

HASLEMERE GARDENING SOCIETY

"C U T T I N G S - 7"

"Cut your weeds in May, they're here to stay. Cut them in June you're a month too soon. Cut them in July and they will die." - Old saying.

DIARY DATES:	<u>National Shows: - 2000.</u>
	Grow 2000, Sandown Exhibition Centre
	Esher, Surrey
	15 - 16 April
	Chelsea Flower Show
	23 - 26 May
	Wisley Flower Show
	27 - 29 June
	Hampton Court Flower Show
	4 - 9 July
	Wisley Flower Show
	22 - 24 August.

For Chelsea addicts, please note that this year there will be more open space, with wider walkways and bigger areas in which to relax. The most important change is the removal of the old canvas marquee, and its replacement with two huge airy pavilions. The new lay-out should make it easier to find your way around the show.

Plant sales and local events:-

Saturday 13 May - NCCPG (National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens) Plant Sale at Millais Nursery, Crosswater Farm, Churt, from 11a.m. - 4p.m. Refreshments and parking available. A number of local nurseries will also be attending.

Saturday and Sunday 17 & 18 June from 11a.m. - 5p.m. Unusual Plants Fair in the Park, Gilbert White's House, Selborne, Hampshire. A wide range of plants will be available for purchase.

Vine Weevils; few gardens are now without these troublesome insects, the grubs of which attack the roots of our plants. A new product called, Bio Provado Vine Weevil Killer, which contains imidacloprid, has recently become available in the Garden Centres. Provado contains granules which dissolve in water, making a soil drench. It is said to give six months protection against vine weevil grubs.

Slugs; those members who attended the excellent lecture by Mike Shadrach, last year, on Hostas, will remember the advice he gave on trying to minimize slug damage to these decorative plants. It is worth re-stating. He uses the blue mini pellets - the latest formula of which, he confirmed, is not harmful to birds, domestic pets etc. - starting on St Valentine's Day and repeating at ten day intervals throughout the growing season. The pellets should be sprinkled thinly around the plants. To obtain complete success this routine should be followed for at least three years. Personally, I use liquid Slugit around the plants, early in the year, followed by the pellets as the leaves unfurl. This has given good results.

Favourite plants: Last year 'Gardening from Which' asked a number of eminent gardeners, if they could take only one plant into the next millennium, what would it be?

Surely an impossible question, but here are a few of the answers they received. Incidentally the most popular plant of all was - Acer griseum.

Alan Bloom chose Achillea 'Moonshine'. (A plant he had bred himself.)

Dr David Hessayon - author of the 'Expert' Gardening book series, chose the groundcover rose, Rosa 'Hertfordshire' - single pinky red flowers.

Christopher Bailes - Curator of the RHS Garden at Rosemoor, chose Cornus controversa 'Variegata' - the wedding cake tree.

Peter Hall, Head Gardener, Powis Castle, chose, Meconopsis x sheldonii - a blue poppy.

Judy Harry, Vice Chairman of the Hardy Plant Society, chose, Corydalis cheilanthifolia - yellow flowers, fern-like leaves.

What would you choose?

S.E. Cateur

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"C U T T I N G S" - 8

"Real gardens are never perfect - they are always better last week or next season; they represent years of trials and triumphs." - Mary Keen: Horticultural writer & Garden Designer.

DIARY DATES:

17 - 18 June	Unusual Plants Fair in the Park, Gilbert White's House, Selborne, Hampshire.
4 - 9 July	Hampton Court Flower Show.
15 - 16 July	Parham Garden Weekend at Parham House gardens near Pulborough, W. Sussex; 11a.m. - 6p.m. admission £5-25 (includes house and garden). 70 nurseries will be attending. Refreshments available.
21 - 23 July	The Great Gardening Show at Loseley House grounds, Guildford. Open 10a.m. - 6p.m. daily. Invited nurseries together with other stalls selling gardening sundries.
22 - 24 August	Wisley Flower Show.
9 September	NCCPG Plant Sale - Wisley Gardens car park 11a.m. - 4p.m. 14 nurseries will be attending plus the NCCPG stall.

'Jack Frost'. Although perfectly acceptable any night between November and March, he can be damaging in April and disastrous in May. Frosts are so likely between 11 - 14 May that saints, whose feast days fall between these dates, St. Pancras and St. Boniface are two, are known as the "Frost Saints". The period is also called the "Blackthorn Winter" because of its untimely cold spells.

Deadheading Roses. Further research has shown that snapping off the spent blooms is more conducive to encouraging a second flush of flowers than cutting back to a pair of leaves.

Compost. Domestic refuse typically contains at least 20-30 per cent paper and cardboard. Much of this is worth re-cycling, but the rest usually gets chucked in the bin. A new study by the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) has found that paper and cardboard, added to kitchen waste and garden refuse, helps to make much better compost, producing a high fibre mixture with a good ratio of carbon to nitrogen. Now you know what to do with the inner tube of the loo roll!

The best method is to put all the non-recyclable paper and card, preferably balled or torn up, into a container until its full, and then spread it on the compost heap mixed with the grass mowings and other garden waste. Do not save it up and put it on the compost in huge batches. There is no need to turn the heap, cover it, or attend to it in any way.

New Clematis Nursery. Clematis enthusiasts will be interested to know that the Gibbison family, who run a wholesale nursery business specialising in clematis and other climbers, have recently opened a retail outlet. They trade as "The Clematis Centre" and are open Mondays to Saturdays 9a.m. - 5 p.m. and on Sundays 10a.m. - 4 p.m. They have about 180 varieties on sale. The address is Ripley Road, Send, Woking, Surrey, and for convenience in finding it, is opposite HM Prison, Send! They are open under the Yellow Book scheme on 18 June and 10 September.

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"C U T T I N G S" – 9

"What a man needs in gardening is a cast-iron back with a hinge in it."

DIARY DATES	NCCPG Plant Fair, Wisley Gdn in front of picnic area	21 April 10.30a.m. – 3p.m.
	Chelsea Flower Show	22 May – 25 May
	Unusual Plants Fair in the Park – Gilbert White's House Selborne, Hampshire.	16 – 17 June
	Hampton Court Flower Show	3 July – 8 July
	Wisley Flower Show	21 August – 23 August

Trees are the thirstiest of plants. An average birch has 200,000 leaves and a mature oak, 700,000. Covering the surface of each leaf are stomata, or small holes, through which oxygen and carbon dioxide pass, also water which transpires into the atmosphere. The rate of transpiration depends on a number of factors, but during the summer a birch will use 40 litres of water daily and a large oak 300 litres. With such a thirst newly planted young trees may need help, if the summer is very dry, with a good soak once a week.

Vine Weevil Control. 'Armillatox' usually used to combat Honey Fungus, Club Root and moss, has recently received approval as a control for vine weevil. It is not aimed at the larvae (which do all the damage), or the adult beetle, but is used to kill the eggs. Adult vine weevils are active between spring and autumn and lay their eggs during that time. The recommendation is spraying the soil surface every fortnight between late March and the end of October, and monthly at other times of the year. My own advice is to learn to live with them!

Field Woodrush. This lawn invader, prevalent in the Haslemere area, is particularly noticeable in the spring when the dark brown flowers appear. The leaf is like a rather stiff thick blade of grass. It is almost impossible to eradicate, but its spread can be inhibited by mowing off the seed heads before they ripen, spot treating the area with lime, to reduce the acidity, which it likes, and applying Lawn Sand to weaken it whilst stimulating the true grasses.

Slugs. To frighten yourself, go out with a torch on a damp night and count the number of slugs helping themselves to your flowers and vegetables. Not seen much in the day, they come out in extraordinary numbers after dark, especially in wet weather. As an experiment, 16,000 were removed from a single garden during the course of a year, and at the end there seemed to be no fewer than at the start. Many forms of control are suggested but I have had most success with liquid Slugit applied early in the year, followed by regular scatterings of pellets in the area to be protected.

Topical tips from the RHS. After the deluge we have experienced recently, which has resulted in many of the essential nutrients being washed from the soil, they suggest that extra fertiliser may be helpful if plants are seen not to be growing as well as they should. Sadly root disease is promoted by wet roots, so some losses can be expected; also water-logged roots are often damaged and extra watering may be necessary if we have dry spells in the summer.

Pruning evergreen shrubs – the RHS recommend that these are best treated in the spring before growth resumes. April and May are the ideal times.

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"C U T T I N G S" – 10

"Now there is evidence that gardening is good for your health, reducing stress levels, lowering blood pressure and even helping you to live longer."
Gay Search.

DIARY DATES	Hampton Court Flower Show	3 July – 8 July
	Parham Garden Weekend – Parham Gardens near Pulborough	
	West Sussex – 60 nurseries.	14 July – 15 July
	Loseley Park Great Gardening Show	
	Loseley Park, Guildford.	20 July – 22 July
	Wisley Flowers Show, RHS Gdns Wisley.	21 August – 23 August.
	NCCPG Plant Sale, Wisley Gdns Car Park	1 September

Local Gardens to visit:

Willow House, Highercombe Rd. 2–5p.m. 8 July
Yew Tree Cottage, Bunch Lane 2–6p.m. 19 August
– " – 6–8.30p.m. 23 August
the evening opening will provide an opportunity to stroll around your President's garden with a glass of wine for the inclusive price of £3 – a delightful way to spend a summer's evening, even if one has to hold an umbrella in the other hand!
High Meadow, Churt, on the Tilford Road with parking at the Avalon PYO. 2–5p.m. 26 & 27 August.

Tulips. Experience has shown that the larger flowered cultivars do not always flower well in their second year, indeed sometimes they fail to reappear. The RHS recommend that you dead-head after flowering and dig up the bulbs as soon as the foliage yellows. Clean up the bulbs and store in a cool airy place and then replant in the late autumn.

Lupin alert. A member advises that she has had problems with some recently purchased lupin plants. Reference to the RHS produced the answer that the trouble was due to a virus called Lupin Anthracnose. This is a fungus infection, recently introduced from the Continent, characterised by necrosis (dying back) of the young leaves, lesions on mature leaves and emerging flower stems and brown stain and rot on the crown. There is no chemical, or other form of treatment, and all you can do is to dig up and dispose of the plant.

Topical tips – Cutting back. In some cases this is essential, not only to tidying up the beds, but to prolong the vigour of the plant and encourage flowering:

Anthemis – although sold by the Nurseries as perennial plants, these floriferous daisies can be difficult to keep from one year to another. It is important to cut the old stems, right to the ground when flowering is over, and to put some fine mulch around the plant to help protect it from the winter weather.

Pulmonarias – cut back the old leaves at the same time as you remove the flower stems in order to promote new growth. (This should have been done in May)

Aquilegias – cut off the majority of old leaves and flower stems at this time of the year.

Hardy Geraniums – cut well back in mid-July to encourage a flush of new leaves and flowers.

Hellebores – remove all old leaves in November.

Violas – if the plants have become straggly, cut back to 3 inches from the ground at the end of July, otherwise in the autumn when you should give them a mulch. This is the key to maintaining violas perennially
S.E. Cateur

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"C U T T I N G S" – 11

"The first purpose of a garden is to be a place of quiet beauty such as will give delight to the eye and repose and refreshment to the mind." – Gertrude Jekyll

DIARY DATES	24 March	Camellia Celebration – Borde Hill Gardens, Haywards Heath, W. Sussex.
	26–28 April	Spring Plant Sale – Loseley Park, Guildford.
	11 May	Savill Gardens Plant Fair – Englefield Green, Egham.
	12 May	Claremont Spring Plant Fair – Portsmouth Rd, Esher.
	12 May	Petworth Spring Plant Fair – Petworth House, Petworth.
	21–24 May	Chelsea Flower Show – Royal Hospital, Chelsea.
	15–16 June	Unusual Plant Fair, Selborne – Gilbert White's House, Selborne, Hants.
	2–7 July	Hampton Court Palace Flower Show – East Molesey.
	26 May 2–6p.m.	Garden open –Yew Tree Cottage, Bunch Lane. – the garden of Ted & Maureen Bowyer and well worth a visit, even if you have been before.

Plant Finder. In the 15 years since this useful guide to locating where to find particular plants was first published, the number of entries in certain genera has increased dramatically. For example – Clematis from 296 to 875; Corydalis from 11 to 126; Geranium from 118 to 560 and Papaver orientale from 29 to 150. It is difficult to see an end to this, as something new is always attractive, although it is nice to know that some of the tried and tested old favourites are still holding their own.

Fasciation. If you should find a plant with a wide flattened flowering stem – delphiniums, euphorbias, foxgloves, lilies, veronicastrum and linarias can be affected, this is due to fasciation. It is probably caused by damage to the growing point from frost, slug damage or human intervention early in the season. No lasting damage is done and the plant should return to normal the following year.

Wisley have advised that 2001 was the year of the waterlogged root due to the very wet conditions in the autumn/winter 2000–1 which resulted in prolonged immersion of roots. This deprives them of oxygen leading to the death of roots and subsequently the whole plant. Tree and shrub losses continued last summer as their damaged root systems were unable to extract moisture fast enough to keep up with water loss from their foliage. In Haslemere with its free-draining sandy soil this should not have been so much of a problem, but it could be the reason for an unexplained loss last year.

Local Nursery. The nursery at Green Farm Plants, Bury Court, Bentley closed down at the end of October last year, but one of the partners, Marina Christopher is continuing the business, with a similar range of perennial plants, under the name of "Phoenix Perennial Plants" at Paice Lane, Medstead, Alton, Hants. Marina will open Thursday to Saturday commencing on 21 March.

It is understood that the very attractive show garden at Bury Court will continue to open for the public. Full details in the Yellow Book.

Topical tips:

Slug control: March is a good time to douse the soil around your hostas, veratrums and other plants liable to slug damage with liquid Slugit. This should be made up as directed and applied in a wide arc around the plants.

Clematis: if you have not already pruned your late flowering clematis – varieties of viticella, texensis and Jackmanii in particular – this should be done now, cutting them back to buds within a few inches of the ground.

Snowdrops: clumps should be split up immediately after flowering and before the foliage dies down.