



Hon. President
George Cowgill

The

Newsletter

No.111

July 2021

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Welcome to the (thank goodness it's) summer edition of your Garden Club Newsletter.

Since the urgent email calling for new committee members at the end of March members have quickly stepped in to fill the roles of Chair, Treasurer and Speakers Secretary, allowing us all to breathe a collective sigh of relief.

During April work was begun on staging an annual show this year but amid uncertainty it was concluded in May to postpone the show again owing to the level of uncertainty still remaining around covid restrictions.

Revised Sales Hut opening dates will be in place through the historically quieter months of July and August (**see back page**).

"No-mow-May", an initiative to allow plants in the lawn to flower to increase sources of nectar for bees and insects coincided with, what felt to me, like interminable rainy days. I discovered after the event that I could have counted the flowers and reported results to the Plant Life organisation survey... Whoops. Did anybody else go no-mow? Would you do it again next year? Please let me know!

Happy gardening!

Kevin

Please send items for the Newsletter to

clitheroegcnewsletter@gmail.com

A note from our new Chair, Gordon.

Hello and welcome to this summer newsletter!

I am the new club chairman, having taken over from Tracey Lawton - we thank her and our other leaving committee members for their efforts.

A few words to introduce myself- I am a keen plantsman who is now once again a teacher. I teach primary age children and at the moment share a Year 3 (7-8 year olds) class. I taught abroad in Qatar for 5 years and then in Thailand for a further 3 before moving back to the UK with my wife Catherine. I started and ran my Gordon's Gardens landscaping and garden design business for 4 years but returned to the classroom in 2010. I have three children; Bill aged 13, Eliza 12 and Joseph 8.

I have an allotment on the West View allotments with fruit trees and rhubarb- with which I make masses of rhubarb and ginger jam! I also grow bonsai trees; preparing them to put into their famous small pots- more on this fascinating topic in the future.

It is a great time of year in the garden- seeing the beech trees burst into bud (finally!) and enjoying evening sunshine on the garden is a delight. I received some bird feeders recently and it's been wonderful to observe the birds visit the garden knowing it's for their chicks somewhere in the trees. Now to keep the crows off and stop mice coming for the scraps!



I have the responsibility at my school of being our allotment organiser- 9 classes with a 3 metre x 1 metre raised bed each. This is proving quite the task and reminds me that gardening can be warfare against the predators who enjoy the cabbage leaves, seedlings or their fruits in autumn! Children and staff have had their eyes opened to the difficulties involving netting,

cabbage collars and the companion planting magic that we need to learn to be successful.

“I could have bought them for the money its cost!” I hear them say!

But we know it’s not always about saving money or growing cheaper produce- there are different reasons for different people but mainly it’s because we enjoy our time on our plot. More than ever it feels so, so important to instil both the deferred gratification of gardening and also the skills of planting with our young people.



If any members want to assist with promoting these values then I would encourage you to get in touch with either a young family members’ school or the local primary school and offer your services.

Taking a tray of spare pea or bean plants along with a handful of canes and demonstrating how to plant them will be very well received! So with the last frosts surely passed we can get our tender seedlings into the sunshine and welcome the Lancashire sky juice.

Happy planting!

Gordon Preston

WANTED!

Please email me (or drop in a note when you’re next at the Sale Hut) with your idea or nomination for a plant that you believe is beautiful or you know is useful, or even better both! I’d like to help members share good ideas in the newsletter. A photograph attached to an email is really useful but if you can’t get a picture to me I can always look for an image online that will do the job.

Kevin Miles

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News from the Hut Team



Perhaps the greatest development for years is the purchase of a very classy gazebo or pergola to keep us dry during sales and keeping distance at the same time. It is rumoured that we have been approached by the NHS to use it for a covid testing station. It seemed like a “nice little earner” but it was doomed to failure when it became known that it was only open for 2 hours on Sunday mornings as this is too little availability!

Curious? What does the “classy gazebo” at the club Sales Hut look like? Come on down to Westview and check it out!



Some of us have the feeling that sales have slumped somewhat this year. However, the evidence available shows that we are keeping up with previous years. Compared with 2019 (pre-covid) we have had sales within £100 of the 1st 10 weeks of the season and were closed for 2 of those weeks this year for bank holidays!

We therefore thank members for their loyal support in such difficult times. We continue to sell at “rock bottom” prices but prices are increasing and availability is not as constant as in normal times.

Trevor Mitchell

News from the Hut Team



To help the transition from peat to peat-free compost members can buy at the hut the following products alongside Sylva Peat Free (itself highly commended by the RHS):

- 1) Farnyard Manure (very smelly but very good)*
- 2) Fine grade Topsoil
- 3) Groworganic with chicken manure



** we're told that our supplier is receiving high demand for farmyard manure and stocks may not be repeatable this season*

These 3 products are ideal to bulk-up and improve peat-free compost (which in fact contains feed for 4-6 weeks effectiveness).

Peat-free grow bags are available but I have not obtained any because of expense, a 2-hole bag costs almost as much as the 50 litre bag.

Trevor Mitchell

TOP 10 JOBS FOR JULY FROM THE RHS

This is often one of the hottest months of the year and a great time to sit out and enjoy your garden. Keep plants looking good by regularly dead-heading, and you'll enjoy a longer display of blooms. Make sure you keep new plants well watered, using grey water where possible, and hoe off weeds, which thrive in the sunshine.

RHS Jobs for July

1. Check clematis for signs of clematis wilt.
2. Plan care for houseplants whilst on holiday.
3. Water new plants and tubs if dry but be "water-wise".
4. Deadhead bedding plants and re-flowering perennials to ensure continuous flowering.
5. Pick courgettes before they become marrows.
6. Treat apple scab
7. Clear algae, blanket weeds and debris from ponds and keep water level topped up
8. Order catalogues for next year's spring flowering bulbs
9. Give the lawn a quick acting summer feed especially if not given a spring feed
10. Harvest apricots, peaches and nectarines.

SYMPTOMS OF APPLE SCAB:

- ◇ On leaves: Patches of olive-green spots or blotches appear, which are initially velvety as they release airborne spores, and then darkening. Affected leaves often fall prematurely
- ◇ On twigs: Infections cause blistering and cracking that can provide an entry point for the apple canker pathogen
- ◇ On fruit: Brown or black scabby blotches develop. As the fruit enlarges, these can restrict expansion of the skin, leading to distortion and cracking. Light attacks only blemish the skin and eating quality is hardly affected (though the disease is commercially very serious, because growers cannot easily sell scabby fruit). However, if the fruits crack as a result of scab they become prone to fruit rots and will not store well.

TOP 10 JOBS FOR AUGUST FROM THE RHS

August is usually one of the hottest months of the year - making watering essential. Try to use grey water wherever possible, especially as water butts may be running low if it has been a dry summer. August is traditionally holiday-time, so you might need to enlist the help of friends and family to look after the garden while you are away. When you are at home, take the time to prune Wisteria and summer-flowering shrubs such as lavender once they've finished flowering.

RHS Jobs for August

1. Prune wisteria
2. Don't delay pruning summer fruits trained in restricted forms
3. Deadhead flowering plants regularly
4. Watering! Particularly container plants and using recycled grey water or stored rainwater where possible.
5. Collect seed from garden plants
6. Harvest sweetcorn and other vegetables as they come ready
7. Continue cutting out old fruited canes on raspberries
8. Lift and pot up rooted strawberry runners
9. Keep ponds and water features topped up



TOP 10 JOBS FOR SEPTEMBER FROM THE RHS

September is generally a cooler, gustier month than August and the days are noticeably shorter. While there's not as much to do in the ornamental garden at this time of the year, if you have a fruit or vegetable patch, you'll be busy reaping the rewards of harvest. It's also time to get out and start planting spring-flowering bulbs for next year and you can collect seeds for next summer's colour too. Make the most of the remaining warmth while you can!

RHS Jobs for September

1. Divide herbaceous perennials
2. Pick autumn raspberries
3. Collect and sow seed from hardy annuals and perennials
4. Dig up remaining potatoes before slug damage spoils them
5. Net ponds before leaf fall gets underway
6. Keep up with watering of new plants using rain or grey water if possible
7. Start to reduce frequency of watering house plants
8. Clean out greenhouses and cold frames ready for autumn use
9. Net leafy vegetables with bird-proof netting
10. Plant spring flowering bulbs





Here's another little plant that I find both useful and beautiful in the garden and I have to thank Mary Alty, our recently retired Social Secretary for introducing me to it. Some years ago when we were neighbours on the Hayhurst Street allotments I was complaining that I seemed to have a lot of aphids on my blackcurrant bushes. "Why don't you give this a go," said Mary, "it attracts hover flies and they'll keep the pests down," and she duly lobbed a bunch of green stuff over the fence.

The plant turned out to be *Limnanthes* more commonly known as **Poached Egg Plant** and it's been with me ever since. It's happy in poorly drained clay soil, needs no maintenance and self-seeds every year. It has very pretty feathery green foliage and in late spring produces the white flowers with yellow centres that give it its common name. Once its flowering period is over I usually rake it up and put it in the compost and often it will oblige with a second later growth.

And hoverflies love it, as do bees, so that on a warm day in late spring the whole plant is alive with the gentle murmur of buzzing insects.



You can grow it from seed or as Mary did for me – beg a plant from an obliging neighbour.

Christine Fawcett

Apple Dessert Cake



Unfortunately I haven't been able to find the time to make this cake before finishing the newsletter so there is not an accompanying photo of my own haphazard baking efforts to accompany this recipe which was kindly sent to me by Fran. It is enough to inspire me to get baking on the weekend though. It might go nicely with icecream once the weather turns back to summer sunshine again.....Kevin

Method

Heat the oven to 160°C /140 °C (fan) or gas mark 3 and lightly grease the tin.

Measure the flour, baking powder, sugar, eggs, almond extract and melted butter into a bowl. Mix well until blended then beat for a minute.

Spread half this mixture in the prepared tin. Lay the slices of apple on top of the mixture in the tin, piling mostly towards the centre.

Using 2 dessert spoons roughly spoon the remaining mixture over the apples. This is an awkward thing to do but just make sure that the mixture covers the centre well as it will spread out in the oven.

Sprinkle with the almonds.

Bake in the oven for between 1hr 15 min to 1 hr 30 min until golden and coming away from the sides.

Ingredients

225g self-raising flour

1 level tsp baking powder

225g caster sugar

2 large eggs

1/2 tsp almond extract

150g melted butter

250g cooking apples, peeled and cored and thickly sliced

25g flaked almonds

Deep 20cm loose bottomed cake tin

I wanted to share this recipe as I think it is easy, peasy and soooo delicious! Go on, give it a try! You won't regret it.

Fran Hocken

Rhubarb & Orange Cake Recipe



I've always liked Rhubarb – not particularly to eat but because I've always found it a very forgiving plant – easy to grow and generally undemanding. This year mine got frost-damaged, something I've never known happen before, and for a while it looked very sorry for itself but it's bounced back and now looks stronger than ever. As an alternative to rhubarb crumble try this – it can be eaten as a pudding or a very moist and delicious cake.

Method

Preheat the oven to 190C, gas mark 5. Grease a round 23cm springform cake tin and line its base with baking parchment. Place the rhubarb in a bowl and cover with 50g of the sugar. Leave for 30mins while you prepare the rest of the cake.

Beat the remaining sugar and butter together then whisk in the eggs. Using a metal spoon gently fold in the flour, baking powder and ground almonds and then stir in the orange zest and juice.

Stir in the rhubarb and sugary juices and spoon into the prepared tin. Place on a baking tray. Sprinkle over the flaked almonds and bake for 25 mins.

Reduce the temperature to 180C, gas mark 4 and cook for a further 20-25 mins. or until firm. Allow to cool in the tin for 10 mins.

Serve warm or cold with cream or custard.

Ingredients

- 400g Rhubarb trimmed and cut into 2cm pieces
- 200g golden caster sugar
- 150g butter softened
- 2 medium eggs lightly beaten
- 75g self-raising flour
- ½ tspn. Baking powder
- 100g ground almonds
- Grated zest of 1 small orange + 2 tbsp juice
- 25g flaked almonds

NB: When I first tried this recipe I forgot to use the baking tray and the mixture dropped through the tin and made a mess in the oven. Make sure the lining parchment comes slightly up the sides of the tin and don't forget the tray!

Christine Fawcett

PLEASE NOTE!
REVISED SALES HUT
SUMMER OPENING
DATES

As sales from the hut have largely followed historical patterns we anticipate lower footfall of members at the hut during July and August.

Opening during July & August alternate Sundays:

OPEN: July 11th July 25th

OPEN: August 8th August 22nd

OPEN: each Sunday in September

Closed after Sunday 26th September until Spring 2022.

Lesley Taylor



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