



WEST LODGE PARK
YOUR COUNTRY RETREAT



Beale Arboretum Summer News ~ August 2018

My apologies for the late arrival of these garden notes, which I put down to the extraordinary weather conditions we have been experiencing during the last few weeks.

The majority of my time has been spent **watering the plants**, including some trees in my garden, mulching, in order to try and conserve the moisture in the ground has also been a task which has been shown to be effective, especially when grass mowings are used. Grey water after the washing up is done can also be used to good effect. The task becomes a much larger one when managing literally hundreds of trees on an undulating 35 acre site. Fortunately we possess a **large water bowser**, which enables us to water a good number of trees before refilling. This element of after-planting maintenance is so important if good transplanting success rates are to be maintained.



**The summer flowering
Magnolia grandiflora 'Exmouth'
is wonderful at this time of year**

One of the other ingredients which help us secure good transplanting rates is the amount of **growth preparation** prior to planting. It is a complete waste of time if you plant a tree which costs £25 say, in a hole which costs £5 to prepare. You cannot beat good ground preparation which should include the incorporation of compost created on site before the planting takes place. As the tree slowly becomes established the following spring, and its roots worm their way through the composts, your efforts will be rewarded. Along with so many others in the profession we are going to have to accept that some failures this year are going to be inevitable.



Despite being the rightful proud holders of **two National Collections**, namely the Hornbeams and Taxodiums, with work on the third (Catalpas) just entering the pipeline, we still manage to find room for a wealth of new trees native to regions across the world. They adapt well in our conditions, providing generous amounts of t.l.c. is applied.

The spectacular *Catalpa bignonioides* (Indian Bean Tree) is beautiful in July and August

A somewhat unexpected and very interesting approach was received a few months ago. **Martin Gardner MBE**, a very widely travelled conifer expert from Edinburgh Botanic Garden, came to see us, and as a result we have agreed to let him have an area of land (1 – 2 acres) in which he will plant out conifer stock, mainly from Chile, as part of the **International Conifer Conservation Programme**.

Numerous trees are coming to us from various sources, such as a generous mixture from **Bedgebury Pinetum**. A number of specialist nurseries satisfy some of our requirements, which take some finding at times.

We devote a great deal of attention to ensuring that our trees are accurately and clearly **labelled**. There is nothing more frustrating that finding a tree that you find attractive and would like to procure for your garden to be unlabelled and there is nobody around to ask its name. It happens all too often, but not at West Lodge Park. Treat yourself to a visit, everything is looking fresh after the recent rainfall.



The blue cones of *Pinus wallichiana* (Bhutan pine) are at their best in midsummer



**Paul Akers
Consultant to The Beale Arboretum**