felled Trees



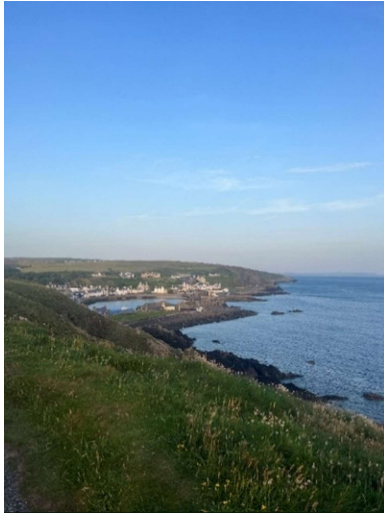
View of the Victorian Fernery



Styrax japonica

Travel Day & Botanising Hike

Day 4 of our trip was a travel day as it was one of the longest drives on the tour, including a ferry crossing, with fantastic views.



We didn't want to pass up any opportunity for learning, so Will created a plant-spotting checklist for our evening hike on the coastal path near our hotel in Portpatrick. We also took various wildflower books to help us with identification.

Portpatrick → Mull of Galloway Plant Spotting Checklist (June)

Tick as you go • Focus on clifftops, heath, and damp patches

- 1 ■ Spring squill – tiny blue star flowers in short grass
- 2 ■ Thrift – pink pom-poms on stems
- 3 ■ Sea campion – white balloon-like flowers in rocks
- 4 ■ Rock samphire – fleshy green leaves, smells aromatic
- 5 ■ Purple milk-vetch – small purple pea-flowers (rare)
- 6 ■ White beak-sedge – fluffy white tufts in wet ground
- 7 ■ Bithynian vetch – pale yellow climbing flowers
- 8 ■ English stonecrop – tiny succulent with starry flowers
- 9 ■ Sea spleenwort – small fern in cliff cracks
- 10 ■ Wall pennywort – round coin-like leaves
- 11 ■ Sundews – sticky red insect-trapping leaves
- 12 ■ Bog asphodel – yellow spikes (late June)
- 13 ■ Cross-leaved heath – soft pink bells in damp areas

Tip: Look low to the ground—many plants are wind-shaped and tiny.

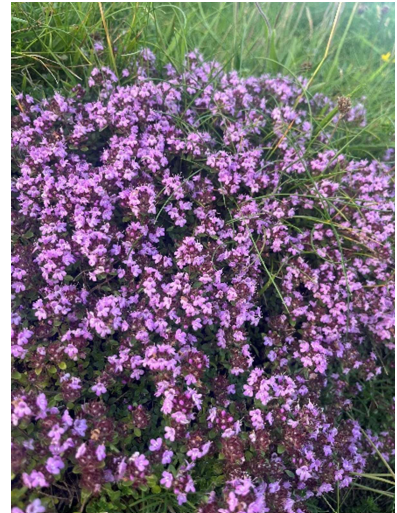
Unfortunately, we didn't find many of the plants on our checklist, but we did find some interesting wildflowers, that we were able to identify between us and the books.
See next page.



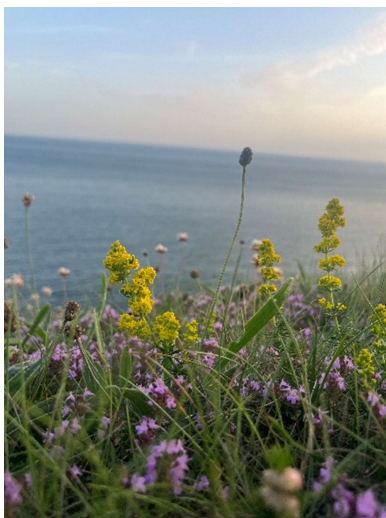
Pilosella aurantiaca



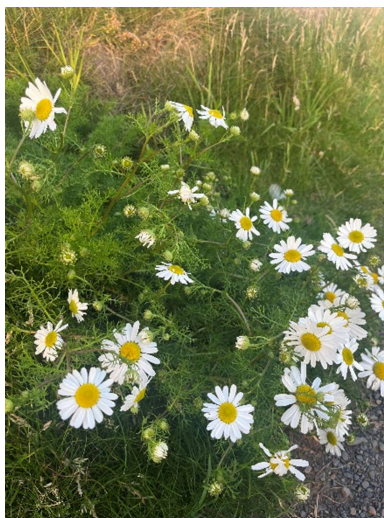
Lotus corniculatus



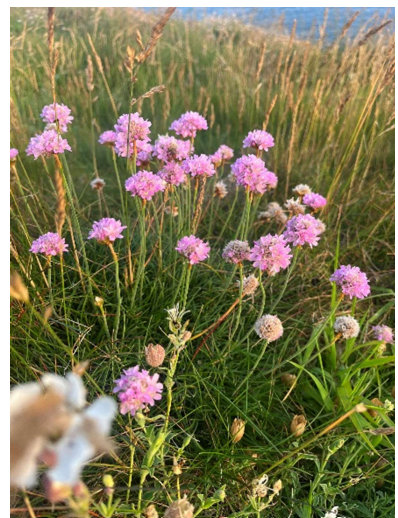
Thymus sp.



Galium verum



Chamaemelum nobile



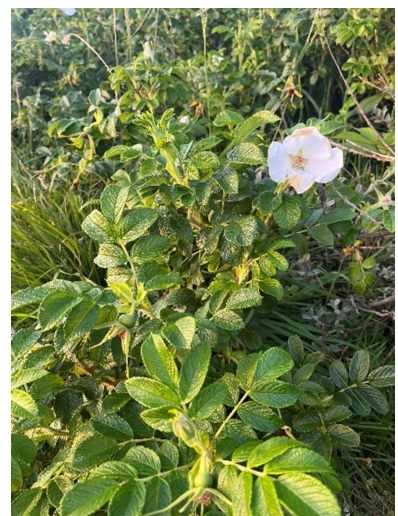
Armeria maritima



Silene uniflora



Achillea millefolium

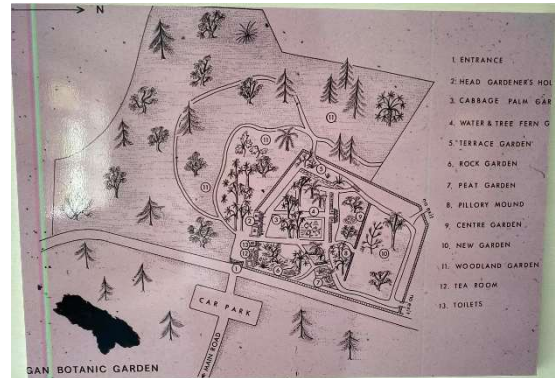


Rosa rugosa 'Alba'

Logan Botanic Garden

Here, we met curator Richard Baines who gave us a tour of the garden and showed us many plants that we had never seen or even heard of before; lots of tropical plants that you wouldn't expect to find in Scotland, and many of them from seed saved on expeditions to Vietnam, that Richard himself led.

Logan Botanic Garden was the second garden acquired by the RBGE, in 1969. It began as a walled kitchen garden in 1800, owned by the McDouall family. In 1869, Agnes married into the family and began replacing the kitchen garden with non-native, ornamental planting. Her son's followed in her footsteps and became avid plant collectors, working closely with well-known plant hunters (George Forrest for example) to find and collect species that were rare in Scotland but could thrive here due to the mild Gulf Stream. Above is a garden map that was created by students in 1968; up to 20 students per year are trained here.

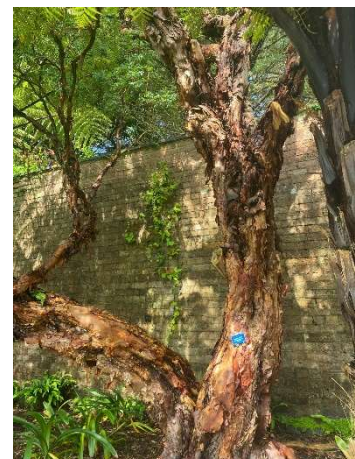


In 2014, the Logan Conservatory became the first glasshouse in the UK to run entirely on renewable energy, it is powered primarily by solar panels that generate 3,700 kWh/year, and an air source heat pump supplements this.

Although the microclimate created by the mild Gulf Stream means Logan rarely sees winter temperatures below 7°C, some of the most frost-tender plants from the Southern Hemisphere are kept in the glasshouse, which is kept above 8°C all year-round.

Richard did mention that they occasionally get hard winters here, only every 10-15 years, but these winters could be detrimental to the tropical collections growing here, so straw and bubble wrap cages are made for the most tender plants, and the *Dicksonia* get special treatment with heating cables running around their bases!

We also learnt that Logan Botanic Garden has 15 champion trees, one of them being this *Polylepis australis*, commonly known as the Filo Pastry Tree in reference to the peeling bark. Like many of the other specimens growing here, it is endemic to its native country (Argentina in this case), meaning that it doesn't grow naturally anywhere else in the world. This is why plant conservation is so important, to help plants adapt to new habitats and reduce their risk of extinction.



Plant Hunting

We had been learning about the RBGE's plant conservation efforts and seed saving expeditions throughout our trip, but meeting Richard was truly inspiring. He told us what it is like to be a part of a botanical expedition, having participated in lots across the world, and led 4 of his own!



The 4 expeditions that Richard led were all to Vietnam to collect seed from endangered plants, as this is a place suffering rapid biodiversity loss. On the first trip in 2016, they recorded 10 different species of *Rhododendron* and when returning to the same area in 2019, only 3 of these species remained, due to expanding cardamom farms.

This really highlighted to us the importance of plant conservation because if it wasn't for people like Richard and his teams, many plants would already be extinct.

A lot of the conservation work is also part of a global mission to reintroduce plants to their native habitats.

Once the seeds or vegetative material is brought back,

this is where the work really begins; recording and documenting the specimens at every stage and constantly propagating where possible to increase the population. Richard explained that almost all the plants here are propagated by cuttings and processed onsite in their nursery.



Above were some of Richard's favourite wild collected specimens.

Left – *Schefflera* (now *Heptapleurum*) *macrophylla*

Middle – *Banksia ericifolia* subsp. *macrantha*

Right – *Shefflera* (now *Heptapleurum*) *taiwaniana*



Myself



Puya alpestris



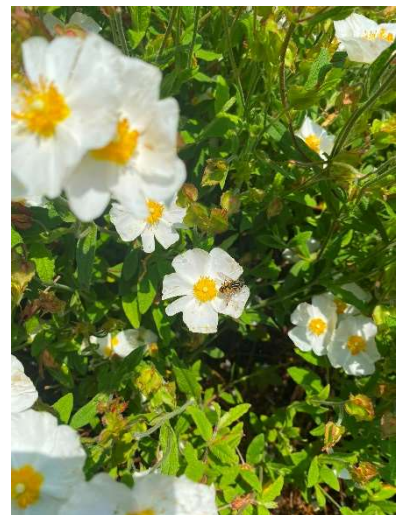
Various *Echeveria*



Agave sp.



Seaweed Collection



Cistus sp.



Wachendorfia thyrsiflora



Dacrydium cupressinum



Pondside Planting



Trachycarpus fortunei



Blechnum cycadifolium



Fuchsia sp.



Dicksonia antarctica



Echium candicans and *E. pininana*



In the Glasshouse



Leptospermum sp.



Eucalyptus rising again



Cyathea medullaris



Willow-woven T-rex in the distance



Olearia sp.



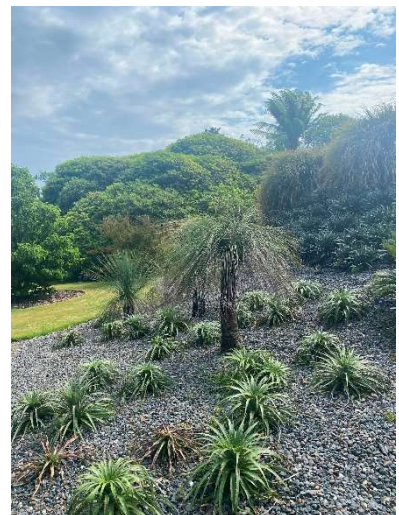
Eucalyptus bark



Gunnera manicata



Lagerstroemia indica



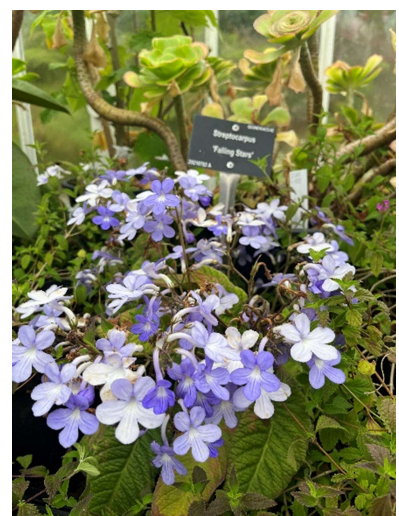
Xanthorrhoea johnsonii



View in the Walled Garden



Cordyline australis lined entrance



Streptocarpus 'Falling Stars'

Dawyck Botanic Garden

When organising the garden tour with Euan, we had a mix-up of dates, which was entirely our fault. After sending our apologies to Euan and the team, we arrived on the Saturday, but unfortunately, none of the curatorial team work weekends. Despite this, the entrance staff were kind enough to let us in free-of-charge, gave us maps, some directions and mentioned what was looking good. Throughout our visit, we noted down questions to later email to Euan, which he went into fantastic detail answering.



Dawyck Botanic Garden began as a castle and garden owned by the Veitch family, who planted trees for windbreaks; one tree, *Abies alba* was planted in the 17th Century, and is still standing today in Heron Wood. The castle was demolished and replaced by Dawyck House in 1830 by the then owner Sir John Murray Naesmyth. John sponsored plant hunter David Douglas, who brought back rare trees and began the arboretum. In 1897, the Balfour family acquired the estate and introduced more colour with Rhododendrons, the Azalea terrace and spring bulbs. Unfortunately, severe storm damage in the late 1900s proved too costly for the family to repair, so the garden was gifted to the RBGE in 1979; the house and chapel remain privately owned by the Balfour family.

In 2014, a micro-hydroelectric power station was built to harness the power of water flowing through the Scrape Burn (which runs through the garden). It produces an average of 238kWh each day; you can see a display of the current power output and carbon savings in the visitor centre. This amount of electricity is enough to power every building on the site, making this the first carbon neutral garden in the UK! Any surplus energy is sold back to the National Grid which also helps with running costs in the garden.

Being carbon neutral is a step in the right direction for climate change, but Euan mentioned that the effect a warming climate is having on plants is changing how they curate the garden. They're currently looking into plants on the IUCN Red List to see if they can help with conserving them, along with using the Climate Assessment Tool app by the BGCI to see how different plants could cope with different climate scenarios.



Champion Trees

We noticed lots of blue, 'Champion Tree' labels on our walk around Dawyck, and asked Euan how many they have in total here – the answer is 24, as of 2025. The UK & Ireland Champion Tree database is organised by a charity called The Tree Register and is run entirely by volunteers. One of their volunteer registrars, Owen Johnson, visited Dawyck in 2025 and declared some new champions, including:

Pinus peuce at 34.5 metres tall! Although it's only the champion after a storm blew down it's 36-metre-tall competitor at Stourhead in Wiltshire.

Abies gamblei with a girth of 3.71 metres and height of 33.3 metres. This tree was planted in 1913, so is expected to be around 120 years old!

Picea breweriana at 25.8 metres tall, it is not the tallest in the UK but it's girth of 3.02 metres is why it is the champion.

Acer nipponicum is rather small compared to these giants, but it is the current height and girth champion at 14.5 metres tall and 1.41 metre girth.



These 'books' were made from different wood genus's



Although not a champion tree here, *Fagus sylvatica* 'Dawyck' is an important part of Dawyck's history. It was discovered by Sir John Naesmyth in 1860. He noticed a *Fagus sylvatica* sapling that looked different to the common form. He transplanted it to the grounds of Dawyck House to keep an eye on its growth, which became thinner and more columnar than common *Fagus sylvatica*. It is still growing in the house's garden today and has been widely propagated, with one of its successors being the reigning champion at Wakehurst Place, currently 31.4 metres tall!

Another significant tree here is the *Picea omorika* of which 53 were planted between 2022-2026, these were grown from seeds collected from Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010; Thomas from the team here helped to collect them!



Kalmia latifolia



Pseudotsuga menziesii with Myself & Will for scale!



Cunninghamia konshii



View over the burn



Carpinus cordata



Lichen



Acer nipponicum



Holodiscus sp.



'The Scream'



Staphylea colchica



Towering trees



Dactylorhiza fuchsii



Abies koreana x Abies nephrolepis



Sequoiadendron giganteum



Little and Large trees



Will and *Pseudotsuga menziesii*



Rhododendron bureavii



Standing deadwood



View over the burn



Weigela sp.



Blechnum penna-marina



Acer seeds and Lichen



Holly, Will, Myself



Aruncus sp.



More Lichen



Callitropsis nootkatensis 'Pendula'



Cone and tree size comparison



Acknowledgements

This project has and will continue to benefit our horticultural career as we have had the opportunity to learn and understand what botanical gardens do to conserve endangered species. While touring the gardens, what we have learnt about seed collecting, climate change and conservation has added context to the importance of botanical gardens and their collections. Not only are the gardens beautiful, some serving as free spaces for the public to enjoy and learn about nature, but they also serve a greater purpose of being a seed bank of genetic diversity.

Meeting people in the teams, networking and learning about different opportunities and training programs, has widened our horizons of potential opportunities. We have seen, learnt and researched many plants for this project; adding to our plant knowledge will help us in our continued studies. Experiences like this have served as inspiration to our ongoing learning and potential education/career aspirations.

With Thanks

We would like to thank **RHS Bursaries and Merlin Trust** for helping us to plan and for funding this trip, which has and will continue to benefit our horticultural careers; we have learnt so much and made great connections.

Aaron and Bruce from Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, thank you for the tours, in depth knowledge and openness to show us parts of the garden that were still a work in progress.

Ishbel and Christine from Glasgow Botanic Gardens, thank you for your enthusiasm, extensive tour and the wealth of knowledge you shared with us.

Sean from Benmore Botanic Garden, thank you for your time, knowledge, openness and a fantastic tour (and taxi service!).

Richard from Logan Botanic Garden, thank you for the tour, enthusiasm and inspiring us to look further into plant conservation.

Euan from Dawyck Botanic Garden, thank you for understanding our date mix-up and allowing us to tour the garden, then answering all our questions in great detail.

Ali Goding, our Garden Manager at RHS Harlow Carr, thank you for steering us in the right direction and allowing us to take time away from our day jobs to embark on this incredible learning journey.

Financial Summary

Funding for:	Amount Spent:
Travel	
Train Harrogate – York – Edinburgh Edinburgh – York – Harrogate	£272.31
Ferry Gourock – Dunoon Dunoon – Gourock	£46.40
Car Hire	£257.90
Fuel	£73.12
Parking Charges	£12.00
	Total: £661.73
Accommodation	
Hotel – Edinburgh 1 night	£465.00
Air B&B – Dunoon 2 nights	£310.00
Hotel – Portpatrick 1 night	£243.54
Hotel – Peebles 1 night	£396.09
	Total: £1414.63
Food and Drink	
Monday 22 nd June	£134.00
Tuesday 23 rd June	£133.89
Wednesday 24 th June	£129.35
Thursday 25 th June	£128.05
Friday 26 th June	£128.51
Saturday 27 th June	£134.17
	Total: £787.97
Total expenditure: £2864.33	
Funding Awarded	
RHS Bursaries	£1995.00
Merlin Trust	£850.00
	Total: £2845.00
Personal Contribution	£19.33

*Please note that all prices were for 3 people. Total per person was **£954.77**.