



The Village  
**GARDEN CLUB**  
of Sevenhampton & District

Jan / Feb 2020



**Hellebores**

(for Factfile see Page 2)

### NEXT MEETINGS

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January - New Year Social — Fun Quiz, drinks & snacks**

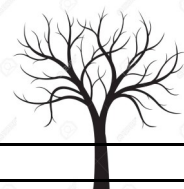
**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February - 'Old Garden Tools of the Trade' with Colin Brookes**

### KEPT IN THE DARK

When we first moved into our home the garden was a wilderness. This really was no surprise as the property had been empty for nearly 2 years. Not only was it overgrown but, apart from a couple of roses and three potentilla (one of which is still going strong), there was little in the way of planting. Any hint of a flower bed had long been swallowed up by mother nature.

Initially there were two priorities in my mind – the first to build composting bays to accommodate the amount of vegetation which would inevitably have to be removed. The second was to provide shelter, as the garden has a very open outlook and is exposed to any weather going. In order to reduce wind damage etc to plants and provide partial shade in the summer, hedging, tall trees and shrubs were planted at the boundaries.

This has worked well and I can now grow most desired plants without them being scorched or flattened by cold north easterlies, or indeed by winds from any direction! However, with this success has come failure - the trees have grown and now provide more shade than intended. Their thirst can also render the soil beneath them dry at times & I have been pondering what plants are best suited to these conditions. After some research I have identified the following recommendations:



Plant	Common Name	Appearance
Alchemilla mollis	Ladies mantle	Height 1ft, bright lime green flowers
Brunnera macrophylla 'Jack Frost'	Siberian bugloss	Ground cover, variegated leaves, small blue flowers in late Spring
Cyclamen hederifolium	Ivy-leaved cyclamen	Small, tuberous perennials pink/white flowers
Cyclamen coum	Eastern cyclamen	Small, tuberous perennials pink/white flowers
Epimediums	Barrenwort, Bishop's hat, Fairy wings & more!	Approx 1 ft tall with a huge range of form and flower colour
Geranium phaeum 'Album'	Cranesbill	Bright white flowers with thick matt of foliage
Lamium maculatum	Dead Nettle	Ground cover, variegated leaves with white or pink flowers
Linope muscari	Lily turf	Low growing tufts with spikes of blue flowers
Mahonia aquifolium	Oregon grape	Low spreading evergreen shrub, clusters of yellow flowers followed by purple berries
Pulmonaria (blue ensign)	Lungwort	Low growing with blue trumpet shaped flowers
Tellima grandiflora odoratum	Fringe cups	Herbaceous perennial growing in clumps with spikes of scented, yellow flowers
Many types of ferns and grasses will also often do well		

Advice tells me that in full shade it is visually better to opt for a good contrast, so use plants with brighter coloured flowers or variegated foliage - or both! Addition of compost before planting will also help water retention. I am now looking forward to bringing a little more cheer to the scantily planted border at the edge of the garden.



## JANUARY SOCIAL — YOUR NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

Start the New Year off with a light-hearted quiz, accompanied by drinks and tasty snacks. Not only will the quiz winners have prizes but everyone wins, as it is **all free** as part of your membership! If you are able to come, please tell Annie or Pippa as they need to know how many to cater for. Apart from that, come along and enjoy the evening.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Contacts: Pippa (01242 821419/pippashouler@gmail.com) or Annie (01242 820718/annvanrossem@btinternet.com)

### Dates for your Diary [Ctrl + Click on the [links](#) for further details].

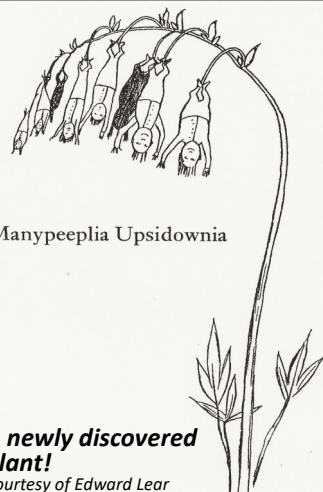
**January 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>** Dundry Nurseries' famous **Potato Weekend** (don't forget to claim your 10% discount, available with your membership card).

**January 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>** **Big Garden Birdwatch**. Help RSPB with their annual survey of garden birds, which assesses the increases & declines in bird numbers. Form on *Page 3*, but more information to be found on their website [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk).

**January-February** University of [Bristol Botanic Gardens](#) lectures & workshops which include botanical art, spring planting, meaning of Latin names, photography.

**February 8th to March 8th** - [Exhibition of Orchids at Kew](#).

**March 16th** at St Luke's Church Hall, Cheltenham, GL53 7HP **7.15 pm Cost £6**. Meet and listen to **Vanessa Berridge** (Author & NGS County Organiser) in conversation with Anne Chambers about the development of the garden at Kiftsgate Court, which has been in the care of three generations of the same gardening family.



Manypeeplia Upsidownia

**A newly discovered plant!**  
Courtesy of Edward Lear



After more than 40 years trading, the **Toddington Garden Centre** are closing due to the termination of their lease. The land is owned by railway enthusiasts GWR, who wish to expand their activities from their adjacent site. Part of the garden centre operation will continue though, at nearby Gotherington Nurseries in Gretton Road.

Our (relatively) mild weather enables planting of bare-root hedging, roses, trees & shrubs to continue before the weather turns really cold. As plants have prepared for winter dormancy, any deciduous woody plant that is dug up will move happily. So, in addition to planting newly purchased bare-root plants if there's anything in your garden that you want to dig up and move - now's the time to do it!

### NOT JUST A BAG!

Towards the end of last year, in over 100 stores, the Co-op replaced the sale of single use plastic carrier bags with compostable bags. Using these bags will reduce the amount of waste plastic but it also has an added benefit. They can be used as liners for council food waste caddies and bins used to hold kitchen waste for your own compost. A win, win?



### FACTFILE: HELLEBORES

The genus *Helleborus* has about 20 species of perennial flowering plants in the family *Ranunculaceae* (to which the buttercup belongs). There are, however, very many hybrids & the flowers can be single, semi-double (anemone centred) or double. Despite their common names such as Christmas, Winter and Lenten rose, they are not related to the rose family. Hellebores are frost resistant and offer a good source of colour in the winter months - some even flowering in December. They will tolerate full sun or heavy shade and are rarely troubled by pests and diseases; an exception being the incurable 'hellebore black death' virus, where the flowers and foliage become stunted, deformed and have disfiguring black streaks.

Hellebores cross-pollinate easily and will readily self-seed, so these seedlings may not be true to the parent plant. Unlike many other perennials, division is not recommended. Once plants are established, avoid moving them and provide a mulch in the Autumn prior to flowering.

The National Collection is at [Hazles Cross Farm](#), Staffordshire. Nearer to home, [Webbs](#) of Wychbold has National Collection status for their Harvington Hybrid Hellebores. (Check out the links for further info).

In common with all *Ranunculaceae* the toxin protoanemonin is present in Hellebores. The roots of all *Helleborus* are strongly emetic and potentially fatal. Roots were sometimes used intentionally to cause vomiting - after a suspected poisoning or to treat parasitic worms. Seeds often cause skin rashes, so wearing gloves when handling is advised.

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 or Tel: 01242 821018

# #BigGarden BirdWatch?

25-27 January 2020

Enjoy an hour counting birds and help monitor our wildlife.

## Thank you for taking part

- 1 Watch the birds in your garden or local park for one hour.
- 2 Only count the birds that land in your garden, or local park, not those flying over.
- 3 Count the most birds that land at any one time – not the total number you count over the hour. (Otherwise you could be counting the same bird more than once!)
- 4 Tell us what you saw. Submit your results even if you saw nothing. It is still very useful information!
- 5 Submit your results online by **11 February 2020** at [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://rspb.org.uk/birdwatch) using the code **BH30**. It is quick, easy and the savings made on postage costs help us spend more on conservation. (However if you are unable to do so, please complete and return this form to us following the instructions below. \*)

Name of bird	Most seen at one time
Blackbird	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blue tit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chaffinch	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coal tit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collared dove	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dunnock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goldfinch	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great tit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greenfinch	<input type="checkbox"/>
House sparrow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long-tailed tit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magpie	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Starling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Woodpigeon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other species	<input type="checkbox"/>

The survey results will be announced on our website in April.

Discover more: [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)

The RSPB is a registered charity in England & Wales 207076, in Scotland SC037654.  
356-1327-18-19

## Let's keep in touch – on your terms

**Thank you for caring about nature.** We're determined to do all we can to save it. You're a very important part of that which is why we'd love to let you know about the conservation, campaigning, research and fundraising work that we're doing.

If you're happy for the RSPB and RSPB Shop to keep in touch, please let us know how you would like to hear from us:

	Yes	No
Post	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Text	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

You're in control. If you'd like to change your choices at a later date, all you have to do is call us on **01767 693680** or go to [rspb.org.uk/preferences](https://rspb.org.uk/preferences). If you decide to stay in touch, we'll also keep you up to date with news about membership, products, offers and competitions.

**Your details will be kept safe and secure, only used by us, or those who work for us, and will not be shared with anyone else.** We analyse information you provide, and about how you've helped us, to decide what communications will be of interest to you (and so that we can save our resources for conservation work) and to help us understand our supporters. We also use this information to run our charity's operations, eg if you place an order or make a donation, we'll need your details to process those.

If you would like to know more or understand your data protection rights, please take a look at [rspb.org.uk/privacypolicy](https://rspb.org.uk/privacypolicy).

## Please use CAPITAL letters.

Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, etc)

First name

Last name

Address

Town

County/Council area

Postcode

Telephone

Mobile

Email (over 18s only)

Date of birth (if under 18)  /  /

How many people took part? Adults ☐ Children ☐

If you didn't do the Big Garden Birdwatch at home, where did you do it?

Postcode (if different from opposite)

\*If you'd rather return your form by post, please put it in an envelope and write **Freepost RSPB BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH** on the front. Please ensure only this wording appears on the return envelope. This is a short address, but rest assured it will reach us.