

Wednesday 19th February 2020 - Grass and Meadows

On a recent visit to Kew Gardens I chanced upon two Royal Botanical Gardeners in the grass area. They were combing and cutting. We have a beautiful grass which has been here for many years. A photograph of the label was necessary to recall the name: *Anemanthele lessoniana*. It is an evergreen and doesn't need to be cut down, pruned, at all. At this time of year it needs to be "combed" so that all the dry parts are taken out. Small plantlets grow around the main part and can be put in to replace as it seems they don't have a long life.



The meadow is a constant source of discussion. The whole concept of a field left to grow on its own is really a result of farming techniques. Fields would be left for animals to feed on, then a crop might have been grown, and a field would be left fallow. Strange how we miss things once they have gone. Changes in farming methods and intensive farming changed the countryside. The vibrant, acid yellow of fields of rapeseed were a visually striking result of demand for its oil.

Bournemouth area is so beautiful at many roadsides and roundabouts. The range of colour during May and June cheers up the grey roads. Roundabouts have considered and changing planting supplied by King's Park Nursery. Grass takes over a lot of our meadow here at Hengistbury. We have tried yellow rattle hoping it might attach itself to the grass in its parasitic fashion. However, it might prefer more chalky soils and hasn't diminished the amount of grass we have needed to remove from our meadow area. Monty Don always emphasises that the gardening process is as much of a pleasure as the outcome. Eventually we will arrive at a system that suits our meadow soil and environment.

Enjoy your week. We look forward to chatting.

From the Volunteer Gardeners at Hengistbury Head Wildlife Garden