

The Berkshire Gardens Trust Logo

When the founding members set up the Berkshire Gardens Trust in 2009, one of the many challenges we faced was how to give it an identity. Central to this was the need to create a logo. The Loddon Lily, *Leucojum aestivum*, seemed to be the obvious choice. My wife and I spent time wandering along the banks of the Loddon and the Thames, searching for just the right clump of flowers to photograph. Eventually I found the perfect clump – and it wasn't by the river, but right in our garden. This is the photograph that I took:



The graceful way that the six flowers hung reminded me of the six unitary authorities that our new garden trust was to represent. Here is how I framed those flowers:



And here is the final result that was accepted by the founding committee as the BGT logo:



Although *Leucojum aestivum* is today accepted as a native plant of the UK, this hasn't always been the case. The first mention of it growing in the wild was by William Curtis in his *Flora Londinensis*, 1799-91. This late mention made people wonder how such an ornamental plant, if it was truly native, could for so long have escaped the prying eyes of earlier botanists.

After it was mentioned by Curtis, references to *Leucojum aestivum* began to multiply – such as that by Claridge Druce in his *Flora of Berkshire*, 1897, in which he mentions its 'great luxuriance and beauty' along the Loddon which resulted in it being called the Loddon Lily in Berkshire. Indeed, there is speculation that the Loddon Lily was deliberately planted along the banks of the Loddon inspired by a 1713 poem by Alexander Pope that celebrated the peace of Utrecht.

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