

# South West Shropshire Gardening Club

## Newsletter



March 2023

How to find inspiration on a grey, drizzly, cold and windy day? Answer: think back to a lovely walk with Mellie around Anne Shepherdson's fields and woods. There's nothing quite like sharing your love of plants, trees and the countryside with like-minded friends. We were fortunate with the sunshine too and I took this photo of one of Anne's hellebores for you all to enjoy.



### Teas

Many thanks to Julian and Heather for manning the teas so efficiently last month. We have volunteers in place for March and April so please sign up on the rota for any month after that as you come in, so we can continue our refreshments. Don't worry if you are not sure of your commitments – we can always rearrange nearer the time if there is a problem. It only involves coming a few minutes early (about 6.45) to set out the crockery – the committee bring the supplies of tea, coffee, sugar, milk and biscuits. We will also put on the urn to heat up. We are finding that most people prefer to wash up by hand as they go along rather than using the dishwasher.

### Pearl Garden

If anyone could spare about half an hour to help weeding the Pearl Garden on Tuesday 11th April at 2pm, the committee would be very grateful. Please let us know if you can help.

### Newsletters

If you are having any problems receiving the newsletter, please let me know. We aim to send the notification that it is live about a week before the meeting so news is fresh in your mind. You will also be in the right place to look at the website – if you have any contributions or suggestions that may be of interest, please let me know.

### History of the Club

One of our previous committee members, Brenda Jones, recently sent me information about how the club started in 1987. It was really interesting and made me think it would be nice to record these memories on the website, before they are forgotten or lost. If anyone has stories or photos from the past, please send or give them to me so we can record and share them.

## **NGS Shropshire**

I always feel cheered when NGS starts opening gardens again for us to enjoy.

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March and 26<sup>th</sup> April: Hundred House Hotel, TF11 9EE (new)

An acre crafted over thirty five years, including sculptures, stonework, working herb and kitchen gardens, over 5000 bulbs, blossoming trees and “dancing pond flowers”. Sounds intriguing and good in the Summer too.

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April: Edge Villa, SY5 9PY

More local and an old favourite, especially the dewpond and plant sales.

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April: Westwood House, WV16 5LP

Everything planted for wildlife and organic growth: tulips, mixed borders, pool garden, woodland and far reaching views – sounds heavenly!

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April: Millichope Park, SY7 9HA

Historic landscape gardens. Our speaker for March comes from the Wildegoose Nursery situated in the walled garden here. Good enough for Gardener's World (Sept 2023) and Carol Klein: good enough for us!

## **NGS Powys**

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March: Bryngwyn Hall, SY22 5LJ

Award winning 9 acre garden plus 60 acres of parkland, unusual trees, a poison garden and 8 acre serpentine lake.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April: Garregllwyd LD6 5PE (new)


3 acres at 1000', stunning views, large ponds, unusual trees, veg beds etc

## **Next meeting**

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

**Creating Beautiful Borders – a talk by Laura Willgoss from Wildegoose Nursery**


**SOUTH WEST SHROPSHIRE GARDENING CLUB**




**Creating Beautiful Borders**  
**A Talk by Laura Willgoss, Wildegoose Nursery**

**Wednesday 22nd March 7.30 pm**  
**Lydbury North Village Hall**

FREE TO MEMBERS (annual membership £15), GUESTS WELCOME: £5  
For more information contact Angie Salmon on 01588 661025 or email [angiesalmon@btinternet.com](mailto:angiesalmon@btinternet.com) [www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk](http://www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk)  
We are a friendly club of like-minded garden enthusiasts. We meet at Lydbury North Village Hall on the 4th Wednesday of the month: interesting speakers, refreshments, forums, advice, outings, seed offers, plant sales.  
We are also affiliated to the RHS. Come & join us!



South West Shropshire Gardening Club:  
celebrating over 30 years of gardening in Shropshire



The speaker for March is Laura Willgoss of the wonderful Wildegoose Nursery, an independent nursey and open garden housed within the former kitchen gardens of Millichope Park.

In 2011, after training at RHS Wisley, Laura and her partner started the restoration of the walled gardens and glasshouses and opened their first nursery specializing in the growing of hardy violas. They soon expanded and, in line with their passion for plants, they began to offer a wide range of perennials and grasses developing the garden alongside the nursery, showcasing their wonderful plants in what they describe as 'exuberantly planted borders'.

In her talk Laura will be sharing how she goes about creating beautiful borders. She says that 'colour is her main driver' often picking bunches of flowers to look at new combinations, never afraid to move and replant. She also looks for great autumn colour. 'Its important to find plants that die back beautifully'. Using grasses, perennials, annuals and biennials she will talk about how she creates beautiful, ever-changing borders. A talk not to be missed!

### **Membership**

If you still need to update your membership, you can come along to a meeting at Lydbury North Village Hall and give your details and payment to our Membership Secretary Sandra Bailey, who sits at the door ready to greet everyone. Alternatively, you can pay by transfer, using the details below. Please ensure you email your name, address and phone number to Sandy.

£15 covers attendance to all our meetings for a year; early access to trips and events with subsidised tickets; seed offers and plant sales. We are also affiliated to the RHS. Such a bargain!

Payment can be made with cash or cheque at our meetings or by transfer to:

South West Shropshire Gardening Club

sort code 20-53-22

account number 80754803.

Please add your name as reference and email [sandy\\_burton@btinternet.com](mailto:sandy_burton@btinternet.com) to let her know.

### **Summer trip to Hidcote Manor and Kiftsgate Court Gardens, Chipping Camden**

#### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June**

National Trust members. Club members: £15. Guests: £20

Non NT members. Club members: £29. Guests: £34

Tickets are subsidised by the club and will be on sale from this month's meeting. The coach will leave the Community College in Bishops Castle at 9am and return between 6.30-7.00.

Hidcote is a world-famous Arts and Crafts-inspired garden where colourful and intricately designed spaces are full of surprises. Many of the unusual plants were collected from around the world by the horticulturist Major Lawrence Johnston who created the garden.

Kiftsgate Court Garden has evolved organically under the care of three women, from the 1930s onwards. There are beautiful borders, wild areas, orchards, water features and woods to explore and enjoy.

Buy your tickets at meetings or from [annie.frost@icloud.com](mailto:annie.frost@icloud.com).

### **Noel's trees**

Mellie and I had a lovely morning going to the Dingle and Derwent nurseries in order to choose a tree for the committee to give in memory of Anne's husband Noel. We came back with Anne huddled in the front seat surrounded by twigs poking through from the boot! (Well, maybe someone else bought a tree and a plant or two – what do you expect with three gardeners approaching Spring!) Anne chose Aesculus indica (Indian Horse Chestnut). This will grow to 12x8m and has bronze leaflets when opening. White flowers are spotted with yellow and then



flushed with pink in mid Summer. This will look magnificent with Noel's other trees: Spanish oak; red stemmed lime; copper beech; fir and an ornamental crab apple (the latter donated by the Clunton Scrumpers!)

The following week, Mellie and I walked up to see the trees, via the woods that Anne planted years ago. Noel loved trees so this is the perfect way to remember him.

I think Anne was getting peckish when admiring the bright green new growth of Hawthorne. "You can eat these" she said, tucking in. Mellie followed...I took a photo and watched their faces as the flavour came through. Don't think it will be a regular on the menu. Anne's flapjacks and coffee were much tastier.



### **Mellie's talk**

I know those of you who attended Mellie's talk on aeoniums will agree that it was extremely informative and enjoyable. What you may not know is that Mellie would not take any payment. However, when the committee realised the extent of damage to her collection due to frost and power cuts, we decided that we would like to contribute to replenishing her collection. Mellie chose the following aeoniums: "cup cake", "Saturn", tabuliforma x mobile, canariense var Californicum and glutinous.



## **RHS affiliation**

The club is affiliated to the RHS. We receive the monthly magazine which can be borrowed, as well as back numbers. These are available from the table at the back of the hall where we display other items of interest and news.

Also, we have a discount card which can be used by up to two members of the club to gain 50% off entry to any RHS garden. Please ask me to borrow the card if you are planning a trip to an RHS Garden.

Plant Heritage journals have also arrived and will be by the notice boards at the back of the hall. These are full of interesting information so do take a look. This will also be good for Sara's morale – she stores these boards and lugs them to and fro every meeting!

## **Plant Hunters' Fairs**

Rather than going to pricey garden centres with limited variety on offer, these fairs are well worth a visit (or several!) The plant fairs bring together some of the best independent plant nurseries from across the country with a brilliant choice of plants to delight every gardener. The entrance charges on these special days are such good value, often up to half the standard garden entry price.

The fairs are also valuable fundraisers for our venues and every penny of the entrance fees goes to the venues to help them keep going after these tough times.

These fairs and gardens also make a great destination for group outings.

### **Plant Hunters' Fairs for March and April 2023**

(The Fairs for the remainder of the year are published on the Resources page on our website)

#### **March**

Sunday 19 Southwell Minster, NG25 0HD 11am-4pm Plant Fair £2.00 **NEW SPRING FAIR**

Saturday 25 Sugnall Walled Garden, Eccleshall ST21 6NF 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £1.00

Sunday 26 Arley Hall, Northwich, CW9 6NA 10am-4pm Plant Fair £2.00

#### **April**

Saturday 1 Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster DY11 5TB 10am-4pm **Free Entry to Fair**

Sunday 2 Ness Botanic Gardens, Wirral, CH64 4AY 10am-4pm Plant Fair £1.00

Good Friday 7 Whittington Castle, Oswestry, SY11 4DF 10am-4pm Plant Fair & Castle Grounds **Free Entry** (P&D Parking)

Easter Sunday - Monday 9 - 10 Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton TF9 4EU 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair £5.00

Sunday 16 Middleton Hall, Tamworth B78 2AE 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £3.50 **TICKET REQUIRED**

Saturday 22 1620s House, Donington Le Heath, LE67 2FW 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £1.00 **TICKET REQUIRED**

Sunday 23 Cholmondeley Castle, Malpas, SY14 8AH 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair £5.00

Sunday - Monday 30 April - 1 May Weston Park, Shifnal TF11 8LE 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £4.00 **TICKET REQUIRED\***

PLEASE always check event status before travelling at [www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk](http://www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk)

\* For Weston Park advance purchase tickets are at the special discounted price of £4.00 (plus small booking fee). Tickets not on sale after 9am on the day of the fair. Without a ticket, venue entry price of £8.00 applies.

**For more information contact [janet@planthuntersfairs.co.uk](mailto:janet@planthuntersfairs.co.uk)**

## **Flower of the Month Competition**

This is Heather Moakes who won last month with her beautiful Tete a Tete Boucher.



Please bring a single cut bloom or spray from your garden, if you would like to join in The Flower of the Month Competition. I appreciate there are few flowers at this time of the year but it's amazing what you find when you look carefully! It doesn't have to be exotic.

That's all for this month. I look forward to seeing you at our meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> – and to receiving inspiration for my borders and the chance to treat myself to some new plants!

Angie Salmon  
Chair

PS Don't forget we are also on Facebook!