



The Village GARDEN CLUB

of Sevenhampton & District



French Marigold: *Tagetes patula*

SEP / OCT 2018

NEXT MEETINGS

- Thursday 27th September - **Rob Hedge:** "Historic Allotments, Gardens & Archaeology"
Thursday 18th October - **Paul Hervey-Brookes:** "Behind The Scenes at Chelsea"

Change of Climate

What an extraordinary year this has been so far. Climate change seems to be manifesting itself into extremes of every form of rain, snow, winds, and heat and at odd times. Snow before Christmas preceded by lots of rain and then the prolonged period of snow followed quite quickly by heat during the day but with very chilly nights.



The brilliant part of this has been the absolute abundance of flowers on all the trees (including fruit trees which hopefully promises a good crop of apples, pears, plums etc) and flowering shrubs and my soft fruits are covered in maturing currants and berries. The big downside has been the over-abundant weeds, particularly dandelions, which does not bode well for next year's spring either. The fields and my lawn have been carpeted in their bright yellow flowers which have to be pulled off the plant to contain the seeds. I was late in digging over the veg patch this year and, when I did plant out broad beans or peas, about half of them have failed to shoot (if that is the right word!). However, the ones which have grown are sturdy and hopefully I will have a reasonable crop. It is extraordinary how each season is completely different from the last but perhaps that is why we keep on trying year after year, not just to try and win a prize at the produce show!

MARIGOLD FACTFILE: There are two genera of marigolds: *Tagetes* which includes French (*T.patula*) & African (*T.erecta*) marigolds and the English marigold *Calendula officinalis*. All belong to the Asteraceae family. Both types have many varieties with a range of yellow, orange and red colours; some petals are even variegated.



Tagetes originated in South America and was used by the Aztecs, allegedly for the "treatment of hiccups, being struck by lightning and for one who wishes to cross a river or water safely"! In the late 16th century it was brought to Europe by the Spanish. They were, and still are, used to decorate alters and are extensively used in festivals throughout the world. For instance, vast quantities are grown in India to provide flowers for garlands, weddings and Hindu celebrations. *Tagetes* are useful as companion plants, particularly in the vegetable garden. As well as their unpleasant smell being a deterrent, their roots give off 'thiophenes', which will kill nematodes.

Calendula is indigenous to SW Asia & Western Europe. Its name is from the latin meaning 'little calendar'. It's also called pot marigold, which derives from its culinary use: the leaves used as herbs in the pot and the petals used for colouring cheeses, butter and cakes. Its petals can also be used to create bright dyes. During the American Civil War, doctors made use of its antiseptic properties and packed its leaves into open wounds. *Calendula* oil is still extensively used for medicinal purposes.

Marigolds are treated as annuals, they enjoy well drained soil and full sun. Dead head regularly, propagate by seed. Used in 'companion planting' as above & also their strong smell is said to deter aphids, whitefly and some beetles.

COLLECTING SEEDS

A **seed** is an embryonic plant enclosed in a protective outer covering called a testa. It is nature's wonderful method of reproduction for flowering plants. Now is the ideal time for gardeners to start collecting seeds from their favourite plants in the garden, in readiness for sowing next year's crop. Doing so can produce loads of new plants at virtually no cost and can offer a real sense of achievement. **Here's how:**

*Collect seeds pods, such as sweet peas, on a dry day. Allow them to dry in a warm place before extracting the seeds.

*For soft fruiting crops, (eg squash, tomatoes), rinse seeds with cold water to remove any fibres (chaff) and lay them to dry between sheets of paper towels. Removal of chaff is important to stop seeds rotting during storage.

*Once seeds are totally dry, put them in labelled paper packets and place in an airtight container with some desiccant (e.g. silica gel) to remove any excess moisture. Store in a refrigerator at 5°C (41°F) until required. Most seed will remain viable in this way for many years.

Note: Certain seed (eg walnuts, oaks, magnolias) mustn't be allowed to dry out as they cannot then take up water which is necessary for germination. Such seeds can be stored in a plastic bag of damp vermiculite or sand etc for several months.

Seed can be saved from trees, shrubs, perennials, aquatic plants, alpiners, annuals, biennials, bulbous plants, grasses, herbs & vegetables. Avoid saving seeds from F1 hybrids - parentage is mixed and the result may be unexpected!

The [Heritage Seed Library \(HSL\)](#) seeks to protect UK's vegetable heritage. As well as their own work they actively encourage people to conserve and save seeds & organise seed swaps. They produce annual seeds lists which offer vegetable seeds not usually available elsewhere. HSL's National Heritage Garden is at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons near Oxford, which showcases rare vegetables used in Raymond Blanc's famous restaurant there.



MALVERN PUDDING

Whilst many plants have suffered as a result of the long, hot, and dry summer, apples seem to be producing bumper crops. Here is a regional recipe which you may like to try...

Ingredients:

450 g / 1 lb **cooking apples** 1oz **butter** 1oz **granulated sugar**
zest of ½ **lemon** 1 pt **custard** 3 tbs **demerara** 1 tsp **cinnamon**

Peel, core and slice the apples.

Melt butter in a saucepan and add the apples.

Add lemon zest and sugar and simmer until the apples are cooked.

Place the apples in the bottom of a dish.

Make the custard and pour over the top of the apples.

Mix the demerara sugar and cinnamon together and sprinkle over the apples for the topping.

Dot the pudding with small pieces of butter and place under a hot grill. Cook until it bubbles and the sugar is caramelised.

GARDEN JOBS FOR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

Divide established rhubarb crowns

Cut back perennials that have died down

Divide herbaceous perennials

Move tender plants into a greenhouse or conservatory

Plant out spring cabbages

Harvest apples, pears, plums and nuts

Prune climbing roses & wisteria

Collect seeds from the garden to sow next year

Cut hedges for last time

Renovate old lawns - sow grass or lay turf

Clean out greenhouse and clean tools

Place nets over ponds to stop leaves entering

After all that, sit back and reward yourself with a well earned drink!

POTATO COMPETITION 2018

Dundry Nurseries are following their promotion of the humble potato with a competition which carries a prize of **£100!** Their competition is for the **'heaviest potato'** and the entry form can be picked up at the nurseries before the closing date of 22nd September. An example entry form accompanies this newsletter. Entry forms should be sent directly to Dundry Nurseries, Bamfurlong Lane,



How to make the most of your garden

At the Cheltenham Literary festival, **Nick Bailey** (BBC's Gardener's World) and garden designer **Jo Thompson** will be sharing their gardening tips and tricks over a delicious afternoon tea, appropriately at 'The Daffodil' venue, in Suffolk Parade. The expert panel will be offering their advice, on Friday October 12th from 4 - 5.30 pm.

Cost: £25 including afternoon tea.

Book: On-line at cheltenhamfestivals.com or
Phone: 01242 850270 or Visit: The Wilson

DON'T FORGET TO BRING ARTEFACTS FOUND IN YOUR GARDEN TO SEPTEMBER'S MEETING, WHERE ROB HEDGE WILL TRY TO EXPLAIN YOUR FINDINGS.

HAVE YOU ANYTHING OF INTEREST THAT CAN BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER?

If so please contact Di Cook (editor) at: Email: ditex.cook@btinternet.com or Tel: 01242 821018