

Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group

Registered Charity number 1161254

ANNUAL REPORT OF TRUSTEES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER 2021

CONSTITUTION

The Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group (the Group) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is a partner group of the Royal Horticultural Society. It is independent of the RHS but the Partnership Agreement encourages close cooperation between the two charities. The Constitution and Rules which govern the Group are published on the Group's website <http://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/information/constitution>

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Group is to advance the education of the public in the plant genera rhododendron, camellia and magnolia and in the conservation and protection thereof by, but not by way of limitation:

- a) ensuring continuity in the care of collections of the genera in public gardens by supporting professional gardeners and taxonomists through travel sponsorship and other appropriate means
- b) operating a website
- c) organising shows
- d) producing literature
- e) acting as an advisor by providing assistance in identification, conservation and reproduction of unusual or rare species or cultivars.

Having regard to the Group's aims and objectives, the Trustees believe these meet the public benefit requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

TRUSTEES AND MANAGEMENT

The charity trustees manage the affairs of the Group and may for that purpose exercise all its powers. The Trustees may delegate their powers and functions to the Management Committee. At least 2 Trustees must be present at any Management Meeting.

The Trustees are required to provide an Annual Report and independently examined accounts to the Charity Commission every year.

The Trustees who served during the year were:

Barry Cooke
Dr. John Marston
Graham Mills (Chairman)
Alastair Stevenson

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2020-2021 REVIEW

As a result of Covid-19 this was a difficult year for the group in that no face-to-face meetings were able to be held.

The AGM was held virtually via Zoom on 8th May. Graham Mills was elected as Chairman. Barry Cooke and David Millais were elected as Vice Chairmen.

Due to the Pandemic the Management Committee held all of their meetings virtually this year at approximately monthly intervals via Skype and Zoom. Day to day running of the Group falls on the hard work and dedication of a small number of volunteers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The Bursaries sub-committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr John Marston were unable to make any awards primarily because travel restrictions and lockdowns made bursary projects impossible.

The Plant Committee

During the year, further additions were made to the Group Collections of Cinnabarina Rhododendrons at Minterne and the Hardy Hybrid Collection at Ramster. Two more rhododendron species were purchased for growing on to 'planting out' size before passing to Abbotsbury for the John Bond Large Leaved Rhododendron collection. Propagation of a further two magnolias for the Amos Pickard Collection at Canterbury Cathedral was arranged from a Swiss nursery. This will represent the last import possible before plant health regulations render further orders impossible. Routine appraisals took place of all the Group Collections.

The Plant Committee continued its work in developing a database of extant taxa in the three genera and circulating the data to its members once enough data had been collected to render it useful. Several more previously unrecorded and known to be threatened hybrids were identified and sent for propagation. This is proving to be an important national repository of information and work will continue apace.

An additional site for micropropagation of rare species and hybrids has been established and is being trialled, with experimental techniques being researched and recorded, first using non-heritage material moving on to more significant taxa. In due course this facility should be a back-up to the Group's usual resource.

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Public facing events.

No events were able to be undertaken during the year.

To compensate we held a second virtual Photographic Competition for the Centenary Cup which was very well received with over a thousand entries. We were particularly pleased with the international entries we received that would not normally occur at face-to-face shows.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Group is grateful to Jenny Fly who maintained our accounts most efficiently. She stepped down at the AGM and Simon Toms took over. He has been instrumental in helping the Trustees to prepare our annual return as a charity, recovered Gift Aid on donations made, and has ensured the smooth running of all financial operations.

As at the 31st October 2020 our total reserves improved by £1693 to £52,333.

As at the 31st October 2021 our total reserves stood at £49,089, a small decrease on 2020 (£52,333). Although membership subscriptions were up over the period, our costs increased and we lost some revenue due to the impact of Covid.

During the previous year we invested a small amount (£3,000) in the M&G Charifund in order to get some return on our funds. This recovered in the period to 31 October 2021 to show a small increase to £3,055 and also generated £134 of dividend income.

This report and the accounts will be posted on the Charity Commission website, www.charitycommission.gov.uk and at <http://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org>

This year our accounts were independently examined by Jacky Havenga, who has kindly agreed to step into the independent examiner role after member Russell Beeson had provided this role for many years. We would like to thank Russell for his contribution in previous years and Jacky for assuming the role.

Jacky has carried out an independent examination of the Financial Statements of the Group relating to the 2020-2021 accounts as required by the Charity Commission and provided her report accordingly.

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APPROVAL

Approved by the Trustees on 29th April 2022 and signed on their behalf by the Chairman,
Graham Mills.

Signed:

Graham Mills

Date: 29th April 2022