



Important Information

THE CHS SHOP

The Crawley Horticultural Society Shop in Ifield Avenue, West Green, Crawley (tel 01293 535585) is open in 2007 from:

9.0am until 12 noon every Sunday until 9th December,
9.0am until 12 noon every Saturday until 29th September, and
6.30 until 8.0pm every Wednesday until 27 June

NEW MEMBERS

The CHS policy for recruiting new members is by word of mouth by you the members. Why not pass the word about the benefits of membership to like-minded friends and relations. A perfect present for a birthday or special occasion would be CHS gift voucher/token to be spent in the shop, or a membership enrolment for one or four years.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

Contributions for the next Newsletter by 4th December.

PETER ARMSTRONG

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Enquiries about the Society should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Ron Spraget on 01293 400234

Crawley Horticultural Society

Founded 1952

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007

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Chairman's Report:

In his report the Chairman, John Green, said that it had been another difficult year with trading and membership falling. He thanked the Trading secretary, Peter Cole, whose job was getting harder every year and the shop helpers for all the time they gave. Where would we be without them? We badly need more so if you can spare 3 hours on a Saturday or Sunday morning you would be most welcome.

John exhorted the membership to keep on exhibiting at the shows – we need more to keep the Show Secretary happy.

Please support the Groups. If you don't you don't know what you are missing.

Secretary's Report

Ron Spraget took the opportunity to emphasise the need for more helpers in the shop and for more use to be made of it. Without the income from the shop the Society would be in a very difficult situation.

Topical Tips

Treasurer's Report:

For the first time in its history the Society had made a loss of £100. Bill Gunning stressed that this would have been much higher had it not been for donations totalling £2858. Our total net cash assets were £25,925.

Membership Fees:

On the recommendation of the Management Committee the AGM agreed to raise the membership fees to £4 for annual fees and to **£14 for 4 yearly ones. These would take immediate effect.**

Elections:

All the Officers of the Society were re-elected unopposed. Three new committee members were elected to replace those retiring, namely; Hilary Fenton, Christine Smith, and Peter Armstrong.

President's Address:

Mabel Clackson thanked the Committee for all their hard work over the past year, especially that of the Secretary and Treasurer whose efforts in getting our rates reduced has helped us financially.

Shop sales were down and this does not help with the hall running costs. It is taken for granted that the hall will always be there for our activities but the cost of running it rises every year. Donations have helped and I hope the Social Committee will continue to run their Quiz Nights. These are helping a lot to ease the situation.

I should also like to thank the Thursday Gang who do all the odd jobs such as checking stock, ensuring the hall and shop are clean and tidy and keeping the garden so nice.

For the benefit of newer members and as a reminder for all of us, now might be a good time to reissue some of the useful tips provided by Mabel Clackson in earlier Spring Editions of the Newsletter. Here is a selection.

Bulbs. After flowering remove the flower heads leaving the stems and leaves to die down naturally. Water well and apply a high potash feed of Phostrogen, Chempak 4 or neat potash fertiliser to help form new flower buds for next year.

Clematis. They need a heavy feed to see them through the flowering season. The suggested method is 4ozs of Magnesium and 4 ozs of Phostrogen in 1 gallon of water for each plant. They will also enjoy a sprinkling of lime which should be watered in.

Fuchsia, Begonia, and Geranium Water these with Provado to control vine weevil and white fly.

Hanging Baskets. Although you may have used a slow release fertiliser when planting up, it is wise to give them a boost of high potash feed such as Chempak 4 or Tomato Fertiliser in late July and August.

Lilies Watch for the lily beetle on Crown Imperials, Fritillaria and other types of lily. Spray with Provado Ultimate Bug Killer

Pieris, Azaleas and Rhododendrons. After flowering, remove spent blooms. From May till the end of August water well (a gallon a day if possible). Feed with Sequestrene Plant Tonic containing iron or Phostrogen for acid loving plants.

Roses After pruning (presumably done by now) spray for black spot making sure you spray the earth around each bush. Then feed with Rose Fertiliser or Fish Blood and Bone. Feed again after the first flush of blooms but before the end of July.

Sweet peas. These will benefit from a little lime sprinkled along the rows and watered in.

Calling all Writers

Although we have a staunch body of contributors to the Newsletter who regularly provide valuable articles of gardening interest for our readers, there are not many of them and we cannot ask them to come up with fresh material for every January and May issues. As a result from time to time we have to fill the pages with repeats. This may not necessarily be a bad thing (television companies are always doing it!) and it can be useful knowledge for new members. However, wouldn't it be nice if we could expand our supply of contributors and give the readership a wider range of gardening interests?

Writing for the Newsletter is in no way the prerogative of the Committee. Indeed we have from time to time had useful articles from non members. So I would appeal to any of our readers, if you have any suggestions, tips, even queries which we could air through these pages please get in touch by letter or email. We would love to hear from you.

PETER ARMSTRONG
Editor

The Bonsai Group

The Bonsai Group is one of the Groups flourishing with a friendly, enthusiastic membership. Many experts are on hand to help those who are new to the hobby. During the year we have speakers and outings but mostly workshops where we do seasonal work and learn new techniques on our own trees.

Don't be put off by the commercial prices of bonsai. We have plenty of small trees which are freely offered to members for training.

With global warming affecting our wild trees, perhaps bonsai will be one way of preserving and enjoying their beauty.

BERYL ARMSTRONG

Spring Show

Yet again we had the problem of rain the day before the show but, as always, you came up trumps with some magnificent specimens of daffodils some of which I hadn't seen before. Congratulations to Barbara Nash who won the trophy for the most points in the daffodil classes.

Alpine entries were down on last year but let's hope this was just a blip and next year will be back to normal. Mick Reed won the Alpine Cup for his exhibit of six rock plants in flower. Well done, Mick!

The flower section did well and there were some beautiful camellia exhibits.

Overall the show went well, the weather on the day was good to us. The only drama was that we almost lost our new marquee as it nearly flew away in the strong breeze.

Thank you all for your help with the show, for exhibiting and last but not least for coming to see it. A special thanks to Joan Thrift and Barbara Nash for the gorgeous cakes they made for the refreshments [heartily endorsed - Editor]

Hope to see you all at the summer show.

CHRISTINE MARTIN

Show Dates

The dates for the Shows in 2007 are as follows:-

Orchid Spring Show - Saturday 13th May at 1.30pm
CHS Summer Show – Saturday 9th June at 1.30pm
Fuchsia Show – Saturday 4th August at 1.30pm
CHS Autumn Shows – Saturdays 8 & 15th September at 1.30pm.
Orchid Autumn Show—Sunday, 18 November at 1.30pm

All the shows are held in the hall. For more information and how to enter pick up a Show Catalogue.

Trading Matters

In the January Newsletter I wrote that our wholesaler was closing down its Belvedere depot and in future would supply us from its Chesham depot. We have subsequently discovered that the variety of gardening items they can now supply is much reduced and does not meet our needs. In view of this, an alternative supplier has been approached and having seen their catalogue I am impressed and hope a satisfactory agreement can be reached.

For many years we have stocked Scotts' Tumbleweed in various sizes but it is now only available as a 500ml concentrate and a Ready-to-Use. As stocks run down, I suspect these two sizes will become unavailable in favour of Roundup which we now stock in a number of sizes.

It only remains for me to remind you that the Plant Sale will be over the weekend 19th and 20th May from 9.00am till 12 noon and that the shop is now open on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm till 8.00pm until the end of June.

I hope you will be a frequent visitor to the shop and help keep your Society buoyant.

PETER COLE

Summer Flower and Craft Show

The Society's Summer Flower, Craft and Pelargonium Show will be held on Saturday 9th June in the Hall. Show Schedules for the Flower and Pelargonium Shows are available from Christine Martin Tel. No. 01293 882871. Let's have as many entries as possible so that we fill the hall with blooms.

For the first exhibited at the show. embroidery, jewellery, houses, toys and plantables available. Contact 01293 420975 for



time we will have crafts. The stalls will include, hand made cards, bird sales. There are still Mrs. Pam Reed tel. no. bookings.

Stopping Fuchsias

Most fuchsias will only produce flowers on their growing tips therefore the more growing tips the better. If a growing tip is removed by pinching out, a new tip will appear at each leaf axil below this.

If a rooted cutting is allowed to grow three pairs of leaves before removing the growing tip, the plant will produce six more growing tips with six times as many flowers. If each of these growing tips is stopped at two pairs of leaves, this will produce twenty four tips with twenty four times as many flowers. If each of these tips is then again stopped at two pairs of leaves, ninety six growing tips will be produced. If you assume that each tip will produce six flowers, this will result in the plant bearing 576 blooms! This is when you need to know how your cultivars grow because certain ones do not respond to such heavy pinching out while others are classified as self branching and will need fewer stops – perhaps only one.

Depending on the cultivar and the heat, light and general environment in which it is growing, on average a fuchsia will be in maximum bloom from the last stop as follows:

Singles, 60 days,
Semi-doubles 70 days,
Doubles 80 days.

When stopping takes place it is important that all the tips are removed at the same time especially with the last stop and do not stop and pot up at the same time as this is too much of a shock for the plant.

IVAN BUDGEN



Crawley Horticultural Society Website

I am writing this on 12th April and at this moment the website is now almost functional. By the time you read this I hope that those with Internet access will be able to put Crawley Horticultural Society into their 'Search' on the search engine to access the website. Hopefully members will either add this onto their favourites so that whenever they want to see 'What's happening in the Society' they just click on the entry in their favourites.

The website will be accessible to anyone in the Crawley area by entering 'Crawley Horticultural Society' in their web browser. From the Website they will be able to see the Shop opening hours; the dates the Groups meet and their events; the next Show dates and Quiz nights.

Anyone experiencing problems (I expect there will be some in the early stages) should contact Mick Reed either by Email: mick.reed@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 01293 420975 and I will endeavour to sort it out.

A secondary advantage to having the Website is that we can put a copy of the most up to date Newsletter on the site so that anyone can read it at any time. This could act as good publicity for the Society and it leads to another possibility. At this time we have nearly 60 members who have kindly supplied their Email addresses to us. Our initial thought was to ask them to get their copies of the Newsletter directly from the website. By doing this it would be quite a large financial saving and this would help to finance the website. They could either get the letter directly from the site, download as a hard copy, or pick up a copy from the shop. If this is not acceptable the Membership Secretary will send it by post if requested by the person concerned. At the same time all other members will receive their Newsletters by post as usual.

It is anticipated that the Website will go live in the near future. We will endeavour to keep you all informed. When it does go live we will put up notices around the shop and hall. We will also try and inform everyone who has given us their Email address. For this to work you must make sure that your Email addresses have been updated if necessary i.e. that the Membership Secretary, Peter Nash (01293 511919) has been made aware of any changes to your address since you originally gave it to us.

We hope you will enjoy this website and make full use of it.

MICK REED and PETER NASH

Fruit and Vegetable Group

The Group has booked the following speakers for the remainder of the year:

May 14th: Harry Townsend – Plant collecting around the world.

July 9th : Tim Pierce – Growing and showing vegetables and little fruit

Sept 10th: David Cheston – From farm to supermarket

Oct 8th Alan Buller – How does your garden grow?

Nov 12th Richard Bailey – Vegetables from a small garden

It's very disheartening for speakers to come a long way only to speak to half empty halls so make an effort and come along to as many of these talks (mostly illustrated) as possible.

And don't forget the other meetings of the Group – also on the second Monday of the month – when you can join in a lively debate over a cup of tea and biscuits.



Wanted—Volunteers

We are always in need of more helpers in the shop.

If you can spare 3 hours on either a Saturday or Sunday morning at about 6 week intervals your assistance will be greatly appreciated. Besides the company and the free flowing tea and biscuits, you will be entitled to a 10% discount on your own purchases.

The shop is the life blood of the Society and without it the Society would not be able to function. If you can help, please contact Jackie Whiting on 01403 270646 or have a word with the duty committee member in the shop.

Creepy Crawlies on Cactii

Hello again, how are your cacti looking after the winter?

Well, pretty good I think. Some of them are already showing what I presume to be small flower buds but on others there are what looks like small dots of cotton wool.

I mustn't say congratulations but you are a real cactus grower now because the most common pest to accept our hospitality has targeted these plants. It is called Mealy Bug and if anyone tells you they never get it don't believe them. However, they are reasonably easy to eradicate – the bugs I mean.

Firstly get hold of a small paint brush and a bottle of mentholated spirits and dab each woolly blob. If you look carefully after the wool has dissolved you may see a tiny woodlouse type creature. Purists attempt to remove these on a toothpick or similar but the following procedure will bring about their total demise.

Since Brussels poked its nose into our insecticides there is only one product on the market suitable for this job. It is called Provado. A yellow bottle, not the blue bug gun, is both a systemic and contact insecticide and will kill several other pests that attack our ornamental plants. Water the affected plants then a couple of days later water in the wonder drug. The systemic potion is absorbed by the plant making it lethal to any insect trying for a feed. Mealy is commoner in Spring and Autumn so you can usually get by on just two applications each growing season, one at the start of the watering and one just before you finish for the winter.

While we are considering pests, mealy has a cousin that attacks the root of the plant. This is discovered when re potting; small white bugs appear around the roots. Provado usually eradicates the problem but if you find any wash all the soil from the roots, dry for a couple of days then re-pot with fresh compost and a clean pot. Vine weevil is not normally a problem with cacti as they usually attack peat or multi – purpose based composts. Once again Provado will come to the rescue.

There are a few other pests around but I do not think they will bother you too much as you grow your plants indoors where the atmosphere is never too dry.

One potential problem that is rarely mentioned in books concerns the summer care of the Christmas or Easter cacti. If there is a prolonged wet spell keep a sharp lookout for any rogue slugs or snails. They just love the succulent leaves of these species.

Finally, don't get too despondent, spend a few pounds on their medicine (preferably in the CHS shop – Ed) and marvel at how they will repay you.

DENYS SKINNER

2007 Plant and Bulb Sales



The annual plant sale will be held in the hall over weekend 19th and 20th May between the hours of 9.0am and 12 noon.

The annual bulb sale will be held in the hall over the weekend 1st and 2nd September between the hours of 9.0am and 12 noon