

South West Shropshire Gardening Club

Newsletter



April 2024



I went to RHS Bridgewater with some Pickleball friends on 10th April. Unfortunately, when we saw this sign, we felt that we were the ones being watered because it poured with rain for our entire visit! The Spring bulbs were lovely and we saw the most enormous yellow tulips. The Weston Walled Garden is magnificent but at this time of year much of it is bare earth sporting numerous labels, showing promise of plants to follow. This is a good day out with plenty to explore but being cold and wet did not entice us round the woodland walks, Ellesmere Lake and the Chinese Streamside Garden,



which is currently under development. Basically, our visit was too early – the postcards and guide book show how gorgeous this place is a little later in the year, so we will be back (especially as we can use our entry discount card of 50% from the club's affiliation to the RHS).



Bumbles on blooms

Thought you might be interested in this nationwide project by the RHS and supported by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. The aim is to identify which plants are visited most by bumblebees in Spring thus helping these vital pollinators to thrive. Up to 31st May participants can spot and photograph bumblebees on flowers in parks and gardens and then record them online or via an app. An RHS wildlife specialist will monitor results and then use the data to advise gardeners which plants are best for supporting bumblebees in Spring. The availability of flowers in Spring is critically important for helping them establish successful colonies at the start of the season.

How to get involved

1. Photograph bumblebees on flowers
2. Check the identity of your bumblebees. For more help visit rhs.org.uk/bumblesonblooms
3. Add your records to the Bumbles on Blooms project on iNaturalist app

Elevated Gardening Beds

John Hunter from Pentre contacted me with news of the elevated beds he has created specifically for gardeners with mobility issues or wheelchair users. They are made from galvanised steel and can be made to the customer's specific requirements. They can come with organic and peat-free growing medium. If you know anyone who could benefit from these, please contact john.b.hunter@btinternet.com or phone 07899946643.

Summer Trip: Wednesday 19th June

Hereford Cathedral and Kencheste Water Gardens



Leaving BC at 9am. Private tour of the 15c Cathedral Gardens spread over four acres, includes Courtyard, Cloister & Vicars Garden, Choral Garden, Deans Garden and Bishops Garden. Split into two private tours 11am and 12 pm. The latter two gardens are not usually open to the public. Extra time for enjoying other areas of the cathedral such as The Mappa Mundi and Chained Library (optional - tickets to be bought by individuals). There is an excellent cafe or you could bring your own packed lunch, but save room in your tummy for afternoon tea included in the price at:

2.15 pm we make our way to Kencheste Water Gardens which is justifiably proud of being the Holder of the National Collection of Hardy Water Lilies. There are over two hundred varieties, most of which are available to buy as potted plants. We will have time to relax with tea/coffee and cake and stroll around the beautiful water gardens, visit the nursery and shop before leaving at 4.30. Arrive back at BC approximately 5.30 pm.




Tickets cost £20 for members and £23 for non-members and will be available at our April and May meetings. Payment can be by cash, cheque or BACS (details in membership paragraph of this newsletter). They are non-refundable. Please email Sandy to let her know you have paid: sandy_burton@btinternet.com and supply a reference of "Trip" for a payment by BACS.

Next meeting: Wednesday 24th April

Chinese Gardens and Landscapes – a talk by Liz O'Rourke

SOUTH WEST SHROPSHIRE GARDENING CLUB



Chinese Gardens and Landscapes
A talk by Liz O'Rourke

Wednesday 24th April at 7.30 pm
Lydbury North Village Hall

FREE TO MEMBERS (annual membership £20). GUESTS WELCOME: £5
For more information contact Angie Salmon on 01588 661025 or email angiesalmon@gmail.com
www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk Also on Facebook.

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



Liz O'Rourke lives in north Herefordshire and is a keen gardener opening her garden, Hillcroft for the NGS since 2018, although this year will be the last. Her roses featured on Gardeners' World last year.

Liz will talk about 'Chinese Gardens and the Chinese Landscape' which is based on two trips made to China in 2017 and 2019, where she visited various gardens, including the famous gardens of Suzhou. The Chinese have a deep connection with the natural landscape and this has been reflected in their approach to garden design through the centuries.

Membership

Membership costs £20 to cover 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 to let her know.

Peat-free compost

Following our interesting talk in February on Plant Propagation, some important issues were raised about using peat-free compost. If anyone has any suggestions/ advice or tips about how to use peat-free compost successfully, I would be glad to continue this discussion in our newsletters or via the notice board at our meetings.

Plant Hunters' Fairs Calendar 2024

When a plant fair takes place within a garden, we arrange a special reduced entry price to the garden. Some gardens on these days are half-price (or better) entry to the garden and entry to the fair is included. Other fairs are free or with a small charge or donation that all goes to maintaining the venue.

Always check event status before travelling at www.planthuntersfairs.co.uk

If you need any further information, you wish to organise a group visit to an event, or you are able to display posters at your meetings, please contact us for:

- Our 2024 calendar and event posters for you to print (also on our website)
- Assistance with booking in a coach to an event
- Full details of each fair including nurseries attending (also on our website).

These are the plant fairs taking place over the next two months:

Sun 14 April Middleton Hall, Tamworth B78 2AE 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £4.00 TICKETED

Wednesday 17 April Bramall Hall, Bramhall, SK7 3NX Fair: £2.00

Sun 21 April 1620s House, Donington Le Heath LE67 2FW 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £1.00 TICKETED

Sat 27 April Chasewater Country Park, Brownhills WS8 7NL 10am-4pm Country Park & Fair Free Entry P&D Parking

Sun 28 April Cholmondeley Castle Gardens, Malpas SY14 8ET 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair £5.00

Sun - Mon 5 - 6 May Weston Park, Shifnal TF11 8LE 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £4.00 TICKETED

Sat 11 May Battlefield 1403, Shrewsbury SY4 3DB 9:30am-4pm Fair Free Entry

Sun 12 May Capesthorne Hall, Macclesfield SK11 9JY 10am-4pm Gardens & Fair £4.00

Sun 19 May Norton Priory, Runcorn WA7 1SX 10am-4pm Plant Fair £1.00

Sat 25 May Carsington Water, Ashbourne DE6 1ST 10am-4pm Country Park & Fair Free Entry P&D Parking

Mon 27 May Arley Arboretum, Upper Arley Worcs DY12 1SQ 10am-4pm Plant Fair Free Entry

If you want more information about a particular plant fair, please contact janet@planthuntersfairs.co.uk

CALLING ALL OUR GARDENER FOLLOWERS*

This year, we are once again entering into the brigades 'Stations in Bloom' competition.

The theme is 'Food for Thought' and we need your help.

We are looking for donations of edible plants, salads, vegetable and fruits to grow around the station grounds. We aim to produce a pretty display, with anything grown donated to a food bank after judging in July.

So, if anyone would be kind enough to send any surplus you may have our way, we would be very grateful. Please message the page, or drop anything off at the fire station if you can help.

A Message from Clun Fire Station

CALLING ALL OUR GARDENER FOLLOWERS

This year, we are once again entering into the brigades 'Stations in Bloom' competition.

The theme is 'Food for Thought' and we need your help.

We are looking for donations of edible plants, salads, vegetable and fruits to grow around the station grounds. We aim to produce a pretty display, with anything grown donated to a food bank after judging in July.

So, if anyone would be kind enough to send any surplus you may have our way, we would be very grateful. Please message the page, or drop anything off at the fire station if you can help.

Sparc Spring Sale

Please note: there will be a Spring Plant Sale for SPARC on Saturday April 20th from 9am to 1 pm outside Wrights Army Surplus Supplies in Church St. Bishops Castle
All proceeds will go to Save the SPARC so don't miss out on a bargain in aid of a good cause!



Flower of the Month

Congratulations to Helen Brown who won our March competition with this stunning camelia.



Please bring a single cut bloom or spray from your garden, if you would like to join in The Flower of the Month Competition. It's always interesting to see what people have in their gardens!

Please note that in order to be fair, we can only accept **one** entry from each participant.

The Committee is looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Wednesday 24th April. Sorry I will be busy sunbathing in Bonnie Scotland! Mellie will also be away seeking aeoniums in Somerset and Cornwall so please support the rest of the committee as much as possible

Angie Salmon
Chair