

Newsletter - May 2023



Letter from the Chair

Hello Members and Friends

May is here at last! All we need now is the weather that it promises.

I always look forward to the tree peonies in my garden early this month. In my opinion, there's nothing to match their extraordinary massive blooms, almost looking as if they are not living plants, but made of ruffled silk.

This year, some of mine had two days of splendour and then got drenched; but they were still wonderful.

Later in the month, I am off to the Chelsea Flower Show - something I've been doing for over 30 years without a break, except for COVID. Recently the show was held in the Autumn, and had a very different feel. Whilst it was interesting to see a new range plants that one would not normally see at Chelsea, overall I'm very glad that we're back to the Spring display of peonies, irises, columbines and other favourite flowers

Anyway, every year I find lots of inspiration from the ideas of the creative designers that put together the gardens; and I'll look forward to sharing them with my fellow gardeners this year.

Alison



Notes for your diary



Our Annual Plant Sale will be on **Saturday 3rd June** 10.00-12.00 at Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall.

Please remember to sow a few extra rows of seed, or divide up some established plants from your garden to contribute to the sale.

It's such an important source of income for the Club, and enables us to hire the best speakers for you.

If you have an spare small pots, please bring them along, we are always short of them.



Our Grand Day Out will be on **Tuesday 20th June**, and we will be going to the wonderful Hestercombe Gardens in Somerset. See later in the newsletter for details.



Garden events from our previous speakers

Roger Lloyd's Garden at Highfield Farm, Goytre, NP4 0AA



Highfield Farm will be open under the NGS scheme from 11.00 until 4.00 on Sundays 18th June, 16th July, 13th August and 10th Sept.



The Gardening Club Social for this year will be returning to Highfield Farm. We'll be able to see the new garden developments that Roger told us about, and enjoy some cheese and wine. The date is Tuesday 4th July. The cost is £8 per person for admission and a tour of the garden. Bring along your own tipples of choice; we'll bring the cheese.

***Helen Picton's Garden at The Picton Garden,
Old Court Nurseries, Colwall, WR13 6QE***



The Picton Garden will be open under the NGS scheme from 11.00 until 5.00 on Saturdays 13th May, 10th June, 8th July, 16th August, 13th September and 16th October.



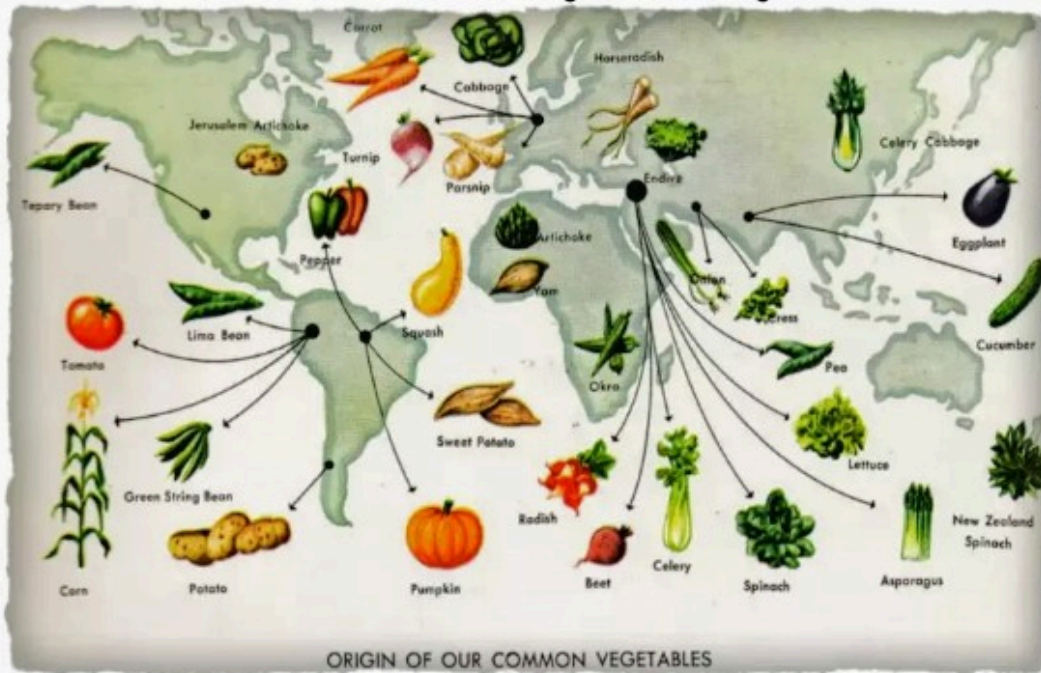
We are planning a Gardening Club afternoon visit to the Picton Garden in September to see their national collection of asters in full bloom.



VEGETABLE LEGENDS



Join us & gardening guru Marion Stainton
for a talk about vegetable legends!



An alternative look at the 'common or garden' vegetables that we know, grow and love to eat! The talk looks at their origins and some history or legends which surround them and at some of the perhaps weird and wonderful alternative uses some have been put to.

A FUN night to raise funds for the Yorkley Village Garden!

There will also be a RAFFLE & CAKE!!

**£5 Entry
£1 per Raffle Ticket**

**Saturday 20th May
19:30 - 21:00
at the Yorkley Community Centre**

Tickets available on the door, or in advance from Yorkley Post Office.

Cwm Farm - Open Garden for NGS

17th June 2023



Nestled in the Usk Valley, the garden of this C16 smallholding has been created over the last 8 yrs.

Set in 2 acres, perennial borders and wildflower areas are contrasted against structural elements of topiary and hedging.

A large pond and stream is surrounded by a wild meadow with mown paths and a Victorian style greenhouse stands within a vegetable garden.

Check NGS website for latest information.

Sat 17 June (11-5). Combined adm with Long Owl Barn £8, Children free. Home-made teas. Times:11:00 to 17:00.

Cwm Farm, Pontypool, Gwent NP4 0TB

Our Gardening Club Grand Day Out!

This year's summer visit is to Hestercombe Gardens on Tuesday 20th June.



Experience 50 acres of quintessential Somerset gardens, near Taunton. Spanning three centuries of garden design, Hestercombe Gardens offer a unique combination and varied experience of the Georgian Landscape Garden (designed 1750s), the Victorian Shrubbery and the Edwardian Formal Gardens (early 1900s).

We shall be travelling by air-conditioned coach, leaving Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall at 9.00am and departing from Hestercombe at 3.45pm.

Lunch is available in the restaurant, The Stables, which enjoys table service. Tables can be booked by calling 01823 414197 between 10am - 5:00pm.

A light lunch is available in the café, Caffè & Gelato. (Lunch is not included in the visit price).

Hestercombe is now a fully cashless venue - only payments by debit or credit card, contactless, Apple Pay and Google Pay are accepted.

Mobility access

Hestercombe have a four wheel All-Terrain 'Tramper' mobility scooter available for hire at £5 per two hour slot. Please pre-book this in advance by calling 01823 413923 (payment is required to secure booking). The tramper scheme is operated by Countryside Mobility, and they require any non-members of the scheme to join for a one-off fee of £2.50.

There are a number of wheelchairs available to use for free, and these are suitable for the smoother paths only.

For more information about the garden see the website at www.hestercombe.com

Tickets cost £30 for members and £35 for non members

They must be purchased in advance from the Gardening Club.

Please pay by bank transfer to:

Bank account name : Grosmont and District Gardening Club

Sort code : 30 99 50

Account number : 34619268

When making a bank transfer please your full name on the reference, and notify our treasurer Barbara at barbararees549@btinternet.com

If you wish to pay by cheque or cash, then please email Barbara to make arrangements.



Helen Picton's Clematis list

We all really enjoyed Helen's talk on clematis at our last meeting, but the variety of plants she talked about was so comprehensive that it was hard to jot it all down.

So here is a list, kindly provided by Helen.

Favourites



Clematis 'Ernest Markham'



Clematis 'Alice Fisk'



Clematis 'White Columbine'



Clematis 'Ice Queen'



Clematis 'Crystal Fountain'

Clematis cirrhosa - winter flowering



C. cirrhosa var. Balearics



C. Cirrhosa 'Freckles'



C. cirrhosa 'Jingle Bells'



C. cirrhosa 'Wisley Cream'



C. Cirrhosa 'Lansdowne Gem'



Clematis armandii



Clematis alpina
'Pamela Jackman'

Clematis macropetala



C. macropetala
- 'Maidwell'



C. macropetala
Hall 'Markham's Pink'



C. macropetala
'Wesselton'

Clematis koreana



C. koreana
'Blue Eclipse'



C. koreana
'Broughton Bride'



Clematis 'Pixie'



Clematis cartmanii

Clematis montana



C. Montana var. rubens



C. montana 'Freda'



C. montana var.
Wilsonii



C. montana
'Marjorie'



C. montana 'Broughton
Star'

Clematis chrysocoma - stripey large flowered



C. chrysocoma
'Nelly Moser'



C. chrysocoma
'Souvenir du Capitaine
Thuilleaux'



C. chrysocoma
'Dr. Ruppel'

Clematis chrysocoma - blue large flowered



C. chrysocoma
'Mrs Cholmondeley'



C. chrysocoma
'Lasurstern'

Clematis chrysocoma - pink large flowered



C. chrysocoma 'Asao'



C. chrysocoma 'Dawn'



C. chrysocoma
'Duchess of
Edinburgh'



C. chrysocoma
'Silver Moon'



C. chrysocoma
'Fair Rosamond'.



C. chrysocoma
'Westerplatte'

Late large flowered (Hard Prune)



Clematis 'Perle d'Azur'



Clematis 'Prince
Charles'



Clematis x Jackmanii



Clematis 'Polish
Spirit'



Clematis Romantika'

Herbaceous clematis



Clematis integrifolia



Clematis recta

Late Flowering



Clematis tangutica
'Bill MacKenzie'



Clematis texensis



Clematis x trinernata 'Rubromarginata'

Clematis viticella



C. viticella
'Venosa Violacea'



C. viticella
'Betty Corning'



C. viticella
Kermesina



C. viticella
'Alba Luxurians'



C. viticella
'Mary Rose'



C. viticella Huldine

A Fritillary Surprise

by *Barbara Rees*



What is a fritillary surprise ?

Read on...

Last year I decided to try the “no-mow” approach to lawn care as I am sure some of you have. It was a combination of boredom with mowing and a fancy to see a wildflower meadow outside my window that drove me to it.

I mowed artistic shapes (of course they weren't really, I have as much artistry as a caravan site) - round the edges so people would know I hadn't lost my grip (“oo it's all too much for her now”) and left it.

After 3 months all that had grown was lots of rough grass , dandelions, daisies and plenty of weeds; although the birds certainly appreciated it, they were continually snuffling around in it.

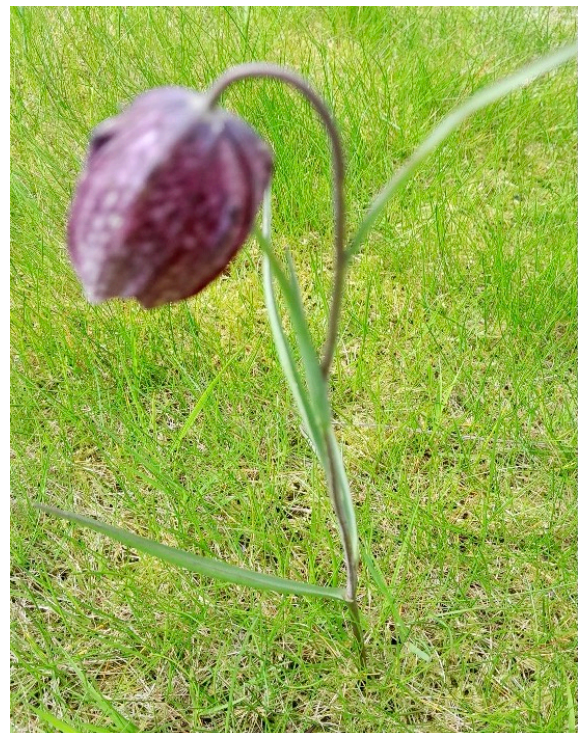
Eventually I got fed up looking at it and mowed it, what a chore that was!

I thought that was me and “no-mow” done with. But lo! in March this year

I SAW TO MY DELIGHT
A WONDROUS SIGHT
A FRITILLARY !!

I was ecstatic. I had never planted one anywhere in the garden yet here it was.
HOW ??

I had a lovely display of tulips, daffs, etc but this little thing sent me into raptures and gave me almost as much pleasure as the rest of the garden. So DO try “no-mow” it's great for nature and who knows what might pop up....



Auntie Rosemary and Uncle Basil's Problem Corner



Your Garden Conundrums: Rosemary and Basil to the Rescue !

Rosemary and Basil between them have decades of gardening experience and we are delighted they have agreed to help our Gardening Club by looking at our readers' gardening queries



My garden is suffering from rabbit attack!

Can you give me any tips to protect my plants? Are there some plants that rabbits don't eat, and is there any humane way to deter them?




Unfortunately for you, but fortunately for the rabbits, they have a fairly varied diet - that is, they'll eat almost anything!


Even prickly shrubs like berberis, roses and pyracantha are not safe as they will have a go at the young growth - unless it is out of reach.

There are some plants they are less fond of. Any with tough, leathery leaves - such as mahonia, elaeagnus, aucuba, osmanthus, acanthus, eryngium, phormium - or silvery foliage like lavender and artemisia and any with a lemon scent, are less prone to attack.

You could try buying a movement operated animal deterrent - but this is probably not ideal if you have pets!

But the only foolproof method is to fence off the garden with wire netting ensuring at least 38cm (15in) is below ground level and angled away from the garden.

 *My roses are terribly afflicted by black spot and rust, yet I have sprayed them a couple of times with a recommended fungicide. What's going wrong?*

 One of the very few disadvantages of living in our beautiful rural area is that our roses are more prone to black spot than those in town gardens. This is because the sulphur in the air from traffic and other pollution kills the spores. Having said that, I know which I would prefer!

If you want to use sprays (personally I don't), then you need to do it in late winter and early spring, before the spores develop. Once it's got a grip, then you are fighting a losing battle. Rose Clear is a good product to use. When pruning, cut back stems by half to remove diseased wood, then spray thoroughly.

Pick up and destroy affected leaves, especially in the autumn, as the spores will overwinter in the soil. Whatever you do, **don't** put them on the compost heap.

My personal preference is to grow disease resistant roses. This by no means limits your choice, as breeding programmes have been very effective in recent years in creating robust varieties.

Reputable rose companies, such as the wonderful David Austin, will state in their catalogues which roses are particularly healthy - and any rose seller will be happy to give you advice on what to buy.



I've tried for a few years grow onions from sets. Some years I get a very good crop but sometimes it is a total failure. The sets start growing and then come to a stop and make no progress at all and I harvest the same sized onions that I planted! What am I doing wrong?



The main problem with onions not performing are:

- poor soil preparation - make sure that you've dug the bed to a crumbly consistency and add compost ;
- planting too early, which checks growth - plant no earlier than mid March;
- the soil being too dry - incorporate plenty of organic matter when preparing the bed;
- plants not being adequately watered through dry spells;
- and diseases such as onion mildew - you can minimise this by planting in an open sunny spot, and not placing the sets too close together.

Also planting good quality sets helps - always buy from respectable firms such as Unwins and Marshalls.

I'm sure by checking on the above growing conditions and making alterations, you'll improve your onions this year.

It's over to you now Gardening Club members. Let us know your knotty garden problems, and Rosemary and Basil will do their best to help out. Send your conundrums to Alison at alison.marlborough@btinternet.com

Jobs to do in May



Prune early spring shrubs, such as Ribes and Kerria, after flowering. Remove one in three stems at the base, and cut back flowered stems to strong buds



Harvest asparagus



Sow winter veg



Lift and divide daffodils and other spring flowering bulbs



Look out for lily beetles, pick off and destroy



Harden off tender plants gradually over 2 weeks, ready for planting out



Net strawberry plants before the birds get them



Water newly planted trees and shrubs, even if there has been rain



Keep on top of the weeds!



Committee Members for 2023

Sarah Bell

Jenny Bond

Paula Crawford

Chrissy Collingwood

Jan Eastment

Barbara Rees

Gilli Urch

Christine Williams

Charlotte Wilson

Alison Ward (Chair)

If you have any questions or ideas, if for any reason you no longer want to receive our monthly newsletter, or if there's anything you'd like included in future editions, then please email

alison.marlborough@btinternet.com

or phone Alison on 07542 800815