

Over the FENCE

REAL
readers'
gardens!

Thank you all for coming!



**Geoff
Stonebanks**

A seaside garden
in East Sussex
that opens for
charity, featuring sculpture
and reclaimed objects.

That's a wrap for 2026! We closed the garden gate on the second of the month, with over 350 visitors having pre-booked to see the garden. Amazingly, two of that number were Julian Humphrey and his wife Mary - Julian and I were in the same class at secondary school back in the late 1960s and last saw each other when we both went off into the wide world in 1970. Wonderful to catch up after all those years! What's more, they both loved the garden and the inevitable tea and cake.

I have two shrubs of escallonia 'Pink Elle', a real bee magnet. A wonderful hardy fuchsia in the back garden is the ever-reliable South American *F. magellanica*

My old
schoolfriend
visited!



The oleander

with pretty red flowers and long, tapered sepals which can be relied on when other fuchsias don't survive winter. Interestingly, all the experts say it should be grown in a sheltered spot away from cold winter winds; that certainly can't be said of my garden, yet the four shrubs on the east-facing fence have always done really well.

I have a collection of aeoniums and 'Sunburst' makes a great centrepiece in any display. Many of the succulents have done really well with the intense

hot weather we've all had. The container of dahlias has looked resplendent and is a real talking point for visitors. Sadly, intense heat plus strong north winds laid a few *Acanthus mollis* flat, but they still look great! *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Limelight' flowers seemed to emerge much later this year and needed to be kept well watered, but since blooming we've had no wind, so the flowers are pristine and not browned.

We've had an amazing crop of wild plums on the little tree my mother bought me a few years ago and even managed to eat a few before the birds got them.

■ **Read more of Geoff's garden at driftwoodbysea.co.uk or follow both him and the garden on social media.**

We got to eat
a few plums



Dahlias are a
showstopper



Aeoniums
on the patio



My highlight

The stunning
oleander in a pot in
the centre of the plot.