



# The Scottish Rock Garden Club Forrest Medal Edinburgh 75th Anniversary Show 2014



**Best Plant in the Show  
Ranunculus parnassifolius  
shown by Sam Sutherland**



**Ranunculus parnassifolius** is most often found with white flowers. It is a high alpine found in limestone areas of the Alps, Pyrenees and Picos de Europa. In some areas, notably near Nuria, on the Spanish side of the eastern Pyrenees pink flowering *R. parnassifolius* grow.

Sam's winning plant of *Ranunculus parnassifolius* was grown by him from a seedling given to him by Margaret & Henry Taylor, to whom Sam gives credit in his notes accompanying his exhibit. Two pink forms of *R. parnassifolius* were used; one from the Picos de Europa and the other from Nuria in the Pyrenees. Thus the plant is not a hybrid.

When you look at the flowers you see sumptuous petalled flowers sitting on quite large dull green leaves. Close inspection shows that each flower has only 5 or 6 overlapping petals but

they give the effect of being almost semi-double. These are much superior to common buttercup petals in form. Their delicate pink is reinforced by deeper pink lines radiating from their yellow centre.

**Reginald Farrer** liked the species. He describes the leaves as follows. "...a tuft of stalked, oval-pointed, fat leaves, thick and dark, of glossy solemn green, with deep lines of care engraved upon their face, outlined with woolliness and with a special fringe at their crimsoned edge." As for flowers he continues, "the fleshy and hairy stems bend lowly to the earth beneath their branching burden of three or four most glorious pearly moons of white blossom, sometimes tinged with pink on the reverse and built of very broad, overlapping petals, round and notchless." Sam's plant improved on the master's description by being pin flowered as well as hairy with strong ridges. ~It was beautifully presented on a neutral base of grey stone and gravel recalling the background colour of pictures taken by the Taylors in both Nuria and the Picos.

**Well done Sam for giving a fitting setting to such a beautiful plant!**

## A wee advert prompted by Sam's Forrest Medal success with *Ranunculus parnassifolius*.



**Margaret and Henry Taylor** have written a splendid guide, **The Pyrenees and Picos de Europa**. It has been published by our sister society, of which many of us in The Scottish Rock Garden Club are members, The Alpine Garden Society. The book is the third in their '**Mountain Flower Walks**' series.

It describes in detail 20 areas along the length of the Pyrenees and another 10 areas in the Picos. Their photographs are well reproduced and invite you into each area as they show mountains, plants, and animals as well as food and drink alongside local curiosities. Clear maps for each area will guide visitors to specific locations. Any one who has heard Margaret and Henry talk about either The Picos and/or the Pyrenees will hear their voices in their head while reading the book. The book is more than just an accurate guide to the regions' villages, sites and

flowers, it describes their personal experiences of the places. It is full of 'extra information' e.g.

On page 107 they describe vividly the atmosphere around part of the Tour de France in the Pyrenees. They end with the words [Henry's, I suspect] "we really admire the French total disregard for authority".

Even if you don't plan your visit right away, this book will take you to the mountains. The writing will inform and entertain you.

For some reason only understood by the AGS, the book is only available from the AGS!

Find it on their web site or e.mail: [ags@alpinegardensociety.net](mailto:ags@alpinegardensociety.net)

I bought mine at a discounted price of £17.60 at the joint SRGC / AGS show in Kendal.

Normal price for non-AGS members is £22.

It's hard to understand why it is not offered more widely as it is a book which everyone who enjoys mountains and plants will enjoy and treasure.

