

South West Shropshire Gardening Club

Newsletter

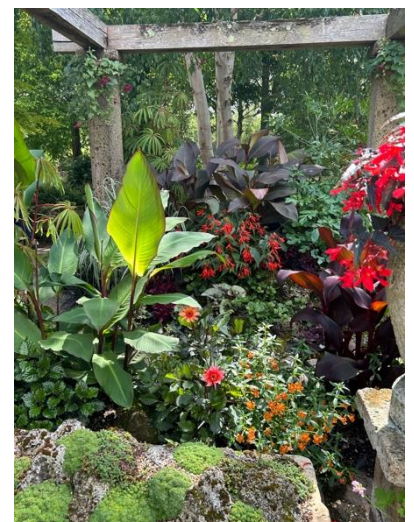


July 2025

We have had some wonderful gardening club trips this Summer. On 25th June we went to Cholmondely Castle Gardens in Malpas, Cheshire. There were spectacular views, stunning lakes full of water lilies, beautiful trees, shrubs, flower beds and meadows. We enjoyed an excellent tour with the Head Gardener and all the staff and volunteers were happy to answer our questions as we strolled around. A return visit in the Spring to admire the cherry blossom and bulbs is being contemplated... If you would like to see more photos (I did get a bit carried away because everywhere was so beautiful!), please look under outings on our website: www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk



On July 7th we went to Ashwood Nurseries and John's Garden, Kingswinford DY6 0AE. I knew it would be good but it was AMAZING! We had an introductory tour and then had the garden exclusively to ourselves. It was heaven! There was so much variety and interest around every corner – I particularly loved the pool and rock garden; herbaceous borders, island bed; stumpery and the terrace and ruin garden, to name but a



few. There were such beautiful plant combinations, including several enormous pots which were works of art in themselves.

Lunch in the café was a delicious treat and we might have bought just a few plants from the excellent nursery...

There are lots more photos on our website under outings.



John's Garden

Bees

As part of our focus on bees this year, I am writing about different bumblebees each month. This month is the turn of the Hairy-Footed Flower Bee – how could I resist with a name like that! It is a solitary bee species, common in gardens and other urban areas, particularly in southern England. The male emerges from hibernation first in late February/early March. They prefer to nest in soft mortar or soil. The male is rusty brown with orange hairs on the middle legs and feet. The female is black and furry with bright orange pollen baskets. They are important pollinators for early Spring plants like primroses, lungwort and comfrey. They have a quick darting flight which helps to distinguish them from bumblebees.



The Hairy-Footed Flower Bee

Hardy Plants Society

Annie Frost (our previous Chair) has alerted me to the fact that the HPS will be increasing its membership fee in January, from £17 to £40 per year. She is concerned that anyone paying by direct debit and automatic renewal might find this increase a bit of a shock!

Purslow Show, Saturday 26th July, from 12pm

Although this show features a gymkhana, dog show, clay pigeon shoot, bouncy castle, light refreshments etc, a huge part of the show is the Handicraft and Produce Marquee where all sorts of growers and gardeners show off their skills and enthusiasm. It is a fun day out, set in beautiful countryside and there are lots of interesting stalls representing local people.

If you miss our gardening club show, then why not enter some of the classes at Purslow? There are over 100 classes to choose from including flowers, flower arranging, handicrafts, photography, cookery, store cupboard e.g. jam, chutney, cordial etc, garden produce and children's classes. Closing date for entries Tuesday 22nd July. Programmes will be available at our July meeting or can be found in local shops. Enquiries to Becky Huffer 07811187048

Plant Fairs

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 in these tough times. 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

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2025

Plant Hunters Fairs

Summer / Autumn Dates

(earlier dates overleaf)



Sunday 22 June Middleton Hall
Tamworth B78 2AE 9am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00 **TICKETED**

Sunday 29 June Whittington Castle
Oswestry SY11 4DF 10am-4pm Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)

Sunday 6 July Thoresby Park
Newark NG22 9EP 10am-4pm Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)

Wednesday 23 July Cholmondeley Castle Gardens
Malpas SY14 8ET 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00

Sunday 27 July 1620s House
Donington Le Heath LE67 2FW 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £1.00 **TICKETED**

Sunday 3 August Southwell Minster
NG25 0HD 11am-4pm Plant Fair £2.00

Saturday 9 August Carsington Water
Ashbourne DE6 1ST 10am-4pm Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)

Sunday 10 August Capethorne Hall Gardens
Macclesfield SK11 9JY 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00

 **NEW Sunday 17 August Middleton Hall**
Tamworth B78 2AE 9am-4pm Gardens and Fair £4.00 **TICKETED**

Sunday - Monday 24 - 25 August Dorothy Clive Garden
Market Drayton TF9 4EU 10am-5pm Gardens and Fair £5.00

Saturday 30 August Bodenham Arboretum
Kidderminster DY11 5TB 10am-4pm Plant Fair Free Entry

 **NEW Sunday 31 August Chasewater Country Park**
Brownhills WS8 7NL 10am-4pm Free Entry (Normal Parking Charges Apply)

Sunday 7 September Weston Park
Shifnal TF11 8LE 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £5.00 **TICKETED**

 **NEW Sunday 14 September Arley Hall Gardens**
Northwich CW9 6NA 10am-4pm Gardens and Fair £5.00

New Hope Day Lilies Open Weekend

Colebatch Farm SY9 5JY

19/20 July; 26/27 July.

Day lilies flower from mid-June-Sept but July is the best month to see the majority of blooms.

Open 11-4pm. Pop-up open air café with homemade cakes. Payments by cash or card. Toilets available.

The owners, Liz and Fi are coming to talk at our meeting on July 23rd.

Iolo Williams

Naturalist and broadcaster at The Sparc, Bishops Castle

Wednesday 17th September, 7.15

Talk and supper. £15 from [ticketsource.co.uk](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk) or contact Noel's Swanson 01588 638246 or Nicky Boyd 01588 638780

Open gardens

Clun Open Gardens weekend went really well. Thanks to Helen Brown for supplying these two photos of floral displays in the church. The theme this year was the magic of music and these two exhibits were depicting Swan Lake and Give me Sunshine in your Smile.



Congratulations to Eileen and her team for a very successful open garden in Diddlebury. There were eleven gardens to view which included an organic smallholding, large herbaceous beds, wildlife ponds and “a joyful space created by the children of the Corvedale Primary School



Becoming a Plant Guardian

As many of you know SWSGC subscribes to Plant Heritage home to the National Collections! Part of the work PH does is safe guard plants that are either threatened with extinction or in need of further cultivation for fear of becoming threatened with extinction part of their extensive conservation program. Many establishments such as Great Daxter, Hampton Court palace, Wollerton old hall and Powis Castle hold many of these plants even Buckingham Palace etc. Members of Plant Heritage can register as 'Plant Guardians' Here is how it works; A plant guardian gets a free plant/s to look after and propagate and share into the wider community, each plant guardian registers the plant/s they hold with PH, the register is to help keep track of these precious and often exceedingly rare cultivars. Many of the plants are easy to care for and the full range of plants are offered in an annual 'plant exchange' for Plant Heritage members, sadly Shropshire does not have a group anymore so we don't get to be part of it, so I, Mellie, have registered myself with the Hereford group. This year I have asked the conservation officer of Plant Heritage if as a 'group' the garden club could join the scheme. I took the initiative and asked for quite a few plants from the plant exchange, as you can imagine garden plants and bulbs are very popular for ease of maintenance and for the rarity value, such as rare snowdrop bulbs, usually these have hundreds of people asking for the same bulb...often only one available! So, I went for some less popular plants such as pelargoniums, which need over wintering and succulents. I have had delivered some absolute 'corkers'!! Just small young rooted cuttings that are all very special and endangered, many from Hampton Court Palace Surrey. If members of the Garden Club would like to become a 'guardian' of a plant then I have a selection which I will bring to the July meeting. Mandy and I will be on hand to register you as a Plant Guardian and you can choose a plant from the selection on a first come first serve basis! I stress, that if the plant dies there is no 'guilty' pressure you just need to let me know that it passed away. Each plant gets a special label. Once the plants are big enough for propagation we can share with each other. There is no cost so even those on a tight budget can take part. I only ask that plants are not sold on, if anyone has propagated then it should firstly be offered to the group and if not wanted by a group member please offer back to the scheme. Or if you have friends or relationships that would like to be a plant guardian they can register with Mandy or myself. I think this will be really good fun, and we will be adding to conservation of cultivated plants so that future generations can enjoy their beauty.

Mellie Lewis: runningwiththeredfox@gmail.com

Monoprint Workshops



A small group of club members enjoyed a walk around Sarah Jameson's meadow on a balmy summer evening recently. She also displayed some of her artwork that she has created: using wild flowers and foliage to produce beautiful cards and prints. Sarah is holding two afternoon workshops for us, so that we can learn to learn the technique of monoprinting. These will be held at Lydbury North Village Hall on the afternoons of September 25th and October 2nd. She will provide all the paper and printing materials, and the participants are invited to bring their own favourite plants for printing. The cost is £32 for the afternoon's session at which we can create our own unique prints/cards. If you would like to reserve a place on either workshop, please contact Elly Bibby (0780 2497780)

For Veg growers: Real Seeds

Mandy Ford buys seeds from this company and says they are very good quality. In their newsletter, they point out that “when you’re surrounded by summer vegetables, it’s easy to forget that it’s important to sow now to keep the harvests coming through into winter. If you’re limited on space, sow in modules or small pots so that you can fill in gaps in your plot as you harvest”.

What to sow this month

- Carrots (direct only, ideally by 3rd week July)
- Beetroot & Fennel to eat from autumn into winter
- Turnips, winter radishes & kohlrabi for winter salads & stir fries
- Mizuna, mibuna & Chinese cabbage plus spicy mustard greens for cooking
- Successional showings of lettuce (but beware, it won’t germinate if temperatures are too high) & annual herbs
- Other salad crops including claytonia, rocket, corn salad & winter cress
- Chicory and endive
- Other greens including winter varieties of true spinach, plus last chance for kale, chard & leaf beet

Start spring cabbage varieties from mid-July-August in modules or a seedbed ready to plant out in early autumn.

Check out our summer growing guide for a fuller list of all the things you could be sowing over the next couple of months.

Recipe: Rhiannon’s baby courgettes with lemon & basil

Every year in the height of the glut I search for new and exciting ways to cook with courgettes, but when the first few appear I like to keep it simple. It feels really decadent to pick courgettes when they are so tiny, but they are utterly delicious and tender.

Ingredients:

However many baby courgettes you can pick, with their flowers

A couple of cloves of garlic

Half a lemon

Extra virgin olive oil

A large handful of fresh basil

Slice the courgettes and flowers lengthways, and check the flowers for insects.

Fry the courgettes in a generous glug of olive oil for a few minutes each side, adding in a clove or two of crushed garlic.

Once the courgettes are golden, add in the grated zest of half a lemon, and the courgette flowers- cook for a few more seconds until they are wilted.

Season with salt and pepper, a squeeze of lemon juice and chuck in a generous handful of basil.

This is delicious eaten straight away, or cold as a salad.

Committee

If you would like to join our merry band and help with the running of the club, please feel free to ask questions or talk to any member of the current committee. You do not have to know anything about gardening!!

Peat-free?

This issue has been raised several times at meetings and I know many members feel strongly about this. If you would like to further support a peat-free approach then you may like to sign the petition which is urging the RHS to take action. Go to [Urging the Royal Horticultural Society to Commit to a Peat-Free Policy for All Flower Show-United Kingdom-Change.org](https://www.urgingtheroyalhorticulturalsocietytocommittoapeat-freepolicyforallflowershows-uk.change.org)

RHS Affiliation

Don't forget that our club is affiliated to the RHS so I can lend you a discount card which offers 50% off entry to any RHS Garden (Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor and Wisley). It is not accepted for visits during Flower Shows and Glow Illumination events.


Next meeting: Wednesday 23rd July

New Hope Day Lilies (as seen on Gardener's World, episode 22, 2024)

The Perfect Perennial

New Hope Daylilies is a specialist nursery with over 390 Hemerocallis cultivars in Colebatch, South Shropshire. As seen on *Gardeners' World* last August, co-owners Fiona and Liz look forward to introducing you to the daylily revealing facts to surprise as well as help you plan where best and how best to grow this often-overlooked hardy perennial.

SOUTH WEST SHROPSHIRE GARDENING CLUB




The Perfect Perennial
A talk by Fiona and Liz from
Newhope Day Lilies

Wednesday 23rd July 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
angiesalmon12@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.



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



A talk by the owners Liz Colebrook and Fi Pidduck, plus plants for sale.

Meeting: September

The Scented Garden
24th September 2025
Lydbury North Village Hall

Gail Plant will bring plants and flowers from her garden that are out at the time of her visit and will talk around them including some history, science and garden facts. Her talk will be interactive so you can all enjoy a lovely fragrant evening.

On retirement, Gail and her husband bought a property to do up, which had a large plot of land with just a few pear trees and nothing else. So, she hit the books again and started studying all about herbs, to do a herb garden. Specialist nurseries, including David Austin's allowed her to get bulk orders at wholesale prices and she also started cultivating herbs, and selling on the plant fair circuit. Lecturing came about through chatting to an old farmer on several wet and cold markets, who advised me selling plants was a mugs game and lecturing you could do in the warm. Thirty plus years I lecture to groups and do some design and advice on planting to my clients.

SOUTH WEST SHROPSHIRE GARDENING CLUB



The Scented Garden
Gail Plant will use and talk about scented examples from her September garden

Wednesday 24th September at 7.30 pm

FREE TO MEMBERS (annual membership £20), GUESTS WELCOME: £5
For more information contact Angie Salmon on 01588 661025 or email angiesalmon12@gmail.com
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Membership

Membership costs £20 to cover attendance at all our meetings for a year (from October); early access to trips and events with subsidised tickets; seed offers and plant sales. Only £10 from April to October, which includes subsidised tickets for trips. We are also affiliated to the RHS so you are able to borrow our discount card which provides 50% discount for two people to any RHS garden. Such a bargain!

Payment can be made with cash, cheque or card 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 our Treasurer Alleyne to let him know:

aandpcopestake@hotmail.com

Hampton Court Palace Festival

Congratulations to Mellie Lewis for winning a Silver Gilt Medal at the Hampton Court Festival!

Here is a photograph of her stand at Hampton

At the next meeting she will also talk about PH plant guardians, and she and Mandy will hand out the plants and register those taken!



Flower of the Month

There was no competition in June due to our trip but July will continue as usual.

Please bring a single bloom or spray from your garden in order to participate. Points are given each month and then an overall winner is announced and rewarded in October.

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

I am unable to attend the July meeting on Wednesday 23rd; we do not have a meeting in August so I look forward to seeing you in September. Enjoy the rest of the Summer!

Angie Salmon
Chair