



Newsletter August 2021

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Delightful, Delovely, Deranged: Aren't Plants Wonderful?

Our Zoom meeting on Monday, all the way from Glasgow, was given by Nancy Stevens, all about the strange world of plants.

The record breakers include the largest flowering plant, which is a Wisteria which has more than a million flowers each year; the Damascene rose which is grown in vast numbers in the Valley of the Rose in Bulgaria for perfume; Japanese Iris, red spider lilies, red lotus, and hydrangeas, which all have their own seasonal festivals in Japan. The tallest palm trees are the Columbian wax palm and the New Caledonian Cook palms, both of which grow to over 200 ft tall.

The “nasty” plants; the manchineel tree of the Caribbean, known as “little apples of death”; the sap is caustic, and if you are under one in a rainstorm, the drips can cause severe blistering. Water hyacinths, which double in size in two weeks and choke waterways in the tropics, and the kudzu vine, taken to America to help the soil after the “dustbowl”, but which is now known as “the vine that ate the South”, it grows a foot in a day, and covers everything.

Then there were the strange plants; the couroupita tree that has fruit the size and shape of cannonballs, the orchids that look like flying egrets or ducks, the bat flower that is black and has long “whiskers”, and the pelican flower, which is the second largest in the world after rafflesia.

She ended with the Atacama and South African desert superblooms, where the whole desert flowers, after rain.

The talk covered every continent except Antarctica and there were many other wonders and oddities besides, all illustrated by superb photographs.

Things to note

1. Our next meeting is on the 2nd August. A talk about “**Delightful, Delovely, Deranged**” by **Nancy Stevens**. This will be held over Zoom.
2. **Trading Hut** – Now open Sundays from 11-12 noon. However watch out for the weekly emails confirming times.
3. **Member's articles**. See in newsletter for more details.
4. August photo competition will **???????????????** I will remind you all a week before.
5. July photo competition results are now on the web and enclosed in this newsletter.

Topical Tip –August 2021

If ever there was a seasonal pest it must surely be the earwig - the month of August often sees them appearing in droves.

Folk law has it that the insect acquired its name by entering people's ears when they were asleep. Perhaps some unlucky campers might have experienced the problem but I tend to think the story is apocryphal!



Earwigs are nocturnal and seek darkness in cracks and crevices of old wood or in hollow canes which are used to support plants. They emerge at night and can cause havoc by feasting on the petals of plants such as dahlias and zinnias. Control by spraying is not effective - better to try and stop them reaching their target in the first place.

The old gardener's trick of placing a plant pot containing straw or shredded newspaper on top of a cane can be effective. The earwigs can then be emptied out and destroyed. Serious exhibitors who are keen to protect their blooms, put a ring of Vaseline around the canes, and even the stems of their prize exhibits. I have a more perverse method. In the morning I put a few drops of paraffin down the canes. The offending earwigs emerge, fall on the ground and await their fate.

Ian Gillott

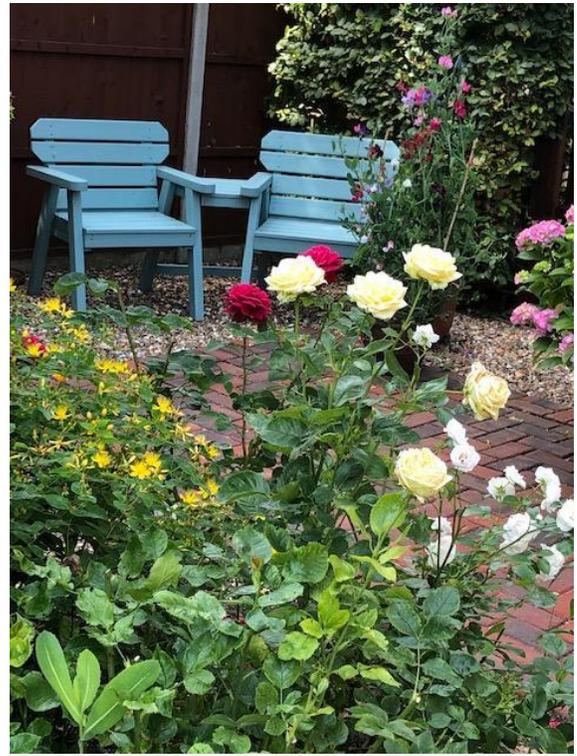
July Photo Competition



First
Chris Spinks (38 points)



Joint Second
Wendy Whitmarsh (24 points)



Joint Second
Lesley Hicks (24 points)



Club Facebook Group

Don't forget our Facebook group! It is a private group which means that only club members can join and post. You can join it at: www.facebook.com/groups/207934410581605/

You will need to first read and agree to the group guidelines. We really would like more members in this group to make it a lively forum. We are looking for gardening related posts and club news.

Julia Goodall Publicity Officer

RHS card

Our club has a RHS Card.

It enables two people to gain entry to all RHS gardens throughout the country (this includes RHS Bridgewater from Sept).

Presentation of this card will give you and your friend a 30% discount on the entry fee.

From March, as a member of our club, you will be able to borrow it by contacting Chris Spinks (number at the end of newsletter) and arranging to pick it up.

Free membership this year

Big thank you to all those members who decided to pay their £5 membership fee this year even though it is a free year. We, the committee, appreciate this demonstration of your support. I must also go further and say thank you to a few who have made voluntary donations on top of their subs. Very kind of you. If you would like to pay your voluntary subs at the Trading Hut then Stuart will be willing to take your details etc.

The clubs bank details are: Sort Code: 40-47-09, Account number: 71301608 (don't forget to give your name as the reference).

Member's email

Member's email

Monthly talks

This is a call to all 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).

Member's email



Lynn Potts

Chairman: Dick Hawes 0118 979 3730	Hon. Treasurer: Peter Radband 07976 640989	Programmes: Hermione Lewis 0118 989 1671	Committee Member:
Deputy Chairman: Ian Gillott 0118 9892649	Trading Hut: Stuart Slocombe 0118 9734531	Membership: Jayne Male 07967639808	Co-opted Member: Marise Radband 01344 774310
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