

Short report on trip to Sir Harold Hillier Garden

At Bodnant we have a recently planted winter garden, currently in its third year and I felt it would be beneficial to learn more about the ongoing maintenance by visiting a more established winter garden. I was lucky enough to spend a week at Hilliers and to receive a grant from the PG Trust Finnis Scott award to help towards the travel costs.



I spent 2 days actually working in the winter garden alongside the team which was a great way to pick up tips on all sorts of things and discuss issues such as timing and methods of cutting down plants such as Cornus, Salix and Rubus. We discussed plant combinations that worked well and those that hadn't been successful. Hilliers have a problem with deer eating their plants whereas our main

problem is rabbits and we have to net a lot of our plants.

They were using black fruit cage netting which was surprisingly almost invisible and looked a lot better than the netting we've been using here at Bodnant.



I was also fortunate in that David Jewell, the head of collections took time out of his schedule to give the Hillier's students and I a talk and tour of the winter garden discussing the latest extension to it, design principles, noteworthy plants etc.

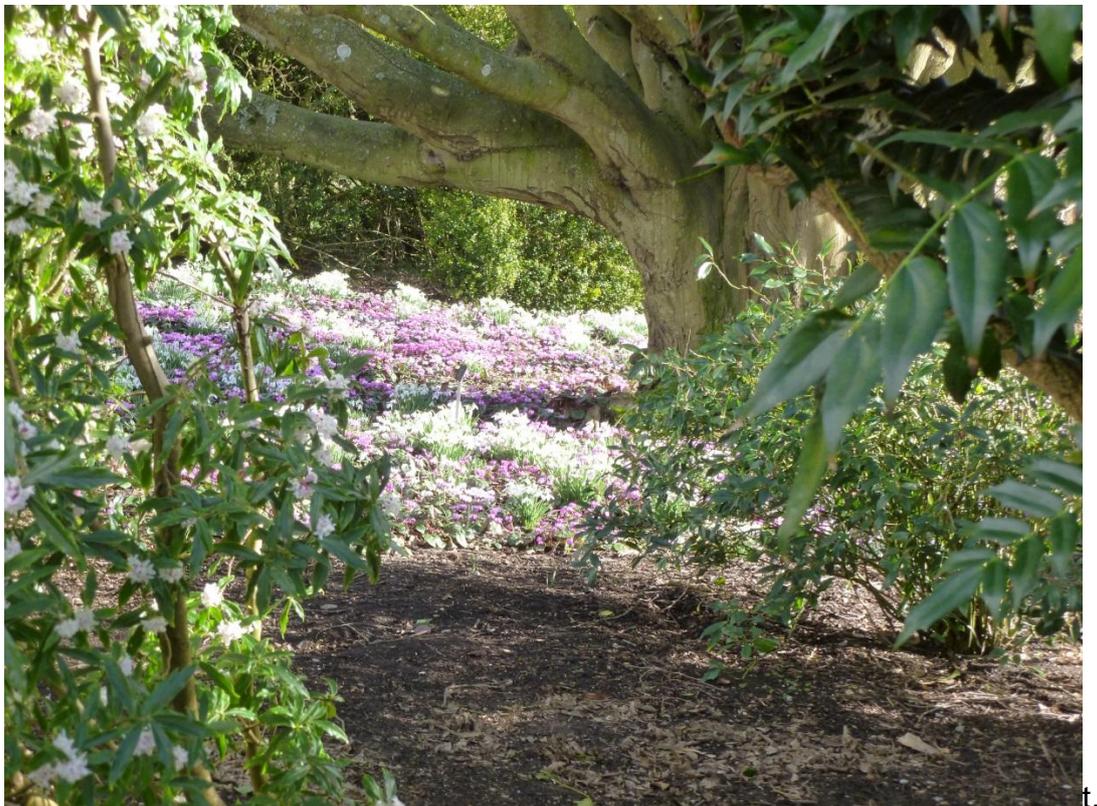


There was also an opportunity to work in other areas alongside other members of the Hillier's team and get a good overview of working practices and breadth of the work carried out.

One of my colleagues here at Bodnant is creating a “peat bed” and as there is an old peat terrace in Hilliers I took photos and spoke to the team leader of that area to bring back ideas for Katie.



Overall the time spent working alongside the winter garden team, chatting and listening to them talk to the public was informative and I will be able to use the information gleaned to improve the way we manage certain plants. It was good to spend time working in another organisation and form new links which hopefully can be mutually beneficial. Some of the team may want to come and spend time at Bodnant as they were interested in how we approached different jobs. Since my return I've prepared some notes to cascade the information to our team at Bodnant



I would like to thank the PG Trust for enabling me to expand my horticultural knowledge and horizons.

Laura Jones (Bodnant Garden)