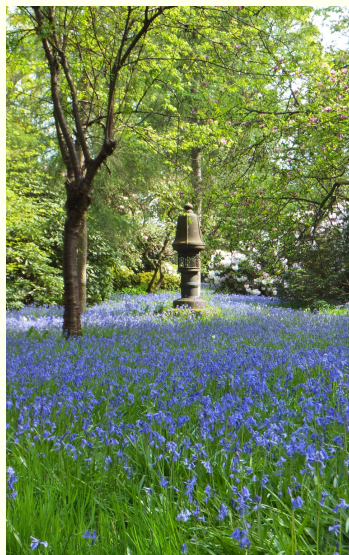


Our season starts in March, Camellias provide some of this best colour when sheets of daffodils cover the ground, magnolias and early flowering rhododendrons are in bloom. In April and May the brilliant display of rhododendrons and azaleas is at its best, while a carpet of bluebells fills the air with scent. The summer brings climbing roses, wild flowers, our giant gunneras reach their full size, and Hydrangeas are a welcome splash of colour. In Autumn the garden is ablaze with colour including favourites Liquidamba and Cornus. Our collection of ancient Acers come to life and the whole garden is transformed to shades of crimson, russet and orange.



Welcome to Ramster Garden.

We are delighted to welcome you to Ramster Garden and do hope you enjoy your visit. In 2022 we celebrated our family being here 100 years so a new centenary garden has been created with a magnificent dragon bench. The garden is best enjoyed by wandering the paths and exploring the beauty and tranquillity for yourself. There is no set route so use the map on the reverse as a guide.

The gardens were first laid out in 1890 by the well-known local nurseries, Gauntletts of Chiddingfold, who created them out of the oak woodland. They were famous for their interest in Japanese plants and ornaments. The stone lanterns, the cranes feeding in the pond, the clumps of bamboo, evergreen azaleas and the avenue of maples are typical of the Japanese style features used in the gardens they designed.

Don't Miss

1. Azalea garden is a patchwork of brilliant azaleas, interplanted with viburnums and maples.
2. The Grouse Hole is a quiet spot from which to admire the banks of rhododendrons reflected in the pond.
3. Lake View is framed by huge bushes of Pink Pearl and Cynthia rhododendrons.
4. The Bog Garden rill tumbles from the top of the hill in Ant Wood, under bridges and round stepping stones to the Lake at the bottom.
5. Magnolia Glade is in the centre of the garden, magnificent magnolias, rhododendrons, carpets of bluebells and specimen trees.
6. The Top Lawn boasts a fine stand of Blue Cedars and a planting of shrubs suitable for smaller gardens.
7. Acer Avenue - sculptured trees over 120 years old with amazing Autumn colour.

In 1922 Ramster was bought by Sir Henry and Lady Norman, the great grandparents of the current owners. Lady Norman, greatly added to the gardens, and introduced many of the rhododendrons and azaleas for which Ramster has become famous. Some of them were grown from seed brought back by the great plant collectors, others were the result of her own crosses. Many of these have now reached maturity and are over 20 metres high. No good garden stands still and the current generations are constantly introducing new plants, projects and improvements. The garden is now home to over 300 different varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas which put on a spectacular show in Spring.



RAMSTER GARDENS

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A list of some of the more important plants and trees, with their botanical names, is available on request from the tea house.

57 Magnolia x loebneri 'Leonard Messel' delightful very floriferous small tree. Flowers are frost resistant FCC AM

58 Rh. augustinii – lepidote species, parent of many excellent blue-lowered hybrids. Colours range through blue to lavender and violet.

59 Fourth on the Top 100 list+ AM

60 Umbrella plant – darmera peltatum – clusters of pink flowers appear before the large rounded leaves

61 Corkscrew Hazel – corylus contorta – has unusual twisted twigs and deformed leaves, but is an attractive small tree

62 Japanese Bitter Orange – poncirus trifoliata – green very spiky stems, flowers like orange blossom and fruits are miniature oranges

63 In the Stream Garden, affectionately known as Dingly Dell, white lily-like flowers, first raised in Belgium in early 19th C. Honeysuckle like flowers, late flowering, fragrant. Primulas, epimediums, irises and small rhododendrons complete the picture.

64 Japanese Maples – acer japonica dissectum – This unique avenue of amazing sculptured trees is over 120 years old. Very fine Autumn colour

65 Rh. Rosa Mundi – early, bright rose, compact bush very floriferous

66 Variegated Sycamore -Acer 'Simon Louis Freres' leaves are pink when young, then turn green with creamy stripes and blotches

67 A huge bank of Rh Cynthia a great feature of Ramster Gardens

68 **Rhododendrons and Companion Plants for the 21st century** is the theme of this area, featuring a range of rhododendrons which remain small with outstanding foliage, giving the plants year-round interest and making them suitable for any size garden. Complimented by companion plants, and ground cover, to give colour and variety in all seasons.

69 Rh. Yakushimanum 'Koichiro Wada'. FCC This form of yakushimanum was voted most favourite rhododendron in the Top 100 list+. Other favourites in these beds include 'Wine and Roses' with lovely red undersides to its leaves, 'Hydon Velvet', 'Woolly Dane' and 'Teddy Bear'.

70 Rh. Falconeri – Perhaps the grandest of all rhododendrons, very large leaves with rusty brown indumentum underneath. 5th in the Top 100 list+

71 Stephanandra tanakae – an elegant shrub with long, arching, rich brown stems, and good autumn colour. Not fussy as to soil or position.

72 Rh yakushimanum – the species from which most of the popular modern small rhododendrons derive. Outstanding plant in leaf and flower.

Recorded by the **Tree Register of the British Isles**

Members of the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group from all over the world recently voted on their top 100 favourite rhododendrons.

We have 40 of them in the garden.

FCC – first class certificate AGM- Award of Garden Merit AM- award of merit

We have numbered and described some of the most interesting trees and shrubs at Ramster. They do not follow any particular route round the garden.

1 Medlar – mespilas germanica - a picturesque little tree, whose unusual brown fruits make a delicious jelly, when blotted by the frost.

2 Tulip Tree – liriodendron tulipifera – from North America, distinctive 3-lobed leaves curious yellow-green flowers in summer

3 Amelanchier 'Ballerina' Small tree, bronze leaves when young turning red and purple in autumn. Profusion of white flowers in Spring

4 Corylopsis pauciflora - the primrose yellow, scented flowers appear before the leaves in March. A charming shrub introduced from Japan by Robert Fortune around 1860. FCC 1983.

5 Dogwood – cornus kousa chinensis – numerous white bracts cover the spreading branches in early June, lovely autumn colour, with red fruits.

6 Cornelian cherry – cornus mas – abundance of small yellow flowers in early Spring, slightly unpleasant smell, edible cherry like fruits

7 Tennis court garden is planted with shrubs for year round interest and an ever changing display in its large pots. A pleasant corner to sit and relax.

8 Pleached hedge of red-twigged lime. Tilia cordata rubra

9 Hinodegiri brilliant red Kurume azalea AGM 1969. a good performer.

10 Acer palmatum aureum Leaves of soft yellow go golden in summer

11* Blue Cedar – cedrus atlantica 'Glaucous' – superb tree from the Atlas mountains. Branches can be damaged by snow and wind.

12 Butterfly maple -Acer palmatum Butterfly. Creamy-white and green variegated leaves, each one different. Pretty, small tree.

13 The beds of evergreen azaleas, mostly kurume hybrids from Japan, and deciduous Exbury hybrids give a brilliant patchwork quilt effect.

14* Coastal Redwood – sequoia sempervirens – the world's tallest tree is 115m high, ours is 40m. The spongy bark is resistant to fire

15* Wellingtonia –sequoiadendron giganteum – the 'General Sherman' in California is the largest living thing in the world, over 2000 years old. Ours is 38m high.

16 Incense cedar – calocedrus decurrens – from the Pacific coast, its aromatic non-splintering wood was used to make pencils

17 Swamp Cypress – taxodium distichum – from North America. Turns golden brown in Autumn. On old trees the roots form 'knees' in wet ground

18 Japanese snowball.- viburnum plicatum Grandiflorum – one of the finest ornamental shrubs. Large globular white heads along arching branches. Introduced from China by Robert Fortune

19 Purple Nut tree – corylus maxima 'Purpurea' outstanding purple foliage. Even the nuts are tinged purple

20 Rhododendron St. Breward – a hybrid of the wonderful blue flowering *R. augustinii*. Brilliant violet flowers in early Spring
21 Paperbark Maple – *acer griseum* – introduced from China by Ernest Wilson in 1901. Paper thin curls of cinnamon coloured bark
22 Rh Sir Charles Lemon – spectacular plant when the sun shines on the cinnamon indumentum on the back of the leaves. 26 in the Top 100 list+
23 American red oaks – *Quercus rubrum*. Fine, upright ornamental tree from the States. Wonderful Autumn colour
24 Handkerchief, or Dove Tree – *Davidia involucreata* – From China, a Wilson introduction. Large white bracts cover the tree in late May.
25 Ramster Summer Ruby and Ramster Summer Pearl. Our own hybrid rhododendrons flowering in late June scented and very lovely
26 Camellia ‘Gloire de Nantes’ Outstanding among our large collection of old japonica and williamsii hybrids. Others named are Lavinia Maggi, Adolphe Audusson, Donckelaeri, Brigadoon, Elegans, Alba Simplex, Nobilissima, Inspiration, Debutante, Donna Herzilia de Freitas
27 Acer palmatum ‘Osakazuki’ – probably the most brilliant Autumn colour of any Japanese maple. We call it the Burning Bush
28 Cornus ‘Norman Hadden’ - a mass of creamy-white bracts in June, turning pink. In Autumn covered in strawberry-like fruits.
29 Loderi King George. FCC AM Perhaps the finest rhododendron hybrid ever, by Sir Edmund Loder from Leonardslee. Huge, scented pink to white blooms. No 3 on the top 100 list. Other loderi on this path are White Diamond, Gamechick, Pretty Polly, Pink Diamond and Pink Topaz.
30 ‘George Hardy’ an old Mangles hybrid, pre 1884 always produces a great display of pink and white flowers. Said to be a parent of Pink Pearl.
31 Magnolia campbellii – ‘the queen of magnolias’ from the Himalayas. To see the huge pink blooms against a dark sky is unforgettable. FCC
32 Magnolia dawsoniana – another outstanding magnolia., From western Sichuan. Introduced by Ernest Wilson. White suffused with rosy-red AM
33 Magnolia stellata Royal Star. One of many stellata magnolias. Lovely star shaped flowers, scented. Ideal for smaller gardens.
34 Rh. oreotrephes – lepidote species- has attractive light purple flowers. Voted no. 81 on the Top 100 list+.
35 Rh Loders White - a large shrub with handsome foliage, flowers in a huge conical truss, mauve-pink, fading to white. 95th on the Top 100 list+
36 Hydrangea Vicomtesse de Vibraye – one of the best of the blue macrophyllas, strong grower and always blue on our soil
37 Bog Garden, watched over by the statue of Diana the Huntress, a stepping-stone path winds under the huge leaves of gunnera manicata, past plantings of marsh marigold, primula, irises, and many water-loving plants

38 River birch, *Betula nigra*, from eastern North America, distinctive young pinkish-brown peeling bark.
39 Rh Ascot Brilliant, very old hybrid by Standish, 1861, a good clear vivid red, contrasts well with the planting of yellow rhodos beyond
40 Rh mucronatum A very useful small shrub of dome-shaped habit with white scented flowers in May
41 The bare trunks of Ramster’s trademark rhododendron, Cynthia, make a fantastic sculpture against the background of the lake. Over 100 years old, they will gradually fall over, and layer themselves to create new plants.
42* A fine stand of Western Red Cedar, *Thuja plicata*. Cedarwood garden sheds and greenhouses all come from this rot-resistant tree from America. Its branches droop under the weight of the leaves and layer themselves into the ground, producing in time a ring of trees.
43 Rh Pink Pearl – probably the best-known rhododendron of all time. Waterer, pre-1892. Large soft pink trusses, crimson-brown spots FCC AM
44 Persian Ironwood – *Parrotia persica* – outstanding tree with year-round interest, small red flowers in Spring, wonderful Autumn colour
45 Rh Alice – an old Waterer hybrid. Flowers in a large truss of clear frosty-pink. Very reliable attractive plant. AM
46 Metasequoia glyptostroboides – Dawn Redwood only introduced from China in 1940s, Leaves go tawny pink and gold in Autumn
47 Her’s Maple – *acer grosseri hersii* – a lovely green snakebark maple, our present from the NGS for being open for 60 years
48 Azalea luteum – the popular sweet-scented yellow azalea which flowers throughout the garden. No 21 on the Top 100 list.
49 Sessile oak – *Quercus petraea* – a very fine example of one of our native oak trees in the prime of life, probably 400 years old
50 Liquidambar acalycina, from China. Large three-lobed leaves open bronze-purple. Richly coloured leaves in the autumn
51 Tetracentron sinensis – a charming small tree with red-tinted heart shaped leaves. Very rare. Another Wilson introduction from China
52 Quercus phellos – Willow-leaved oak. An attractive tree from E. USA. Its glossy green willow-like leaves turn yellow and orange in Autumn
53 Rh ‘Fabia’ – attractive late flowering rhododendron, in shades from coral to orange. Hybridised at Bodnant in 1927
54 Cliff Hanger – the sculpture of Pan overlooks the Iris Pond, and a planting of daffodils, hydrangeas, primulas and magnolias
55 Fern garden – a mass of rare and unusual ferns planted in the mossy beds, with a tree fern, species rhododendrons, trilliums and spring bulbs
56 Calico bush – *Kalmia latifolia* – from North America, one of the best June flowering shrubs for acid soil. Flowers like sugar-icing.