



Tuesday 9th June 2009

Carole and Dave Smith kindly allowed us to visit their garden on the San Jaime urbanisation. It was well attended with 16 members arriving for the opportunity to see a garden that was both different in design and content than all those previously viewed during this first year of the Garden Group.

First of all Dave gave us a potted history of their beautiful garden, which was originally created by the property's previous owner - a Dutchman - who travelled extensively as a professional diver! He had collected plant specimens from all over the world and brought them back for planting in his garden.

Following the introduction by Dave we took pleasure in a look round their garden and then completed the morning with a short meeting to review the year's activities of the Garden group and look forward to planning for the next.

First came Dave's introduction. He described how the Dutchman, although keen to bring back plants for the garden was never here to tend to them!



Indeed, by the time Carole and Dave bought the property, it had stood empty for four years and the garden was completely overgrown! After a year of hacking, cleaning and pruning, the wonderful original design emerged.

Although the plot is flat, it has areas of different levels to add interest, including a dramatic waterfall into a huge pond.



There were, in fact, four ponds originally, but due to the excessive mating calls (24/7) of the frogs and toads, two have been filled in!

After hearing about all of the developments and discoveries that Dave & Carole made with regard to this garden we took the opportunity to stroll around it and see for ourselves the many different, and probably unique to this area, plants that have been cultivated.





There was much to observe and talk about and Norman had already been primed to bring along his two encyclopaedias of plant books in order to help identify some of the species.

There was plenty of opportunity to discuss with Dave the origin of these plants and how we might have the chance of getting some specimens for ourselves! Dave promised to see what he could do.



One of the features of their garden was the different type of rock used in the construction of the paths and borders. They made for a fantastic backdrop of sculpture that added interest and yet naturalness to the garden design.



There was one area of the garden that Dave and Carol were less sure of and this was the area that contained quite a number of oleanders. They thought it needed revamping but were unsure of what plants to replace the oleanders with that would give colour all year round.



We promised to give them some ideas.

After the leisurely walk around the garden, and several attempts to identify some of the exotic plants, we assembled in the naya for a brief meeting to consider suggestions for topics, speakers, visits etc. for the next session in September.



The ideas included a 'Gardeners' Question-time' with Dick and Clodagh Handsome, a visit to the Lavender Garden, speakers on seed planting, propagation, etc, DVDs, and, of course, visits to members' gardens. We will probably also arrange another session on pruning, but with an English speaker this time!

When the meeting finished we all moved on to the nearby restaurant at Golf Ifach and enjoyed an excellent Menu del Dia.



The next meeting of the Garden Group will be on Tuesday, 8th September 2009 – the day after enrolment.