



Grayshott Gardeners

Newsletter

February 2024

From the Main Committee



It is difficult to think that this rain will ever stop but I need to think about the Plant Sale on **11th May** and how much help I need to make it a success.

Jobs fall into 5 categories.

- 1) Propagate/Divide - When you are sorting out your garden look to see what plants you can divide, pot up and grow on.
- 2) Caretake the plants in good soil - I can provide pots if necessary - and keep until Friday **10th May**.
- 3) Clean and label pots on **10th May** from **10am** at my house. Sandwiches and tea/coffee will be provided.
- 4) Collect from my house and deliver to the village hall from **6pm** on **10th May**.
- 5) Selling plants on the day.

Please email me at plantsales@grayshottgardeners.net stating which task/tasks you can take on. The more the merrier! ... and my sandwiches are particularly good!

Jan Bebbington



2024 Potato Competition

Seed potatoes will be available at the February lecture to grow and enter in the Summer Show Potato Competition (1 bag/family).



Spring Show

If, like me, the very thought of gardening in the cold and wet doesn't fill you with enthusiasm, then how about planning what you'll do once the weather improves instead?

I do hope, as suggested in the January newsletter, that you are already considering which classes you might enter in our Spring Show. The Show brings so much pleasure to people of all ages in our community whether they are gardeners or not. Remember that without exhibits, there just won't be a show ... or at least just a rather 'weedy' one!

Looking through the list of 58 different classes I see, to my surprise, that there are quite a few that I could enter. However, if like me your experience of flower arranging extends to pushing some greenery and a candle into a block of biodegradable Oasis at Christmas and calling it a table-decoration, you too probably think that the Floral Arrangement classes just aren't for you, and never will be.

However, fear not – help is at hand! Grayshott Gardeners are planning an informal and relaxed

Workshop for Flower-arranging novices.

The key words above are 'informal', 'relaxed' and 'novices'.

Sounds ideal to me & I for one intend to go. Nothing ventured, nothing gained, and it promises to be great fun. Further details will be announced in February & the workshop will be held in March ... just in time, for at least some of us, to try out our new skills at the Spring Show.

I'll look forward to meeting you there.



Subscriptions

We would like to remind Members that Subscription renewals have to be paid by **1st March** and the earlier they are paid the better it is for the Club. In order to receive your 2024 Membership card, with discount offers and your Handbook with all the information about the varied and interesting lectures, activities and the Schedules for the Spring and Summer Shows you need to pay your subscription.

The BACS payment A/C is:

Account name: Grayshott Gardeners

Sort Code: 30-93-94

Account number: 00806355

Reference: Subs

CHEQUE PAYMENTS to be paid to Grayshott Gardeners and sent to:

*Jane Jones, 2 The Brae, Glen Road,
Grayshott, Surrey GU26 6NF*

CASH PAYMENTS to be paid personally at the February Club Night on

Wednesday 14th February at Grayshott Village Hall.

Growing Together Podcast

For those of you who have an interest in garden related podcasts you may like to take a listen to this local one from a team based in Petersfield:

The podcast is called Growing Together with Claire and Steve and can be found on any podcast app or at www.shineradio.uk/growingtogether

There is a website with more info www.growingtogether-pod.com and also Instagram https://www.instagram.com/growingtogether_podcast

Workshops

The Spring Pruning Workshops have some limited spaces available, so if you are interested in attending David Hurrion's workshop on **2nd March**, please get in touch with Carmen at events@grayshottgardeners.net to secure your place.

The workshops are also open to non-members, so if you have someone who would like to attend with you, just let Carmen know their details.

Forthcoming Event

4th June 2024

A reminder of our upcoming visit to:
2 CHINTHURST LODGE, WONERSH (NGS)
Wonersh Common, Wonersh, GU5 0PR
1 acre enthusiast's atmospheric and tranquil garden divided into rooms with year-round interest.

2.30pm Make your own way there.
£10 per person including tea and cake.
To book please email

Carmen Harvey-Browne –
events@grayshottgardeners.net
or sign up at the next Club night.
40 places available.

Haslemere Gardening Society

28th February 2024

A talk on "365 Days of Colour" from Nick Bailey freelance horticulturalist, best-selling author, award-winning TV presenter, garden designer and speaker - 7.45 pm.

More details can be found at:
<https://haslemere-gardening-society.co.uk/Nick%20Bailey.pdf>

Plant of the Month

Winter Aconite – *Eranthis hyemalis*



One of the earliest flowers to appear through any winter snow alongside *Crocus tommasinianus* and the snowdrops is the Winter Aconite, its golden yellow cups held above a ruff of green bracts ahead of its rich green lobed basal leaves and attractive seedhead.

The Winter Aconite, a member of the Buttercup family, is a tuberous clump forming perennial about 4in (10 cm) tall.

It is a woodland plant which has naturalised widely across Europe. Although it naturally grows on alkaline soils it will happily grow on a wide range of soils in both sun and partial shade.



The Winter Aconite will seed profusely and multiply naturally but can be easily propagated from seed in pots. It dies back completely after flowering and seeding. It can also be bought and grown from the dried tubers but splitting clumps 'in the green' after flowering generally gives better results. We have lost many tubers, probably to squirrels and mice which constantly dug them up.

Good companion plants are snowdrops, crocus and early iris.

The open flowers rich in pollen and nectar are attractive to bees and other pollinators.

The downside is that all parts of the plant are said to be poisonous to humans, causing cardiac failure.



The Winter Aconite is worthy of a place in any Grayshott garden, but just admire it, don't eat it!

Project 500

Thank you to everyone who bought all the snowdrops in January and raised **£300** for our delighted Hon. Treasurer.



In February there will be about 100 more named varieties for sale, but these are less likely to be in bud or in flower.

As we are well on our way to raising the £500 target for GGs from the sale of snowdrops for this year, please help us to sell the last 100 pots at the meeting on 14th February.

£3.00/pot
4 named varieties for £10



Thank you!

Gordon Rae VMH

January Meeting

Sheila Das

Garden Manager Edibles, RHS Wisley

No Dig and Sustainable Food Growing

I'm sure you'll all agree this was a very enjoyable lecture.

Sheila shared her passion for growing edibles. Key to this is being able to eat food not doused in chemicals, being able to reconnect with the seasons, to avoid the packaging waste that is built into our current food system, and to enjoy the mindful pleasures of being outside in your garden or allotment.

Sheila recommended "minimum intervention" - Nature does it best! No Dig fits in with this aspiration. Mulching the soil surface avoids traumatising the soil health and structure, it aids moisture retention and adds to soil fertility, without the use of chemicals. And for those of us that enjoy digging, shovelling mulch can be just as good for your muscles as excavating a trench.



A very popular topic and a very fine turnout to our first lecture of 2024!



More details of the presentation and additional photos can be found on our website

www.grayshottgardeners.net

February Meeting

It is our great pleasure to welcome

Darren Everest

to the club this month for his lecture on:

'Sweet Peas'



Darren is a specialist Dahlia & Sweet Pea grower and will talk to us about his passion for growing and showing sweet peas.

Originally inspired by his father, Darren first started out growing and showing dahlias. He really enjoyed the show circuit but as dahlias were limited to the later seasonal shows, decided to expand his repertoire to sweet peas.

Darren exhibited his sweet peas at Chelsea 2023 and has his own YouTube channel. It should be a fascinating and informative talk with lots of valuable tips for all of us hoping to grow and possibly enter sweet peas in our very own summer show in July. Please join us to hear all about it.

The meeting will be held in

Grayshott Village Hall

Wednesday 14th February 2024

Free light refreshments will be served

Doors open at 7.15pm ready for the meeting to begin at 8pm.

Jobs for this month

Gardening in February

(excerpts taken from the RHS website)

This month there are signs of the approaching spring, with bulbs appearing and wildlife waking up as light levels and temperatures increase. There's plenty to do indoors this month to prepare for the season ahead. Outdoors, as the garden comes to life again, it's time to prune shrubs and climbers, such as Wisteria as well as evergreen hedges.

1. Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover

Knowing which vegetables to sow where, when and how means you can maintain constant supplies throughout the season.



2. Chit potato tubers

It's important with earlies, and a good idea with maincrops, to 'chit' the seed potatoes before planting. This means allowing them to start sprouting shoots.



3. Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches

Most top fruit and soft fruit are very hardy but once they start into growth in spring, flowers and buds are especially



More Jobs for this month

Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off

Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering

Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'

Prune Wisteria

Prune hardy evergreen hedges and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges

Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea

Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter, remove dead grass from evergreen grasses

Slug & Snail Control

February is the time to kick start your slug and snail control. Here's a recipe for a spray recommended by the British Hosta & Hemerocallis Society (BHHS)... Happy cooking!

- 1) Crush 2 large garlic bulbs
- 2) Add to 2 pints of water and boil for 3 minutes until blanched
- 3) Cool and strain
- 4) Use 1 tablespoon per gallon of water in a can with a rose
- 5) Pour over leaves in late afternoon. Repeat this every 14 days from when the shoots first appear.