

## The LDGA Trip to RHS Garden Hyde Hall on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

It was almost exactly two years to the day since the last time I visited Hyde Hall with the LDGA. Like the last time, the weather was perfect for the visit, with clear-blue skies and autumnal sunshine. As I mentioned previously, the garden can be loosely divided into two parts; the Hilltop Garden adjacent to the old farmhouse, the new restaurant and adjoining gardens and the gardens at the bottom of the hill near the entrance comprising the Cottage Garden, Modern Country Garden and by means of the Birch Grove, the Winter Garden. Between these two parts are vast swathes of grass with a few very long but thin beds. Each of these areas, has something to offer the visitor.



1 *The Herbaceous border at the Hilltop Garden with deep bays displaying different colour palettes.*

The displays in the herbaceous border relied heavily on dahlia and daisy families to provide the colour but the adjacent Rose Garden still had quite a number of specimens to admire, including one named Hyde Hall (centre below).



*Rosa Young Lycidas ('Ausvibrant')*



*Rosa Hyde Hall ('Ausbosky')*



*Rosa Westerland ('Korwest')*

I think I did Hyde Hall a disservice when I remarked that there were few mature trees. Although they don't tower over you, like some of the ones at Kew, there were some interesting specimens. Being autumn, there were several examples of crab apple laden with fruit.



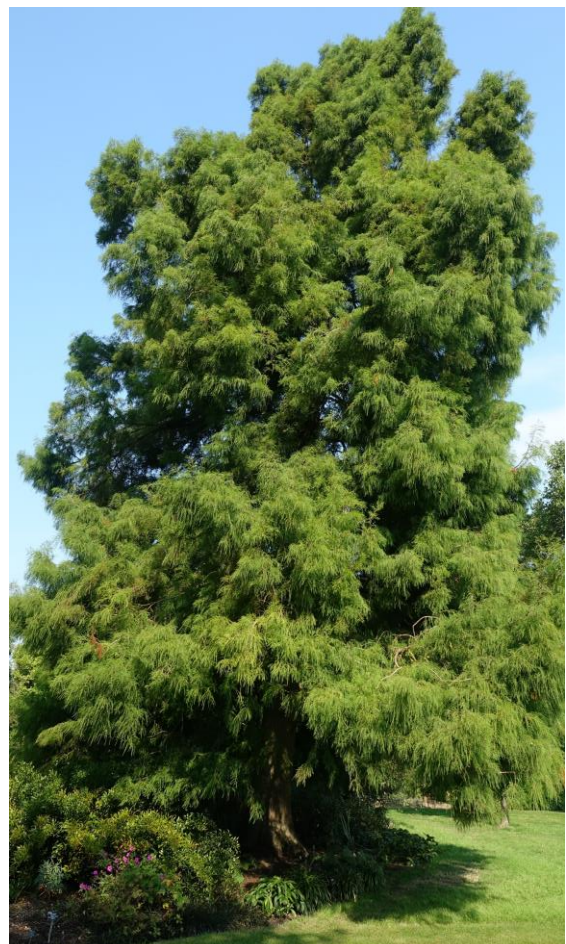
2 *Malus 'Butterball'* laden with golden fruit (see insert for detail of the fruit).

Moving down to the lower pond, we noticed a tree with unusual roots and speculated that it might be one of those trees from the swamps of Louisiana.

In fact, we were right. The tree was *Taxodium distichum*, the baldcypress which is native to southeastern USA and which is the state tree of Louisiana. It is deciduous and the needles can change colour to yellow – red before they're dropped.

It makes quite a beautiful tree and can flourish in all types of soil. One drawback is that it can grow to 40 metres – so it is not for our back gardens.

They're also very long-lived, there is one in the Black River in North Carolina that was dated in 2019 to 605 BCE i.e. over 2,500 years old!



The Global Growth Vegetable Garden is a series of beds surrounding a central greenhouse. The four sections highlight foodplants from Europe & the Middle East, Asia, North & Central America and South America. Since it was autumn, many of the plants had finished but the squashes and pumpkins were supreme, including one called Gills Atlantic Giant.



My tomatoes suffered with leaning canes this year, so I was impressed with the gardener's use of stout posts (see right above) to support horizontal canes on which those supporting the plants themselves were tied. Further down the hill are the Clover Hill Borders, deeply planted with perennials including an array of grasses whose diverse seed-heads were particularly attractive, see below.



There was one plant in the borders (not pictured here, unfortunately) called *Oenothera lidheimeri* 'Whirling butterflies' gaura, that included in this "Prairie planting" really lived up to its name. Unfortunately, whilst there was plenty of birdsong, we saw few real butterflies.

Although the borders were mostly over, there was an area called Floral Fantasia where everything was in bloom. I've selected a few of the stunning plants in the frame below



*Glandularia 'Margaret's Memory'*



*Glandularia 'Endurance Red'*



*Lantana 'Evita Fire'*



*Leucanthemum x superbum 'Real Goldcup'*

Since we last visited, the garden has been enhanced by the addition of some fine sculptures and I noticed many more excellent plants. As always, there's more left out of this account than I have space for. We were very lucky with the weather – it was the last dry day up till the time of writing and a very enjoyable day out.

Mike McConnell – September '24