



Grayshott Gardeners Newsletter August 2023

From The Chair

Dear Members

Congratulations to our Show Committee who excelled again with our Summer Show. Also, with the bonus of a successful Plant Sale. Thank you to all those who entered to create the displays.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 9th of August when we learn how to beat the bugs!

Best wishes
JOHN

Summer Show

Super Show – thank you all very much!
What a wet week! Despite all of the rain that poured down just before the Summer Show, our entrants managed to gather some excellent exhibits that impressed the judges very much indeed. In all, we had 257 entries, which was a massive effort by everyone. Thank you again!



In the afternoon, lots of people came to view the show, sample home-made cakes with a cuppa, and maybe buy a raffle ticket and a plant or two. Visitor feedback was very positive, everyone enjoyed themselves – roll on Spring!

The award winners were:

Home Produce Cup	Karen Cozens
Floral Arrangement Trophy	Gill Purkiss
Photography Prize	Sue Erler
Juniors Prizes/Rosettes	No entries
Mike Hallt Cup	Dick Smith
Davies Rose Cup	Lois Karayianni
Smith Cup	Lynne Callender
Davies Tankard	Andy Karayianni
Novice Cup	Karen Cozens
Littlejohn Rose Bowl	Andy Karayianni
Banksian Medal	Andy Karayianni
Best in Show Plate	Anne Noyce



More pictures will shortly be available on our website
www.grayshottgardeners.net

Plant of the Month

The Opium Poppy - *Papaver somniferum*

I did not plant it in our garden. Honest! I believe it came in from the garden next door. The owner at the time was a retired vicar!



The Opium Poppy is the one from which the latex in a cut seed head is harvested like rubber and later refined and modified to produce heroin and cocaine. The seeds are used to sprinkle onto loaves of bread!



The plant is a native of the East Mediterranean but is now naturalised throughout Europe and Asia. In this country it is a handsome flowering annual, easily grown from seed in most soils.

In Afghanistan, where two thirds of the opium comes from, it is produced on farms. Recently the Taliban has been destroying the poppies, but there is little else for the farmers to plant to bring in the same income as that from opium.



Grown as an annual garden plant here, it has attractive grey green glaucous leaves, a pale mauve flower with four petals and dark mauve/purple internal markings. The fruit is a hairless capsule producing many viable seeds.



Unless carefully controlled it can become invasive, but with careful selection and weeding the opium poppy is a useful and attractive early summer addition to the Grayshott border.



July Meeting

'All Muck and Magic'

The answer lies in the soil
by Geoff Hodge

In July we learned all about our soil – including how to care for it and how to improve it. Geoff Hodge gave us a very entertaining lecture which unlocked some of the science behind the topic, and gave us a real insight into what is going on with our muck.

Geoff started by underlining how important a plant's roots are to its health and well-being. Healthy plants show much more resistance to pests and diseases – and with many pesticides now withdrawn from home use, it is important to grow plants as well as we can so they can fight off problems themselves.

Geoff took us through examples of the wide array of fertilisers available on the market. We now know how to use liquid, granular and slow release feeds, what to look for in an N:P:K ratio, and the dangers of incorrect feeding.

It's a complicated topic, but Grayshott Gardeners are now armed with a little more knowledge that should help us successfully navigate the Garden Centre shelves (and keep our President's pension in fine fettle).



More details and pictures can be found
on our website

www.grayshottgardeners.net

August Meeting

It is our great pleasure to welcome
Andrew Halstead
to the club this month for his talk

'Pest recognition and control'



Entomology is the scientific study of insects and as Andrew was previously the Principal Entomologist for the RHS he knows a thing or two about all things bug related.

Having since retired from the RHS, Andrew is now an author, journalist and lecturer specialising in garden pests, wildlife gardening and the biological control of pests. Andrew is also a keen beekeeper.

Pest control has changed significantly in recent times so it will be fascinating to hear his views on a subject close to all our hearts.

The meeting will be held in

Grayshott Village Hall

Wednesday August 9th 2023

Light refreshments will be served
Doors open at 7.15pm ready for the
lecture to begin at 8pm.

Jobs for this month

Gardening in August

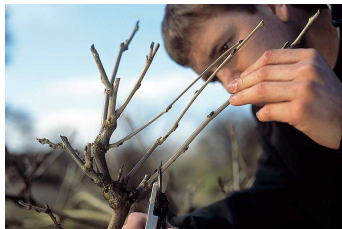
(excerpts taken from the RHS website)

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.

Take the time to prune Wisteria and summer-flowering shrubs such as lavender once they've finished flowering.

1. Prune Wisteria

Wisteria needs regular pruning to keep the growth and size under control, but it will also improve the flowering display. Prune twice a year; Jul-Aug - cut back the whippy green shoots to five or six leaves, then later in Jan-Feb cut back to three buds.



2. Don't delay summer pruning fruits trained as restricted forms

Summer pruning is mainly for apples and pears trained as restricted forms. It will allow sunlight to ripen the fruit and ensure good cropping for the following year.



3. Deadhead flowering plants regularly

Remove spent flowers as soon as they look scruffy. The simplest method is to just pinch off the faded blooms with finger and thumb.



More Jobs for this month

Water containers and new plants, preferably with grey recycled water or stored rainwater

Collect seed from garden plants

Harvest sweetcorn and other vegetables as they become ready

Continue cutting out old fruited canes on raspberries

Lift and pot up rooted strawberry runners

Keep ponds and water features topped up

Feed the soil with green manures such as Phacelia

Phacelia tanacetifolia:
Generally best sown in April to August and dug in after two or three months; the flowers are very pretty and very attractive to bees and other insects.

