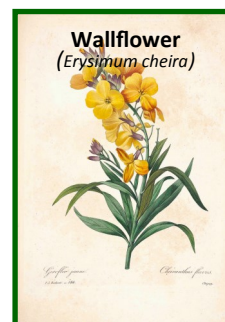




# The Village GARDEN CLUB of Sevenhampton & District



NOV/DEC 2018

## NEXT MEETINGS

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November - 'Christmas Decorations from your Garden' with Millie Richardson

No December meeting but wishing you all a very..... HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR



### Going Potty?

Having just come through the longest, hottest and most glorious summer for many years, and spent hours trying to keep a multitude of pots and planters alive and colourful, I decided that I needed to re-think my planting for next year.

As usual, I joyfully filled pots of every shape and dimension, shuffled them around endlessly to find the perfect arrangement and then had to confess to my lovely chiropractor that I had put my pelvis out moving pots - yet again!

Next year, I have vowed, I will have fewer but larger containers, to make watering less arduous - my wonderful neighbours will no doubt be relieved!

I have been eyeing up the various potted grasses and perennials to see which would make a pleasing combination and ruthlessly binning the less than beautiful, rather knobbly old fuchsias that I have lovingly overwintered in the crowded greenhouse for years. (But not the one that won me first prize in the show!) The hydrangeas are going into much larger planters to make a statement on either side of the steps, and just a couple of other big pots one step down. A few big pots in key positions - and that, in theory - is that.

Will I manage to resist popping in just one more cheery pot here or another irresistible plant there? I shall try. Just don't take me anywhere near a garden centre!

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### Hints & Tips:

- \*When potting / repotting plants put slow release fertiliser in with the soil.
- \*Terracotta pots lose their moisture more quickly than plastic ones, so line them with thick layers of newspaper or a thick plastic bag before adding their compost.
- \*Soak plants 10 minutes or so before transplanting them to larger containers.
- \*A few drops of washing-up liquid added to the watering can will reduce water run-off if the surface of the planter's soil becomes too dry.
- \*Shrubs will benefit from the addition of mycorrhizal fungi pellets to their soil which will aid the plant's root development and nutrient intake.
- \*Pinecones make good lightweight drainage material at the bottom of pots.

**WALLFLOWER FACTFILE:** There are two main types, annuals & perennials, both are members of the Brassicaceae family. Perennial species are short-lived and subject to fungal disease and clubroot (a typical disease of Brassicas) and so, in cultivation, are treated as biennials. These biennials are either English (*Erysimum cheira*) or Siberian (*E. marshallii*). Siberian wallflowers have yellow/orange/apricot petals whilst the English ones have a greater colour range throughout the warm spectrum. One species, *E. semperflorens*, which is native to Morocco, even has white flowers. The cultivar 'Bowles's mauve' has gained the RHS Award of Garden Merit.

Biennial wallflowers can be heavily scented and were used in Elizabethan times as nosegays. Their old fashioned name 'cheiranthus' is derived from the Greek for hand (cheir) and flower (anthos).

Erysimum species are a food source for the larvae of certain butterflies & moths. Beetles, grasshoppers and other insects also feed off the plants. Wallflowers are very useful in the garden as they are 'pollinator generalists', i.e. they are visited by many different types of pollinators, including bees and butterflies.

Wallflowers enjoy a sunny location but can survive in very poor, dry soil conditions and will happily sit against a wall or in the gaps between stones, unlike many other plants. Shy, retiring people who distance themselves from the crowd are also known as "wallflowers" and echo the plant's growing positions.

## Sustainable Planting



Cheltenham Borough Council are moving away from traditional municipal planting of annuals and introducing perennials into their flowerbeds, which will be more sustainable, need less watering & help wildlife by providing a more permanent habitat. The trial scheme at Winston Churchill Gardens (a little gem of a garden in the Lower High Street — entrance near the old railway bridge) will be extended to Sandford Park & Priory Terrace gardens next year.

This trend towards providing better habitats for wildlife acknowledges the need to work in greater harmony with nature. You may find the following seasonal tips for gardeners useful:

- Don't prune mature ivy in your garden just yet! Flowers are a valuable source of late season nectar and the berries provide a winter food source for birds.
- A few windfalls left on the ground are welcome food for hedgehogs and other animals.
- Don't be hasty tidying up seedheads, which can provide a welcome winter snack for birds etc.
- Bundles of twigs in a quiet corner of the garden provide shelter for invertebrates and small mammals.
- Some butterflies overwinter in sheltered places such as garden sheds. Protect their habitat by not being too tidy!
- Plan next years planting to include plants favoured by bees, butterflies and other pollinators. A very comprehensive list of seasonal shrubs, trees, bulbous plants and flowers can be found at [www.rhs.org.uk/plantsforpollinators](http://www.rhs.org.uk/plantsforpollinators)



### BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Here is a selection of gardening books printed this year which you may wish to consider as a gift.....

Nikki Jabbour: **Veggie Garden Remix**. Detailed growing information for different plants & varieties along with fun facts. (ISBN:9781612126708)

Monty Don & Derry Moore: **Paradise Gardens The world's most beautiful Islamic gardens** from the BBC series & presented at Chelt. Literature Festival (ISBN: 9781473666481)

Lisa Mason: **Vegetables Love Flowers: Companion Planting for Beauty and Bounty** (ISBN:9780760357583)

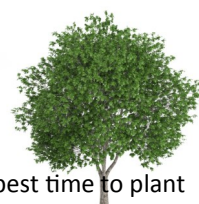
Jules Hudson: **Walled Gardens**. Exploring the features and history of National Trust walled gardens. (ISBN:9781909881969)

Lee Reich: **The Ever Curious Gardener** humorously focuses on using natural science for better garden (ISBN:9780865718821)

Gisela Keil: **A Year in the Garden**: 365 Inspirational Gardens & Gardening Tips from around the world (ISBN: 9783791384245)

Matthew Biggs: **Grow Something Different to Eat**: Weird and Wonderful Heirloom Fruits and Vegetables for Your Garden (ISBN: 9781465464293)

### TREES



November to April is the best time to plant trees (including hedging plants). At this time of year the trees are dormant and the cooler weather reduces the likelihood of stress. However, avoid planting when soils are waterlogged, which can cause roots to rot. Bare rooted trees should only be planted during this period of dormancy. While container grown trees can be planted at any time they will have a better start & need less aftercare if planted now.

Note: Tex will have some bare rooted trees available together with spiral guards **free of charge**. If you are interested please contact him by phone on 01242 821018 or email [ditex.cook@btinternet.com](mailto:ditex.cook@btinternet.com)

**LAWNS ....** Does there come a time in late Autumn that you feel you can put the lawn mower to bed knowing that all that walking up & down has finally finished for the year?

Sorry to spoil your illusions but grass doesn't necessarily stop growing unless the soil & air temperature is below 5°C. Its growth does, of course, slow as soil & air temperatures drop but reflective heat from walls and sheltered situations will continue to aid growth - as do good light, sufficient water and nitrogen levels. Other factors affecting growth are the types of grass in your lawn, e.g. perennials like fescue and ryegrass. So lawns will continue to need mowing but with less frequency, anything between every 10 days to once a month.

The most important tasks for your lawn in late Autumn are:

1. Clear all debris (which blocks out light);
2. Scarify to remove competition eg moss;
3. Aerate (Oct/Nov time);
4. Give winter feed (when conditions are cool & wet);
5. Cut grass on a high setting;
6. Don't walk on frosty lawns (the blades of grass get damaged);
7. Get the lawn mower serviced and blades sharpened.

The website [www.grassclippings.co.uk](http://www.grassclippings.co.uk) offers a lot of helpful info on lawns.



### RECYCLING GARDEN WASTE

For those who use Fosse Crosse recycling centre to dispose of garden waste etc., please note that from **28th October** they will **NOT be open on Tuesdays**. Throughout the county times of opening are also changing to 10am—4pm. Information on closure days for all Gloucestershire recycling centres together with new seasonal times can be found at:

[www.recycleforgloucestershire.com](http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com)

Have you anything of interest that can be included in the next newsletter? If so please contact Di Cook (editor) at [ditex.cook@btinternet.com](mailto:ditex.cook@btinternet.com) or Tel: 01242 821018