

# SpecialPerennials at the BBC

In 2014 BBC 2's Gardener's World selected our garden as one of Carol Klein's "Plants and Their People" feature.

Martin told us the story of their day with the Gardener's World team.

"We had really great time with Carol, Ben, Becky. Sam and Ray making us feel relaxed about the whole process.

The team arrived just after 8:30am and spent a little while admiring the garden and deciding on the best places to shoot from.

Each "scene" is filmed several times - firstly so I could "get it right" but also because the camera needed to capture different angles and close-ups.

So I had to remember which flower I pointed to on a wide shoot, so I could do it again in close up.

The most difficult thing for me as a trained "presenter" was not looking at the camera!

Carol really helped me with feedback and praise making it a really enjoyable experience.

We talked about growing heleniums, where they come from, planting combinations and new varieties.

There was quite a lot of technology on view, from the professional cameras, lapel mics and tablet computers to review shots straight after shooting plus the "dolphin" to get the camera to a high vantage point.

Fortunately the weather held and the only interruption came from the occasional plane or helicopter.

The day finished at around 6pm—9 hours filming for 6 minutes of programme.

This wasn't the end of it though. Just before the segment was aired I was asked to pick my top 10 heleniums for the BBC website—never an easy task.



Martin from SpecialPerennials showed Carol around their National Collection of heleniums



The team started the day by planning where shoots would happen and adjusting the outline story for the piece

Our local press were intrigued by the story and we ended up doing 2 photo shoots and had a front page story and centre spread in one paper.

I also received a request to appear on a BBC local radio chat show—I managed to put this off!

But perhaps the best outcome from my TV stardom was the impact on numbers of people coming along to our charity garden opens. We didn't know until the day of screening whether or not our garden open dates would be mentioned—as it was Monty Don encouraged everyone to come along on Sunday—and they did!

Normally we have about 500 visitors spread over 12 days of opening in the summer. On the Sunday after appearing on Gardener's World nearly 600 people descended on our small, plant-packed garden. To this day we don't know how they all fitted in. Thankfully our friend Liz rallied around at short notice to help take the ticket money while we tried to cope with all the visitors wanting information and plants. We raised just short of £4,000 for the NGS charities.

You can see our 6 minutes of fame at [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p025p1g5](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p025p1g5) or search "SpecialPerennials" on youtube.



The "dolphin" took the camera where no camera should go!



Carol and Martin, relaxed between shots by chatting about our garden and plants.