

Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group

Registered Charity number 1161254

ANNUAL REPORT OF TRUSTEES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER 2022

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 one Trustee must be present at any Management Committee 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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2022-2023 REVIEW

Public facing events.

During this year the pandemic appeared to be behind us and a normal cycle of activities occurred.

The AGM took place in May 2023 at Ness Botanic Gardens along with the North West England & North Wales Branch show and the Centenary Cup Competition.

Alastair Stevenson was re-elected as a Trustee.

Barbara and Robbie Sampson were elected as joint Secretaries.

Philip Eastell was elected as Treasurer.

Our Management Committee meetings continued to be held using Zoom. Day to day running of the Group falls on the hard work and dedication of a decreasingly small number of volunteers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Bursaries

Bursaries were awarded as follows:

1. Application: February 2023

Applicants: Selina TAN & Zoe ROBERTS jointly

Award: £1,000

To study the propagation and native seed conservation in the Royal Botanic Garden, Serbithang, and then hiking in Jigme Dorji National Park, observing the diverse flora

Date of trip: May 2023

2. Application: February 2023.

Applicant: Mark BOBIN

Award £1000

Follow-up trip to Arunachal Pradesh studying local rhododendrons and flora.

Date of Trip: March 2023

We have now decided to put our Bursary Scheme on hold until a review of the available funds of the RCM Group is completed. We will honour those approved applications still in the pipeline. Bursaries may not resume until 2026. It may be decided to have a pot of Bursary money which will provide a definite amount available for the awards for that year.

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The Plant Committee

During the year, our Plant Collections have been monitored and additions/replacements sought where appropriate or necessary. Material of missing camellias from the species collection at Ness is being propagated and several more rhododendron varieties for our hardy Hybrid and Cinnabarina collections have been sourced and are being micropropagated at the Duchy College laboratory.

The database of extant taxa in the three genera continued to expand and updated data was circulated to Group members and other conservation bodies to whom it would prove useful in supporting their activities. Many more previously unrecorded and known to be threatened hybrids were identified and sent for propagation. This continues to prove an important national/international resource, gaining considerable recognition and praise, and work carried on apace throughout the year.

The Plant Committee worked with numerous gardens, both private and public as well as nationally important organisation such as the Royal Botanic Gardens at both Kew and Edinburgh, to support identification and curation together with more serious work to devise resilience in the face of climate change and international ex situ conservation of threatened species.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Group is grateful to Philip Eastell who maintains our accounts.

As of the 31st of October 2023, our total reserves stood at £42,672, an increase on 2022 which stood at £41,495. Our Income was considerably up though in 2023 at £32,024 compared to £19,973 in 2022, which was primarily the result of a legacy for £13,629. However, our expenditure was also considerably up in 2023 at £ 30,842 compared to £ 24,644 in 2022, primarily a result of incurring new set up and layout costs for our yearbook at £6,875.

Our investment of £3,000 in the M&G Charifund lost a small sum to end of 31st October 2023 at £ 2,715.06 but it did produce a dividend of £166.87 during the period.

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. Jacky has carried out an independent examination of the Financial Statements of the Group relating to the 2022-2023 accounts as required by the Charity Commission and provided her report accordingly.

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APPROVAL

Approved by the Trustees on 11th May 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Chairman,
Graham Mills.

Signed:

Graham Mills

Date: 24th April 2023