

CSGGA Newsletter

July 2019



RHS Affiliated Membership Number: 10570237

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Evening visit to Lindengate

Tom Cole, who lectures at Writtle University College, is a popular speaker and we were delighted to hear from him again. Tom emphasised that green gardening should focus on ecology, sustainability, horticulture and recycling.

Water features are attractive, but make sure they have at least one gently sloping side to allow wildlife in and out. Marginal plants are needed to encourage diversity, such as water iris, *Nymphaea pygmaea*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Myosotis* and *Zantedeschia*. Include some floating aquatics, such as water lilies, to give hiding places and shade, and underwater aquatics for aeration. Beware of skunk cabbage - the name says it all! Boggy areas near ponds, where the area is permanently damp but not waterlogged, can be planted with *Astilbe*, *Rodgersia pinnata*, iris and *Ligularia*, but the last has a tendency to collapse if too dry. Only plant *Gunnera* if you have plenty of space.

Pollinators are the gardener's friends so plant to attract them. Chives are excellent, and make good companion plants for carrots and parsnips to deter carrot fly. Encourage native ladybirds with open centred flowers such as

Calendula, which can be companion planted in fruit areas. Ladybird larvae are voracious and make short work of aphids, as do the larvae of Hoverflies and Lacewings. *Limnanthes* (poached egg plant) is useful too but can spread wildly. *Tagetes* are great in vegetable gardens, and will keep flowering if regularly dead headed.



Pests are a problem, but can be dealt with in a green way. Blue methaldehyde slug pellets will not be on sale after 2020, so a trip round the garden in the evening with a bucket and a pair of scissors is a permanent solution, or slug traps for the more squeamish. The dreaded box moth caterpillar is now in the village, and will produce 4 generations in a year so constant treatment is required. Pick off and dispose of the green caterpillars if you spot them. Organic sprays or pyrethrum must go directly onto the pest to be effective, and these beasties roll themselves in several leaves to can be hard to get at. If all else fails and you have to remove the plant, and then burn it. *Euonymus*, *Taxus buccata*, *Pittosporum* and *Lonicera nitida* are alternatives. Pheromone traps are preventative and effective. Only 1 trap is needed per quarter acre, placed in a tree, and last about 4-6 weeks but need to be replaced. Basil is good in gardens and will deter midges. Barriers are useful ways to stop pests. Recycle wooden frames with netting to keep pigeons away, and if the mesh is small then cabbage whites cannot get in. Check plants regularly for disease, and plant at the correct spacing intervals as crowded plants are more susceptible,



and allow good air circulation. Mulch round veg to retain moisture. Recycle plastic sheeting as a vertical barrier to carrot fly, as they don't go above 18 inches. Spring onions and chives will help disguise the smell of tasty veg from pests.

Watering should ideally be done in the evening, but that is nice for slugs and snails too. Tomatoes need water twice or three times daily. Cut the bottoms off plastic drinks bottles and push them neck first into the soil and water into these to keep roots moist. Make use of rainwater butts and barrels and rain diverters to collect water for plants, especially orchids and ericaceous plants. Water can be harvested from sheds and polytunnels too.

Mulching is essential, applying a good 4 – 6 inches as summers are warmer now. Apply mulch when it is wet, and collect leaf mould which decomposes quickly but is not long lasting. Compost waste as much as possible, but don't overdo the grass clippings. It is best to place these in thin layers with other organic material or the compost will become slimy. Green manure can be grown and then dug in to enrich the soil. Phacelia keeps down weeds, and clover and legumes do the same job. Buckwheat and red clover are alternatives.

Liquid manures can be made from comfrey plants steeped in water, but it is very pongy! Nettles can do the same job and smell less awful.

Tom suggested trying a green roof of sedum. However it does need maintenance, filling gaps and removing grass. He gave us some excellent ideas that we can take and use effectively in our own gardens. Certainly his pictures of the healthy and vibrant growth at Writtle showed what can be done with a little lateral thinking. We look forward to seeing him again.

Jan Still

Jan has been scribbling notes at the back of the hall for at least 10 years to produced the meeting reports for our newsletter but has now decided to hand over to someone else. Thank you, Jan for your amusing and detailed reminders of what we should have heard but might have missed!

Monthly Cup

Alan Clark was our winner for July, with a beautiful display of dahlias – a sign of things to come for the Village Show! (We really must start photographing the winning entries!)

M's Action Diary for July

- Some varieties of penstemon are not fully hardy, so take softwood cuttings.
- Lavenders require trimming so as to maintain shape. Never prune back into old wood, as lavender will not produce new shoots from woody stems. This also applies to rock roses which need to be cut back by about a 1/3 to remove spent flowers.
- Plant autumn flowering bulbs such as colchicums and sternbergias as soon as they are available.
- Lilly beetle are still around, so seek and destroy!
- Water trees and shrubs planted in the last 18 months – very important in view of the dry spell we are experiencing at present (Is Chalfont St Giles a rain free village?)
- Remove flowering stems of alchemilla at their base; if leaves look tatty chop back the whole plant to enable new foliage to grow before the end of the summer.



Next Meeting

Container Gardening Demonstration – Andrew Mikolajski

Thursday 8th August 2019 8.00 pm

A practical demonstration during which Andrew shares the key lessons outlined in his book "Container Gardening". For those who want something more manageable and easy to reach; for those who see the potential for the exciting visual effects of varied pots and containers - the benefits are endless.

<http://www.andrewmikolajski.com/about-me/>

www.csgga.org

Holiday 2020

The Gardens of Essex and Suffolk

5 days Sunday 7th to Thursday 11th June 2020

We are again using the services of Tailored Travel to book our holiday to Essex and Suffolk next year. Travelling by executive coach, we will stay four nights on half board basis at the 4* Stoke by Nayland Hotel www.stokebynayland.com on the outskirts of Leavenheath.



The hotel is located in a countryside setting in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 10 miles from the centre of Colchester. Facilities at the hotel include a restaurant, bar, spa with swimming pool, gymnasium, sauna, steam room and a Jacuzzi and two golf courses! All rooms are en suite and feature television, telephone, hairdryer. A double room will cost £599.00 per person, for single occupants there is an additional £99.00 supplement. Lunches, holiday insurance and gratuities are also not included.

We have agreed a full programme of excursions and the cost of the holiday includes entry to all the gardens, except Ickworth (which will be free to National Trust members) and the services of a blue badge guide for 3 days. We will be visiting:

[Wyken Hall Gardens & Vineyard](#)

Southwold

[Layer Marney Tower – guided tour](#)

[Gainsbrough's House and Gardens](#)

[Marks Hall Gardens & Arboretum](#)

[Ickworth House \(National Trust\)](#)

[Adnams Brewery](#) (not inc)

Colchester

Lavenham

[Gibberd Gardens](#)

Ipswich – guided tour

[Green Island Gardens](#)

[Helmington Hall Gardens](#)

The full details of the holiday can be found on our website or at Tailored Travel www.tailored-travel.co.uk and quote csgg201. **No deposits are due until the end of the year but if you are interested in joining us, please contact Briony – details on last page.**

Wild flowers blooming in Chalfont St Giles

You may have noticed the poppies at the Pheasant roundabout and the wild flowers planted along the Misborne River path adjacent to Stone Meadow. I believe this is thanks are due to the Parish Council for adding a little extra colour giving enjoyment to both humans and our local wildlife. If you would like to see more areas of the country growing wildflowers, the charity, Plantlife, has created an open letter to UK councils to better manage road verges for wildflowers. They want to transform the entire road network. Apparently there are nearly 500,000 kilometres of rural road verge in the UK, equal to half of the remaining flower-rich grasslands and meadows: their potential is enormous. To sign the open letter asking local councils to consider adopting some basic principles to bring benefits for wildlife and for future generations click on this link <https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/#sign-the-letter>



Chalfont St Peter Garden Club – Hut and Show

Unfortunately, Chalfont St Peter Garden Club have had to withdraw their offer for our members to buy gardening products from their Garden Hut. Apparently they have stirred up a bit of a hornet's nest by asking Inland Revenue to confirm that the arrangement would be permissible under trading and VAT rules.

The CSP Garden Club Summer Show is being held on Saturday 17th August. For details see https://www.gardenclub.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Show_Schedule2019_v4.pdf

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Outing to Hyde Hall Tuesday, 20th August



We will spend the day at RHS Garden Hyde Hall which is considered one of the finest gardens in the East of England. Hyde Hall is located amongst rolling hills with fantastic panoramic views. This 360-acre estate is constantly evolving as the garden team strive to retain the original intimacy and charm of this horticultural gem, while at the same time aiming to restore much of the estate to its former rural glory, including historic hedgerows and woodlands.

The cost for this outing will be **£19.00 for members** (or £24.00 for guests and non-members) which covers, entrance to gardens, garden tour, coach and driver's gratuity.

- Please bring a picnic lunch or visit one of the restaurants.
- Departing Chalfont St Giles Village Green at 09.15.
- Departing Hyde Hall at approximately 16.00.

Please use the booking form attached to this newsletter to reserve a place or contact Ellie on 01494 875646

Carnivorous Plant Show at Wisley 20-21 July 2019

Those of you who attend the meetings will be aware of Caroline Jackson's love of the carnivorous plant – she regularly enters one into the monthly cup. If you would like to find out what she sees in these fascinating plants why not visit Carnivorous Plant Society Show. There will be talks on the planting, care and use of these plants in the garden and demonstrations on how to propagate them yourself. Visitors will find unusual plants and books for sale from members of the Carnivorous Plant Society and Sarracenia Nurseries as well as friendly experts on hand for advice and questions.

Your Committee

Chairman and Membership Secretary:

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Committee Members:

Jacqui Greenham	01494 870752
Caroline Jackson	01494 876685
Ravi Kudhail	01494 874709
Eleanor O'Connor	01494 875646

New Committee members are always welcome. We are a friendly bunch! Please contact a committee member if you're interested in joining us.

Dates for the Diary

Visit to Kew

We are planning a visit to Kew to see the Christmas lights on **Wednesday 4th December**. We will also visit Osterley House for their winter exhibition. Full details and costs will be published once they have been finalised.

CSG Village Show

The Village Show is being held on Saturday 7th September. It is one of the highlights of the village calendar and enjoyed by so many. The Gardens Association manages the Horticultural Competitions and we always need help! If you can spare some time on the day, please put your name down at the next meeting or contact Briony.