



# California Gardeners' Club

## Newsletter April 2019

[www.californiagardenersclub.co.uk](http://www.californiagardenersclub.co.uk)

Our April meeting proved very popular, with over 60 people coming to hear Dr Pat Morris give a superb talk on Hedgehogs. He is very knowledgeable, having done his PhD on the life of hedgehogs and studied them for many years.

Hedgehogs are widespread throughout the country, including Ireland and the Isle of Man. They are not territorial although they avoid one another, and you might find that the friendly hedgehog who visits your garden is in fact several different ones. They cover a lot of ground each night with males up travelling up to 2 miles, and females a little less.

Hedgehogs eat a wide range of food, mainly beetles, but also earwigs, worms, spiders, slugs and grubs. If they come across bird eggs or carrion, they will eat that too. Feeding them will do no harm and helps the younger ones to gain enough weight to hibernate successfully. Dog and cat food mixed with dog biscuits is the best whilst milk mixed with bread tends to give them diarrhoea, so best avoided.

They have 4 or 5 young at a time. The young are born without spines, which grow within 2 weeks. Whilst 60% die in their first year, the average lives for 3 to 4 years. However, they can reach 10 years.

They face many threats; roadkill, mowing machines, strimmers, litter, netting, ponds, cattle grids, and badgers, which can eat them. Weedkillers and insecticides can be poisonous to them and turf chemicals kill the grubs they feed on. As more land is intensively farmed, there are fewer grubs etc. for the hedgehog to feed on. This all results in a decline in the hedgehog population overall.

Lynn Potts

### Spring Show

The Spring Show is on Sunday 14th April. It helps the members who are trying to set up the Show if you can get your entries in by Wednesday, so we will be in the Hall on Wednesday evening between 7.00 pm and 8.30pm to collect entry forms. Not got an entry form? Don't worry we will have plenty. You can also email your entries in. HOWEVER, late entries are always welcome up to 10:45 on the day of the show.

The summer sunshine we have had has brought most of the Daffodils on far too early. However, do look around; I still have a few in dark corners where they are yet to break bud. If you have some flowers in bloom, then think positive: - you may well be the only one entering and win the prize. There are of course other sections, there are 3 sections for pot plants. Have you a nice small specimen in the garden, then there is time to pot it up, there is no time stipulation on how

### Things to remember

1. Our next meeting is on May 6<sup>th</sup> when we will be having a talk on 'Wellington College' given by Mark Dodd
2. Please note the Spring Show photography subjects, classes 52 & 53, are 'A Village Pub' and 'Animal(s)'
3. Note the Spring Show is on the 14<sup>th</sup> April
4. Trading Hut now open every Sunday 10:00 to 12:00
5. Annual membership is now due (£5).

long it has been in the pot! As the trees are beautiful this year, why not enter a vase of flowering shrubs and foliage.

So, this is YOUR Show, do look through the whole of the schedule and enter as many classes as you can. Why not buy a few flowers and try your hand at Floral art?

We have a different Handicraft judge this year so please enter your handicraft items and make her trip worthwhile.

Peter Turner, Your Show Secretary

### **Green Waitrose Tokens**

Please note that Waitrose in Wokingham are now collecting green tokens for our club. If you shop in any Waitrose, please keep the green tokens so we can deposit them in the Wokingham store. Thank you.

### **Outing to Kew**

The coach is already half full. Anyone wishing to join this outing on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June, please contact Chris Spinks as soon as possible as we will be opening it up to other clubs in the area soon. The cost is just £30 for the luxury coach and group entry fee.

To book, either email Chris Spinks ([cspinks41@gmail.com](mailto:cspinks41@gmail.com)) or phone her on 01189781432 (leave a message)

### **Membership**

***Over the past six months our membership continues to steadily grow.  
Why not tell your neighbours and friends about us and invite them to a meeting?***  
Keeping annual membership at £5 makes us a great club to be a member of.

**So, don't keep it a secret**

### **Topical tip**

April is one of the best times to top-dress lawns. When using fine soil or compost, it is worth adding some grass seed as this will bulk out the sward – especially important as last year's drought had a particularly adverse effect on many lawns. I understand from Stuart that we have a good supply of grass seed for sale in the hut at a very competitive price.

### **Trading Hut**

Vice Chairman Ian Gillott is on duty at the Hut this coming Sunday 7 April from 10.00 – 12.00. If you need any gardening advice, then Ian is your man!

Just a few reminders:

We now have a new stock of leather gardening gloves in and they are still at the amazing price of £5 per pair. They are particularly good if you are dealing with anything prickly!

Remember it is our Spring Show on Sun 14<sup>th</sup> April, so this coming Sunday is your last chance to buy oasis if you are entering a floral decoration class and our price is good at £1.20 a brick;

Jobs for April (although I recommend you wait a few days until this short cold snap ends) include:

- feeding your rose bushes (rose feed £1.10/kg)

- general fertiliser application to beds & borders (growmore at £1.10/kg or fish, blood & bone at £1.00/kg)
- application of lawn feed (Spring & Summer at £1.20/kg, feed & weed at £1.80/kg or feed/weed/mosskill at £1.60/kg)
- feed green shrubs and plants with Chempak 2 (high nitrogen) particularly if any are looking a little yellow & pale
- after your bulbs have finished flowering deadhead them and feed with a high potash fertiliser (Chempak 4 or Tomorite)
- if you only want to buy one Chempak product then no. 3 (balanced) will help with all the above!
- keep an eye out for slugs, especially on tender shoots coming through the soil (eg delphiniums or dahlias). We have slug pellets (£3 for a kg) but please use sparingly
- give your houseplants a boost with Baby Bio and if you grow orchids, we have new supplies of orchid feed

and finally, ..... we have a good stock of garden canes to 'prop' everything up once things get growing.

Enjoy your garden and don't forget to stop for a cup of whatever you fancy from time to time!  
Stuart

### **Monthly Table Competition**

First with 30 points was Sylvia Hawes, 2nd Jayne Male 29 points,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Stuart Slocombe 28 points, 4<sup>th</sup> Peter Radband 27 points,  
joint 5<sup>th</sup> Kath Coutts and John Kerr with 26 points, 6<sup>th</sup> Kriss Turner with 25 points, joint  
7<sup>th</sup> Jean Potts, Ros Slocombe, Kerry Eaton and Hermione Lewis with 20 points

The subject for May is:

Any plants, flowers, vegetables or fruit.

All exhibits must have been in the exhibitor's possession for at least three months and you must be present on the night for your points to be counted towards the annual prize.

### **Monthly talks**

This is a call to members: if you have any ideas/requests for the subjects of the monthly talks, please let us know. Either reply to this email or give Hermione a ring (number below).

Chairman: Dick Hawes 0118 979 3730	Hon. Treasurer: Peter Radband 01344 774310	Programmes: Hermione Lewis 0118 989 1671	Committee Member Jayne Male
Deputy Chairman Ian Gillott 0118 9892649	Trading Hut: Stuart Slocombe 0118 9734531	Membership: Kerry Eaton 07736 022361	Co-opted Member Marise Radband 01344 774310
Hon. Secretary: Chris Spinks 0118 978 1432	Show Secretary: Peter Turner 0118 9730424	Committee Member: Lynn Potts 0118 977 1852	Co-opted Member Shirley Brown 0118 9734571

Pruning Salvias. We were asked at the last meeting “what is the best way to prune Salvias.

It's best to know which kind of salvia you have before springing into action with the pruners. All 3 types of perennial salvias really benefit from a good haircut. You'll get much better flowering and shape if you do so. Whether you prune in autumn or spring is up to you.

### **#1 The Deciduous Herbaceous Salvias.**

With these salvias the old growth eventually dies out and the fresh new growth emerges from the base of the base. They have softer stems which either die off and/or freeze. These types of salvias are better to prune in spring because the old growth will protect the fleshy new growth over the winter

When they're through flowering, simply cut those stems all the way down to the ground. It needs to be done once or twice a year. That allows the soft new growth to appear at the base. Another thing to know is that these salvias tend to spread as they grow so you might have to do a bit of dividing.

### **#2 The Herbaceous Salvias with Woody Stems.**

These are the shrubby salvias.

You prune these salvias back after flowering but not all the way. Take them back to at least where the first set of foliage starts on the flower stem – this could be a pinch, or you can take them down further if they need it.

With these types of salvias, thin out in the middle and then shape the plant so it's pleasing to the eye. They usually go through 3 bloom cycles throughout the year.

Be sure to take out any growth which has died over the winter. If you don't give these salvias some type of pruning, they will get extremely woody and won't repeat bloom like you want them to. Plus, they get straggly and sparse – not a pretty sight in the garden.

These types of Salvias need to be replaced appx. every 5 years. Perennials don't live forever after all. No worries though because they grow fast.

### **#3 The Rosette Forming Herbaceous Salvias**

This category includes: *Salvia nemorosa*, *S. x superba* & *S. penstemonoides*.

These salvias form low rosettes and the stems with more foliage and the flowers emerge out of them.

Prune the stems all the way down to the rosette and also clean up any dead foliage growing close to the ground. The leaves tend to grow densely on this one, so the undergrowth gets smothered.

# CALIFORNIA GARDENERS' CLUB



## SHOW SCHEDULE 2019

**Spring Show – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

**Summer Show – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

Each Class entry 25p

**Held at California Ratepayers' Hall**

**Finchampstead**

**Doors open: 2.30 p.m.**

Admission to Show: 50p

Under 16 free

**Prize Giving and Auction commence at 4pm**

Show Secretary: Peter Turner

[www.californiagardenersclub.co.uk](http://www.californiagardenersclub.co.uk)

Tel: 0118 9730424

# RULES

1. The Show is open to any amateur.
2. Club vases **must** be used except where stated and sundry items needed to stage the exhibit must be provided by the exhibitor. Every care will be taken of the sundries, but the Committee cannot accept any responsibility for breakages or losses.
3. A Novice is an exhibitor who has not won more than two first prizes in the same Novice section in the previous 3 years.
4. Packing is allowed for cut flowers, but no artificial supports are permissible.
5. Exhibits must be staged between 08.00 and 10:55 hours and the hall vacated prior to commencement of judging at 11:00.
6. Exhibitors not wishing their entries to be sold should ask for a 'Not For Sale' label to affix to the entry card. Exhibits may be removed between 15.45 and 16.00 hours, but all entries on show after that time will be sold in aid of Club funds.
7. Either Official entry forms to be used or email entries, stating the exhibitor's name, address and class numbers entered. Forms to be accompanied by the entrance fee of 25p for each class entered emails entries to be paid for on the day of show. Children's Classes are FREE. Email entries should be sent by 3pm Saturday before the show.
8. All entry forms will be accepted by the Show Secretary: -
  - 8.1 Between 19.00 and 20.30 hours on the Wednesday before the Show at California Hall.
  - 8.3 At the Club's monthly meeting preceding the Show.
  - 8.4 By email to: **turner1235@btinternet.com**
  - 8.4 Late entries will be accepted at the discretion of the Show Secretary up to 10.30 on the day of the Show, accompanied by an entry fee of 30p.  
No late entries are allowed for Flower Arranging classes.
9. No person may enter more than one exhibit in any one class.
10. Prizes will be: **1st** - 70p; **2nd** – 50p; **3rd** – 30p.
11. The Judges' decisions will be final.
12. Any complaint must be made to the Show Secretary before 3:45pm on the day of the show.

13. The Committee reserves the right to refuse any entry not according to Schedule.
14. Any matter not provided for in these Rules shall be dealt with by the Show Secretary at his or her discretion and whose decision shall be binding.
15. All entries in the Children's, Domestic, Floral Art and Handicraft sections **must be the sole work of the exhibitor.**
16. All pot plants must have been in the exhibitor's possession for a minimum of 3 months.
17. Money prizes may be collected from the Club Treasurer between 15.00 and 16.00 hours on the day of the Show. Any prizes not claimed by the end of the Show will be returned to Club funds.
18. Points for calculation of awards:  
1st – 3 points; 2nd – 2 points; 3rd – 1 point.

FOR SHOW NOTES AND ADVICE PLEASE SEE  
INSIDE FRONT COVER AND PAGES 11 TO 13

### **Spring Show - Section A - Flowers, etc.**

*Classes 1 to 11 – One bloom per stem excluding classes 6 and 11*

<b>Class</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Variety</b>
1	2 Vases of 3 Daffodils and/or Narcissi	One per vase
2	3 Daffodils or Narcissi	One
3	5 Daffodils or Narcissi	One
4	5 Daffodils or Narcissi	Mixed
5	1 Specimen Daffodil or Narcissi	
6	3 Daffodils or Narcissi (bunch flowered)	One
7	3 Daffodils or Narcissi (double)	One
8	3 Daffodils or Narcissi (novice)	One
9	5 Tulips (One bloom per stem) (novice)	One or more
10	5 Stems Miniature Daffodils (single headed)	One or more
11	5 Stems Miniature Daffodils (multi headed)	One or more
12	3 Stems miniature tulips	One or more
13	5 Tulips (one bloom per stem)	One or more
14	3 Tulips (one bloom per stem)	One
15	1 Camellia bloom	
16	Bowl/pot not to exceed 23cm (9") growing any one species of Bulb/Corm /Tuber	One or more
17	3 Sprays of Polyanthus (same colour)	One
18	5 Sprays of Polyanthus	Mixed
19	Chairman's Challenge (No entry fee)	One
20	1 Cut spike of Hyacinth	
21	Flowering Orchid	
22	An exotic plant (excluding orchids)	

23	3 Specimen blooms in a decorative vase (both bloom and vase to be judged)	One cultivar
24	1 Vase of ornamental foliage	Min. 5 kinds
25	1 Vase of flowering shrubs/trees	Mixed
26	1 Vase of Spring flowers (No shrubs)	Mixed
27	1 Vase of any other flowers not included in schedule	Mixed
28	Pot plant in flower (excluding cacti & orchids)	
29	Foliage pot plant (pot not to exceed 12.5cm (5"))	
30	Foliage pot plant (pot not to exceed 25cm (10"))	
31	1 cactus or Succulent pot plant	
32	3 Sticks of Rhubarb – (natural)	One
33	3 Sticks of Rhubarb – (forced)	One

**The pot sizes will be judged on the metric dimensions.  
The imperial sizes are only for guidance.**

### **Spring Show – Section B – Floral Arrangements**

**NO LATE ENTRIES ALLOWED**

**See class for space allowed**

#### **Novice Classes**

**Class Title**

- 34 'Spring Delights'. w2'6" x d2'  
35 'Take Five' – An exhibit of five stems of plant material.  
Space up to w2' x d2' x h18".

#### **Open Classes**

**Class Title**

- 36 'The third degree'. An arrangement using three flowers with any fresh plant material w12" x d12" x h-unlimited"  
37 'The Minute Waltz' – Any natural plant material. Size under 4"  
38 'Easter' – An exhibit to include spring flowers, a candle and natural foliage.  
Open staging w18" x d2' x h2'

Please refer to the explanation of terms set out at the back of the schedule

### **Spring Show – Section C – Young Exhibitors' Section**

**Class Title**

#### **Aged 7 and Under.**

- 39 A wooden spoon decorated as a flower  
40 A robot made out of scrap materials

#### **Aged 8 to 11 inclusive**

- 41 An arrangement of flowers in a teacup.  
42 Three jam tarts



Club who can answer queries. Please remember that help and advice are always readily available.

#### Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables

- Read the schedule carefully and be sure that the number of specimens and groupings per variety are correct.
- It is recommended that you use the smallest Club vase that will comfortably hold the exhibit. Please ask for an alternative sized vase if required.
- Aim for uniformity of freshness, size, shape and colour.
- If you wish to read more about show techniques the Horticultural Show Handbook published by the Royal Horticultural Society is worth reading. A copy is available, for reference purposes only, at all meetings or in the Trading Hut. This book is widely accepted and forms a standard reference for all who take part in shows, judges, exhibitors and organisers alike.
- Please name your exhibit whenever possible as this adds the final touch for the benefit of the judge and public.

#### Domestic

Flower arranging - an explanation of the terms used:

Open Staging - This means no backing or niche between exhibits. A space will be specified within which an entry is placed without touching the edge of the Space allowed. The height of the exhibit is left to the competitor's choice unless specified.

Niche - A white cardboard backing with shallow sides. An exhibit may come forward of the niche but must not touch or go higher than the niche. If wished, drapes may be attached to the niche.

An Exhibit - This is defined as an arrangement in which accessories, i.e. non-plant material such as figurines, china, glass, may be included.

An Arrangement – Conversely an arrangement does NOT include any accessories unless specifically stated in the Schedule.

Pot et Fleur - A Pot et Fleur is a collection of plants in a bowl with some cut fresh flowers. No added foliage.

Petit Arrangement - A Petit arrangement measures not less than 4" (10cm) and no more than 9" (23cm) in height, width and depth.

N.B. All tables used are 2' (60cm) in depth.

- Key points are presentation, adherence to schedule, i.e. no original manufacturer's writing on jars or lids, correct number of items and size, etc.

- Entries should be appropriately covered, e.g. cling-film or a dome
- Finally – please ask if you are unsure, help and advice is readily available.

Plants

- All pot sizes are measured across the top edge (inside diameter).

Category	Showing
Soft Fruit e.g. Raspberries, Blackberries, Loganberries, Strawberries	To be shown with stalks on
Top Fruits e.g. Apples, Plums, Pears etc.	To be shown with stalks on
Carrots	To be shown with leaves trimmed to 75mm and neatly tied. Can be washed.
Beetroot	To be shown with leaves trimmed to 75mm and neatly tied. Can be gently washed.
Onions, Shallots	To be shown with tops bent and tied and roots trimmed. Do not over peel.
Runner Beans, French Beans	To be shown with stalks on
Rhubarb	To be shown with leaves trimmed to 75mm and the bottom white heel left on.
Lettuce	To be shown with roots washed and left on. The roots can be wrapped in moist kitchen roll and put in a polythene bag.
Potatoes	To be gently washed and shown on plates with “rose” end outwards. Can be covered with damp kitchen roll.
Courgettes, Cucumbers	To be shown with or without flowers left on.
Squash	To be shown with the stalks attached.
Tomatoes	To be shown with stalks left on.

For any other information on vegetables or fruit not mentioned above, or quantities required, please consult the Show Secretary.

## **A guide to exhibitors. The following may be helpful to exhibitors:**

### **Flowers**

Good fresh condition with approximately 70% of flowers fully developed. The foliage should be clean, healthy and undamaged by weather or pests.

### **Daffodil (Narcissus)**

Flower carried at nearly a right angle to the stem except in species and hybrids where a pendent flower is typical. Calyx & corolla (calyx & corolla combined are called the perianth) of smooth texture. Corona or crown of good colour, texture and in proportion to the perianth. Stem, straight and strong and in proportion. Perianth and corona symmetrical. In double cultivars, segments and colour symmetrically arranged.

### **Fuchsias**

A vigorous, symmetrical, floriferous plant, well furnished with clean foliage and fresh blooms of good colour. Support and ties (if any) neat and unobtrusive.

### **Fuchsia Heads**

Fresh, then perfection — every petal should show no signs of decay, damage or discolouration. Symmetry between each head and as a collection.

### **Roses**

Specimen bloom: Fresh, no blemishes, full size for cultivar. Petals regularly arranged within circular outline, well-formed centre. Colour, bright and brilliant.

Other than specimen bloom: As for specimen, but additionally well-formed foliage of good size and texture. Strong stems.

### **Tulips**

Flowers in good condition, unblemished, of good colour and smooth texture, Stems must be stiff and strong enough to carry the flowers.

### **Pot plants**

Clean pots, neat staking. Preference given for decorative rather than botanical value.

Shapely plant with healthy unblemished foliage with flowers of good size and colour.

Plants that are usually grown for their ornamental foliage are not debarred from foliage plant classes if they are in flower at the time of the competition.

They can also be considered for entry into flowering plant classes. However, in judging a foliage class, no account will be taken of any flowers on the plant.