

PRESS RELEASE

‘THE SEAWILDING GARDEN’ DEBUTS THE OCEAN’S ONLY FLOWERING PLANT AT RHS CHELSEA 2025

For the first time in the show’s history, seagrass will take centre stage in a garden designed by Ryan McMahon for marine restoration charity Seawilding, supported by Project Giving Back



The Seawilding Garden in the All About Plants category, designed by MUSA Landscape Architecture and supported by Project Giving Back

Loch Craignish, 7th January 2025 - For the first time, seagrass the ocean’s only flowering plant with the appearance of an underwater meadow, will take centre stage at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The Seawilding Garden draws inspiration from the vital work of marine restoration charity Seawilding in restoring lost biodiversity to our marine environment. The garden, which is designed by RHS Chelsea newcomer Ryan McMahon of MUSA Landscape Architecture, will highlight the efforts of a remote Scottish community in reversing biodiversity loss in coastal waters, focusing on the restoration of two keystone species: seagrass (*Zostera marina*) and native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) to their sea loch. It is sponsored by grant-giving charity Project Giving Back, with additional funding from The William Grant Foundation.

Ryan McMahon from MUSA Landscape Architecture, said: "I’ve long admired the important work of pioneering marine restoration charity Seawilding, having first learned about their work via social media, so when the opportunity arose to create a show garden for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show supported by Project Giving Back, they were my first choice. As a keen ocean swimmer, with a love for our natural environment, I always assumed seagrass grew in warmer climates. But when I learned through Seawilding that it grows in our coastal seas, I was intrigued. The more I discover about seagrass, the more fascinated I become by the incredible role it plays in our marine ecosystems."

“We are excited to bring marine restoration into the spotlight at RHS Chelsea,” said Danny Renton, Seawilding CEO. “This is not just a garden; it’s a story of how coastal communities can lead the fight to restore biodiversity and combat climate change; it’s also a call to action for people, businesses, and communities to recognise the degraded state of our coastal and marine eco-systems, and to work together to restore ocean health. The garden serves as a symbolic reminder that restoration efforts must extend from land to sea if we are to successfully address the climate and biodiversity crisis.”

The garden's design has been inspired by the landscape found at Loch Craignish, located on the west coast of Scotland and home of Seawilding. A viewing window at the front of the garden offers a glimpse into the underwater world of Loch Craignish, inspiring conversations around marine restoration. The garden planting, inspired by that around Loch Craignish is wild in character with native species that are found in, or should be found around the loch.

Ryan McMahon continued: “We are working with [Rare British Plants](#) to include a number of rare native plants, some only found at one location in Scotland, bringing one of the core objectives of Seawilding to the garden: restoring lost biodiversity. Shells and pebbles from local beaches will be collected by Seawilding’s Youth Group ‘The Seawildlings’ and local primary school children will grow some of the plants in the garden.”

At the front of the garden, a saltwater pool, planted with seagrass, emerges from sandstone rocky outcrops. A stone path leads past a pebble beach area and the saltwater environment, separating it from a freshwater bog area that leads to an informal seating space. Framed by native trees at the rear of the garden, a 2.5m high seagrass sculpture made from recycled scrap metal rises from the landscape and gently flows over the seating rocks, visually connecting the land-based garden to the seagrass at the front.

After the show, the garden will be relocated back to Craignish for community use and maintained by local volunteers. Most of the garden will be relocated to a site in the middle of the village of Ardfern, just behind the primary school, which is called ‘Talamn An Righ’ (The King’s Playground). It’s a green space with a roundhouse that is used for community events. The rest will be dispersed around the peninsula with the sculpture incorporated into a sculpture trail at Lunga.

Hattie Ghai, CEO of Project Giving Back, said: "Project Giving Back is thrilled to support the Seawilding Garden at RHS Chelsea 2025. Biodiversity loss is a critical global challenge, and seagrass, the ocean’s only flowering plant, plays a key role as a habitat for marine life and a vital carbon sink. Sadly, 95% of the UK’s seagrass meadows have vanished due to disturbance, pollution, and disease. Seawilding’s groundbreaking restoration work at Loch Craignish empowers communities to restore coastal waters by reviving seagrass and native oyster beds, delivering lasting, measurable impact. We hope this garden inspires others to help protect and restore our precious marine ecosystems."

Key Highlights of the Garden:

- Seagrass to take centre stage at RHS Chelsea for the first time: The seagrass displayed in the water feature is expected to come from the West Coast of Scotland. The Ocean Conservation Trust at the National Aquarium in Plymouth will assist in its maintenance to ensure it remains in good health for the duration of the show.
- Community-led restoration: Beyond the garden, Seawilding is telling a bigger story about how small, community-driven projects can have global significance. As the UK's first community-led seagrass and native oyster restoration project, Seawilding empowers communities with the knowledge and tools to restore and protect their coastal habitats. By putting restoration in the hands of those most connected to their coastline, Seawilding is not only repairing ecosystems but building a movement that ensures long-term stewardship of our seas and generating a sense of positivity and achievement in a world where negativity carried by the 24-hour news cycle can lead to feelings of apathy and anxiety.
- A call for action: Seawilding is actively seeking support from corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes and environmental trusts to further its mission. As the marine restoration movement grows, new donors are needed to support cutting-edge restoration work that delivers measurable impact.

For more information including high resolution photos go to: www.seawilding.org/chelsea

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About Seawilding

Seawilding, based in Loch Craignish, Argyll and Loch Broom in Wester Ross is the UK's first community-led native oyster and seagrass restoration charity. Established in 2020, their aim is to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises by restoring important marine habitats that store carbon and shelter an abundance of life. They are pioneering practical, low-cost restoration methodologies to empower other coastal communities to carry out similar projects. For further information please go to www.seawilding.org

About seagrass

Seagrass meadows have been described as the most valuable coastal and marine ecosystems on the planet. They are one of the richest habitats for biodiversity, providing an important habitat for commercial fish species as well as many other marine animals, they lock away carbon in the sediment preventing it from being released into the atmosphere, often referred to as 'blue carbon', and protect our coasts from erosion. At least half of the oxygen we breathe is produced by photosynthesis in the ocean. Although covering just 1% of the sea bed, seagrass accounts for 15% of carbon storage in the ocean. To date, Seawilding has planted 400,000 seagrass seeds and translocated 18,000 rhizomes and has ambitions to plant many more acres.

About native oysters

Vast native oyster beds used to surround the UK Coastline and almost all have disappeared owing to human predation, declining water quality and disease. We have forgotten the importance of this humble species. In times gone by they formed vast reefs covering miles of seabed, several meters high. They filtered and cleaned the water and provided vital spawning and nursery grounds for fish and were eaten in their millions by appreciative humans. In the 1900s almost all the UK oyster beds disappeared owing to human greed, pollution and disease. At Loch Craignish and Loch Broom, Seawilding is restoring over one million native oysters to the seabed to bring back this keystone species and enhance biodiversity.

About MUSA Landscape Architecture

MUSA Landscape Architecture, established in 2013 is an award winning garden and landscape design studio based in Falkirk, Scotland. We create low maintenance, plant filled gardens allowing nature to return.

RHS Hampton Court Garden Festival in 2022 – Bronze medal for the Alzheimer's Research UK garden 'Connections'
Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in 2019 – Gold medal for the Beyond Blue garden 'Journey'

Ryan has a Master's degree in Landscape Architecture from Edinburgh College of Art in Scotland and has 2 decades of professional experience designing landscapes and gardens throughout the UK and Australia.

About Project Giving Back

Project Giving Back (PGB) is a unique grant-making charity that provides funding for gardens for good causes at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. PGB was launched in May 2021 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating effects on UK charitable fundraising - effects that have since been exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.

PGB will fund 10 gardens at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 2025 and intends to fund a total of 60 gardens inspired by a range of good causes from 2022 to 2026.

PGB aims to boost UK-based good causes by giving them an opportunity to raise awareness of their work at the high-profile RHS Chelsea Flower Show, as well as supporting the relocation of the gardens to permanent homes after the show where they can continue to benefit the charities and their communities.

Find out more at www.givingback.org.uk.

About The William Grant Foundation

The William Grant Foundation is a non-profit association established to support charitable causes in Scotland. Its work is funded by William Grant and Sons Ltd. www.williamgrantfoundation.org.uk