

View from The Southwood Garden October 2018

It's amazing what you see when you look ...

Craneflies and leather jackets



The photo shows a crane fly resting on one of our Peruvian Lilies – possibly attracted to the flower's nectar. The club tail indicates it is male. Crane fly larvae are called leatherjackets and eat the roots of grass. Last year I noticed holes in the turf where I suspected magpies had dive bombed the grass to find them. Leatherjackets prefer moist soil so hopefully the dry summer will help suppress populations. However the larvae are around from September to July so there is ample time for them to regroup.

A tale of two hostas



Our Hosta 'Hadspen Blue' has been a spectacular performer since it was removed from the beds to a pot - its leaves entirely intact. H. 'Patriot' on the other hand, despite receiving the same treatment, has been attacked by slugs and snails. Both are in pots although H. Hadspen Blue is in a terracotta pot and isolated from other plants.

Rummaging in the Jermyn Street hedge



This month I trimmed the hedge along Jermyn Street. Although best pruned in spring or after flowering, I wanted to clear space for the winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) to show off its yellow flowers when they open in late winter.



During the work I spotted this parsley-crested ivy (*Hedera helix*) planted in summer 2014. It disappeared for several years only to show up this year. It is a small, non-vigorous variety which when mature, will produce pollen for bees and berries for birds.

Often periwinkle is discounted as dull and common. In fact it is a multi-

faceted plant, rampant if given too much sun or water, but in the Jermyn Street bed, where it gets neither, it displays a range of interesting characteristics. The mature leaves of the *Vinca major* 'Variegata' has large, elliptic shaped leaves whilst the new ones are orbicular. New stems not only race along the ground but stand upright like meerkats. The stems running over the edge of the wall fall dead straight with a big gap between leaves.



The hedge is predominantly made up of Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*). This climber has taken off in the last few years, however, one of the plants shows signs of die back and has what looks like coral spot on its main

stem. This fungus grows on dead wood and enters the plant through cuts or bark wounds. It may be that our summer drought weakened the plant making it susceptible to the disease. The plant will be removed (in dry weather so as to minimise the spread of spores), and disposed of.

Plants in flower (as of 31st October 2018)

<i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> 'Limelight'		●
Fuchsia		●
<i>Alstroemeria</i> 'Summer Snow' and A. 'Summer Paradise and Summer Sky'	Peruvian or Chilean lily	●
<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>	Feverfew	●
Flowering in decline: <i>Geranium nodosum</i> ; <i>Anemone x hybrida</i> 'Honorine Jobert'; <i>Cuphea viscosissima</i> ; <i>Viburnum tinus</i> ; <i>Lamium album</i>		