

# **Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group**

**Registered Charity number 1161254**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF TRUSTEES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2024**

## **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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## 2023-2024 REVIEW

### Public facing events.

The normal cycle of events & shows occurred.

The AGM took place on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024 at Trewithen Gardens along with the Centenary Cup Competition.

Graham Mills was re-elected as a Trustee.

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 are offered to applicants based in the UK who wish to study our three genera in order to further their knowledge or pursue a more scientific goal and publish their conclusions for the benefit of the RCMG.

The Bursary Committee members are:

John Marston (Chair) Mark Bobin, Thomas Clark and Rama Lopez-Rivera

1. Dr Ling Hu from Massey University, New Zealand received £500 in March 2024 to help fund her Red List risk assessment of Maddennia Rhododendrons as outlined by her supervisor Alan Elliot of RBGE. She has had a £2,500 Sibbald Grant award in addition to our £500 to enable this work.
2. Chris Tomlin, a student at Pershore College, was awarded £250 in September 2024 to help with his travel to Schepker's Bremen rhododendron nursery in April 2025
3. Stefano Ciabo working at the Inner Temple Garden, London was awarded £500 to investigate the cultivation of historic camellias in Lucca, Italy and the surrounding area in June 2024.

We are setting aside a sum of money as a pot from which to draw funds for bursaries (at present set at £1,000) which might fund two applications a year.

The varied experiences of our Bursarians has not only enthused them and us with the results of their endeavours, but has raised awareness of our three genera, which I hope they will disseminate among their friends and colleagues, to the ultimate advantage of the RCMG.

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## **The Plant Committee**

The Group is grateful to Pam Hayward who is the Chair of our 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 Cinnabrina 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 2024, our total reserves stood at £52,746 an increase on 2023 which stood at £45,478. However, this is slightly misleading, as due to the late publication of the 2024 yearbook, the associated costs were not accounted and paid for until the 2024-2025 accounting year.

Our investment of £3,000 in the M&G Charifund had a value of £2789 on the 31st of October 2024, but had produced dividends during the year totalling £170.82

This report and the accounts will be posted on the Charity Commission website, [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://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 2023-2024 accounts as required by the Charity Commission and provided her report accordingly.

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## **APPROVAL**

Approved by the Trustees on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and signed on their behalf by the Chairman, Graham Mills.

Signed:



Graham Mills

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025