



The gorgeous Brazilian fuchsia

Even in winter, much in the garden looks good

If ever I had any doubts about removing the old pond and replacing it with a new patio, corten steel wall and raised steel pond, they have completely evaporated seeing it now, in the depths of winter. The whole area looks so neat, tidy and pretty. More importantly, it requires virtually no maintenance throughout the year!

The greenhouse, however, needs regular checks in winter to ensure the heater is working and to monitor plants which need watering. One of those is a stunning *Justicia floribunda*, or Brazilian fuchsia. Mine is very floriferous at the moment. *Echeveria 'Red Sea Monster'* is true to its name and wants to grow big! Its flower stems are tall and crowned with red/dark pink blooms on the ends. It's a real favourite of mine.

The beach garden looks amazing for the time of year. The



Euphorbia characias looks amazing



My neat and tidy patio area



Geoff Stonebanks

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

Euphorbia characias looks pretty, even flowerless with frozen leaves. It certainly makes a dramatic feature plant with its long stems clothed in blue-grey foliage, which is handsome all year. It prefers shelter from wind but mine does take a battering but still survives.



A very frozen bird bath!



The greenhouse needs checking regularly in winter

One of the recycled, rusty metal sculptures in the beach garden is a bird bath made from metal cogs with an old bundt cake pan on top to hold the water. The birds love it but it's so hard to keep it from freezing over in the winter.

In the house, I've had great success with a poinsettia. I bought it in December and then I placed it in the lounge out of direct sunlight and watered it only when the compost dried out. Result: it's still almost as good



Echeveria 'Red Sea Monster' is one of my favourites

as the day I bought it, so I'm very pleased. Long may it last!

Read more about Geoff's garden at driftwoodbysea.co.uk.

My highlight

The Brazilian fuchsia in the greenhouse.