



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

NOV / DEC 2020



**Heathers & Heaths**

(*Calluna, Erica, & Daboecia*)

**GARDEN CLUB GOES 'VIRTUAL'**



On 15th October our Garden Club successfully held its first 'Zoom' meeting on line, when 26 participants (maybe more) dialled in to listen to Victoria who gave an informative, illustrated talk entitled:

**" WHAT TO DO NEXT IN OUR GARDENS .... AND WHAT WE CAN AVOID DOING".**

In summary the talk focused on 'clean' and 'dirty' gardening. Unlike dirty gardening, clean gardening avoids contact with soil and can easily be accompanied by one's favourite beverage!

**Clean gardening:**

- Take photographs — identify what looks good; checking heights of plants and shaded areas
- List flowers and veg to grow next year; what's been successful / new things to try
- List flower and veg never to grow again; what has failed or lacks good looks
- Decide which plants need to be moved for winter protection
- Order seeds and bulbs for next season - Many catalogues are available, including [Sarah Raven](#) and [Chiltern seeds](#)
- Make diary notes when to sow certain seeds (eg chilli in Jan, otherwise it will be too late!)

**Dirty Gardening:**

- Plant daffodils and narcissi — these should be at least twice the depth of the bulb (4-6" deep)
- Take cuttings, particularly of tender plants e.g. shrubby salvias
- Sow sweet peas in pots — seedlings overwintered in a cold frame provide more robust plants
- Similarly sow hardy annuals eg larkspur
- Prune climbing roses; aim for horizontal runners which will flower more vigorously
- Divide herbaceous plants e.g. sedums & campanula
- Protect pots of tulips and crocus bulbs with wire mesh (squirrels *really* like them!)
- Wash pots ready for next year



\*\*\*\*\*

***It was heartening to see members' faces once more and the discussion following the talk reminded us that we all have similar garden queries and problems, which are always good to share.***

***The committee is trying to organise more 'Zoom' talks and all members will be advised of them once they are confirmed. Any members with suggestions for further talks (including 'Zoom' talks), please contact a committee member whose details can be found [here](#). Meanwhile, stay safe and well.***

More jobs for the garden.....

**November**

- Repair lawns
- Collect leaves for mulch / composting
- Protect potted plants from frost: move to greenhouse or wrap
- Plant tulip bulbs (note advice above)
- Feed garden birds
- Protect brassicas etc from hungry pigeons (& pheasants!)
- Cut back perennials
- Take root cuttings (eg Papaver & Phlox)

**December**

- Clean & tidy the greenhouse and cold frame
- Ensure houseplants on windowsills don't get too cold
- Turn houseplants regularly to provide even light
- Top dress trees such as acers and fruit trees
- Feed wild birds and provide water for drinking & bathing
- Prune acers, birches and vines
- Prune free standing apples & pears
- Insulate outdoor taps & prevent ponds from freezing



Growing squashes or pumpkins for next Halloween? - Sew seeds in pots in April. Keep warm & watered before planting seedlings out in May, remembering that they need a lot of space. They also like good manure/compost and regular watering once established. Harvest late Autumn, leaving a long stalk on the fruit, & expose to warmth (in sunshine or indoors) for approx. 6 days to harden. They can then be stored in a cool, airy place until needed.



**'HEATHERS' FACTFILE:** Heathers belong to the family **Ericaceae**, although the common heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) differs from heaths (*Erica & Daboecia*), as its flowers' corolla and calyx are in 4 parts instead of 5. These evergreen, low growing shrubs thrive in an open, sunny position, but will tolerate light shade. Many need lime-free soil, rich in organic matter, but some can tolerate neutral to alkaline soil. Flowers can be white, pink or purple and the foliage varies from yellows, reds and many greens, which often change with the seasons. Any pruning should be limited to trimming plants straight after flowering. Heathers do not regenerate well from old wood, so once they have become woody and leggy, replacement is the best option.

Typically found on high ground, heathers are extremely hardy, surviving severe weather conditions & temperatures below -20 °C. They provide an important food source for sheep, grouse and other moorland creatures, which can graze the tips of the plants when snow covers low-growing vegetation. They are also beneficial to bees, butterflies and moths. Heather honey is a highly valued product in moorland and heathland areas, with many beehives being moved there in late summer. It has an unusual texture, for it is thixotropic, being a jelly until it's stirred, when it becomes a syrup (like other honey) but then resets again to a jelly. This makes the extraction of the honey from the comb difficult, and it is therefore often sold as comb honey.

Heathers have been used as a yellow dye for wool and to 'tan' leather. They have long been used for making brooms or besoms – the name *Calluna* coming from the Greek (Kallyno) meaning 'to sweep clean'.

White heather is regarded in Scotland as being lucky, sprigs often sold as a charm or worked into bridal bouquets. Introduced into New Zealand by early settlers, it has become invasive and is now considered a weed there.

A few quotes which say it all... "Gardening requires lots of water—most of it in the form of perspiration!"

"God made rainy days so that gardeners could get the housework done."

"The most noteworthy thing about gardeners is that they are always optimistic, always enterprising, and never satisfied."



### FREE tree and hedgerow plants for schools.

Schools can order a *free* orchard and hedgerow pack for their school grounds to inspire teachers and pupils around the country to get outdoors, plant and care for trees. In addition, teachers will receive a set of resources, designed by experts and teachers, all linked to the national curriculum. If you have friends or family who may be interested please mention this to them.

More information is available on this link:

[Additional information & application form](#)

### GARDEN QUIZ

- Chelsea Flower Show lifted a ban on what in 2013  
(a) Garden gnomes (b) Gazebos (c) Gargoyles
- Winston Churchill proposed to his wife in which palace gardens?  
(a) Kensington (b) Kew (c) Blenheim
- Which poet wrote "The Glory of the Garden"?  
(a) Rudyard Kipling (b) W.B Yeates (c) John Milton
- Monet's garden is where?  
(a) Cimiez (b) Giverny (c) Cagnes-sur-Mer
- Where is South Africa's Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens?  
(a) Johannesburg (b) Cape Town (c) Port Elizabeth
- 'Waltz of the Flowers' is from which ballet?  
(a) Swan Lake (b) The Nutcracker (c) Giselle
- With paths almost 6 miles long, where is the world's largest hedged maze?  
(a) Australia (b) China (c) Germany

**G**arden Club member, Joanna Rolfe, recently organised a Macmillan Coffee

morning at Notgrove village hall, which included the sale of plants as well as coffee and delicious cakes.

Her efforts, together with many other supporters, who gave up their time selling plants, refreshments etc. raised a terrific **£910**. Joanna sends her thanks to everyone involved, as do Macmillan Cancer Support.



**2021 RHS Flower Show** - from October 30th, tickets for RHS shows will be on sale to the public. For more information click [here](#).

### Garden Quiz Answers

- (q) L
- (q) 9
- (q) 5
- (q) 4
- (e) 3
- (c) 2
- (a) 1

**DON'T FORGET to clean & oil garden tools before storing them over Winter**



### BRING THE GARDEN INDOORS FOR CHRISTMAS

Rose hips & hawthorn berries can be picked now in readiness for Christmas. Strip off all the leaves and store them a cool, dark, dry place to stop the fruits shrivelling. Holly, dried hydrangea, teasles, wild clematis & echinops heads can be similarly stored ready for use. Leaves & berries can also be preserved in a jam jar filled with 1cm glycerine and 2cm of hot water. Leave them there for 2 weeks and they will stay soft, ready for use. Using hairspray on flower and seed heads, can also help to keep them intact in readiness for festive decorations.

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