

# Newsletter

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Dear Members,

Following the success of our first Zoom speaker meeting in January, we were looking forward to repeating this in February. Those of you who logged in will know that this was not the case and some 'unfortunate language' was heard from the speaker as we prepared to abandon the meeting. She has since sent an apology to David Ashcroft. Your Committee is sorry that this happened, and David was appreciative of the subsequent emails of support he received from members.

I am grateful to Robert Leeming for sending me the following cartoon, which serves to remind us all that microphones on electronic devices pick up everything and may NOT be your friend. It is therefore worth learning where the mute button is on your device!



Thus, there is no 'Speaker Report' in this newsletter, but the website of Garden Organic at Ryton Gardens does have a section devoted to the speaker's topic of the Heritage Seed Library. [www.gardenorganic.org.uk/hsl](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/hsl)

Hopefully next month's meeting at 8pm on Thursday 25th March will run smoothly. We are expecting Mick Poultny, aka 'The Compost King', ..... no prizes for guessing what he will be talking about! Please contact David Ashcroft by 12noon on Weds 24th March if you wish to join us on Zoom. A reminder regarding the "ground rules" for doing this and David's contact details are on page 2.

It remains uncertain if our Annual Show will go ahead on July 17th and our Show Secretary, (poor David again), is having dialogue with St. Peter's Church Hall, the judges etc. Your Committee also realises that members may have views as to whether they would feel comfortable attending the Show in July, given that the government's roadmap to fully release the country from lockdown is just 4 weeks prior on June 21st. Obviously, the stages of this map may slip between now and June, depending upon what happens to the Covid rates. Our options are as follows:

1. Go ahead on July 17th but with less classes to prevent St Peters' hall from being packed.
2. Hold an open - air 'mini show' at Helen Jones' Farm in August with a small number of classes.
3. Delay the show at St Peter's to the end of August / early September subject to the hall's availability, but this may clash with other shows normally held at this time and which some of our members also enter. Note: our BDHS holiday to Cornwall & Devon is scheduled for 7th – 10th Sept, IF it goes ahead.

Your Committee is divided as to which option would be preferred and as we have until April before the final decision must be made, please contact David if you have a view.

Welcome to new member Judy Lambourne who was instrumental in the re-vamp of the BDHS website. Finally, don't forget to check the noticeboard on page 2 for other information.

With best wishes to all members,

Marion

## NOTICEBOARD

- We were sorry to learn of the death of Life Member Bill Court on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, following several months of failing health. He was a familiar figure on his mobility scooter in Balsall Common, as he popped up and down from his home in Laurels Crescent to the shops. Our President, Jackie Tommie reports that Bill and his wife were longstanding members of BDHS and thinks that they were already members when she joined in the mid - 1990s. Both were staunch supporters of society activities, rarely missing a meeting and always attending the Annual Show. Bill was made an Honorary Life Member of BDHS in February 2019 and his daughter, Judy Moffatt, reported that this had made him as 'proud as punch'. A card of condolence from the Society has been sent to his wife and family.
- Despite being unable to hold our Annual Dinner, the Daffodil Competition is still being judged. You may remember that Narcissus 'Sailboat' bulbs were distributed to members last autumn. With no dinner at which to display and judge them, we are doing as we did last year. Please send a photograph of your pot of blooms **by Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March** to Angela Shaw ([ange\\_shaw@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ange_shaw@hotmail.co.uk)), so that they can be forwarded to last year's winner, Laura Eden, for judging.
- The closing date for receipt of photographs for the BDHS website is **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March**. Again, please send your photo to Angela Shaw as above, who will forward them to the judge for March. Photographs may be of your garden, flowers or a plant and **MUST** have been taken in March. Multiple entries are allowed, but only one prize place is available per member. Points awarded are 5 for 1<sup>st</sup> place, 3 for 2<sup>nd</sup> place and 2 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. This will continue until meetings resume in the Village Hall again.
- A reminder of the ground rules for joining Thursday Speaker Meetings via Zoom.
  1. Please contact David Ashcroft on [dja@krystalservices.plus.com](mailto:dja@krystalservices.plus.com) **by 12 noon on the previous day (WEDS)**. It is preferable that you log your intention to join the meeting even if you are not sure until Thursday evening. This is to avoid David being inundated with last minute requests.
  2. David will then acknowledge your request to join. Should you not receive this from David, please check your SPAM file first in case his email has gone in there, before you contact him again.
- BDHS is affiliated to the RHS and our Secretary, Angela, receives information from them. The following may be of interest.
  - The RHS Horticultural Show Handbook (revised 2016), price £8, is available from [shop.rhs.org.uk](http://shop.rhs.org.uk), in the books section under RHS publications.
  - RHS membership, 12months for the price of 9 if paying by annual direct debit, from £49.50 for the first year. Ts & Cs apply. Contact [rhs.org.uk/join/4004](http://rhs.org.uk/join/4004)
  - On – line speakers / You Tube videos for talks & advice from all over the UK & overseas.
  - New RHS floral & horticultural judges are needed for RHS shows. If interested in applying for training to become a new judge, email [affiliated@rhs.org.uk](mailto:affiliated@rhs.org.uk)

Please contact Angela (see above) should you need to quote our Affiliated Society membership number.

## COMPETITIONS PAGE

### An Easter Offering

With Easter falling at the very beginning of April, I thought that I would try and get you in the mood. The common names of the following plants have a connotation on the Easter theme, and are a mix of biblical references and secular images.

Please match a letter from the answers section to the numerical plants.

Eg ..... Mint (*Mentha x piperita* f. *citrata* ' ? ')

ANSWER = L (Chocolate Mint)

- |                       |                                  |              |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. .... Flower        | ( <i>Passiflora</i> spp.)        | A. Easter    |
| 2. .... weed          | ( <i>Stellaria media</i> )       | B. Egg       |
| 3. .... Artichoke     | ( <i>Helianthus tuberosus</i> )  | C. Lamb's    |
| 4. .... Tail Plant    | ( <i>Sedum morganianum</i> )     | D. Chick     |
| 5. Poached .... Plant | ( <i>Limnanthes douglasii</i> )  | E. Cross     |
| 6. Bird's .... Fern   | ( <i>Asplenium nidus</i> )       | F. Passion   |
| 7. .... Tree          | ( <i>Cercis siliquastrum</i> )   | G. Chocolate |
| 8. .... Ear           | ( <i>Stachys byzantina</i> )     | H. Donkey's  |
| 9. .... Tail Grass    | ( <i>Lagurus ovatus</i> )        | I. Nest      |
| 10. .... Cosmos       | ( <i>Cosmos atrosanguineus</i> ) | J. Jerusalem |
| 11. Maltese .....     | ( <i>Lychnis chalcedonica</i> )  | K. Judas     |
| 12. .... Lily         | ( <i>Lilium longiflorum</i> )    | L. Bunny's   |

Please send your answers to me on [marion.keeley@btinternet.com](mailto:marion.keeley@btinternet.com) or post to me at The Cottage, Fen End Farm, Oldwich Lane East, Fen End, Near Kenilworth, CV8 1NR, by **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March**.

Now it has been suggested that I have been making these puzzles too easy, but the various lockdowns have been gruelling for many, so please make the most of a bit of fun for the moment. We also have new members who have not gardened much before and it is important to encourage everyone. Be warned though, I may change my mind on the ease of puzzles as the year progresses!

### February's Wordsearch

All entrants found the potato terms in the wordsearch grid and correctly identified 'Potato Blight' from the letters left over. Well done to Mary & Edward Cotterrell, Celia & Cyril Davis, Laura Eden, David Felthouse, Amanda Ghent, David Hickson, Helen Jones, Henry Plumptre and Gill Whitehead. At our last Committee Meeting, it was suggested that we could post or deliver a copy of the RHS magazine, 'The Garden', to the entrant whose name is pulled from the hat.

This month's winner is Henry Plumptre, who will receive his magazine in the post.

### Results of the monthly BDHS website Photographic Competition

1. David Cotterrell - Violas
2. Angela Shaw - Aconites under a birch tree
3. Marion Keeley - Dwarf iris in a stone trough

- Deadhead spring bulbs as they finish flowering, leaving the leaves in place for at least 8 weeks or until they die down naturally.
- Lift and divide large clumps of Snowdrops.
- Finish cutting back / splitting hardy perennials and feed, then apply mulch to beds & around trees.
- Lift and divide herbs.
- Complete the pruning of Dogwood (Cornus) and Willow (Salix) where grown for winter colour.
- Complete the pruning of shrubs & climbers that flower on new growth such as Buddleja, Hydrangea, Lavatera, Sambucus and Hardy Fuchsias.
- Finish pruning late – summer flowering (from July onwards / Group 3) clematis.
- Plant woody shrubs so that the roots can start to grow before the demands of the foliage begins
- Mulch fruit trees and bushes; bare – rooted fruit can still be planted.
- Lawns can be mown lightly when dry, spike & feed if required, tidy up lawn edges. Grass seed may be sown & turf laid.
- Remove weeds from paving and gravel.
- Hardy annuals can be sown outdoors, but half – hardy annuals should be sown under glass to protect from frost.
- Plant Shallot / Onion sets, Asparagus, new Rhubarb crowns, Strawberry plants and early Potatoes.
- Plant out autumn sown Broad Bean seedlings.
- Start Dahlia tubers off in damp potting compost; when shoots appear these may be used for cuttings.
- Keep an eye open for slugs, snails and aphids.
- Clear ponds of dead foliage and re-pot aquatic plants to extend their life.

### Temple Balsall Spring Flowers

No ‘Snowdrop Sunday’ this year, but they have been delighted by the large number of informal visitors who came round in small groups. It seems that Temple Balsall is beginning to establish something of a local reputation as a nearby place to come to see the blooms at their best.



Much of this success is due to Temple Balsall’s unofficial ‘head gardener’ Adrian, who has been quietly building up the stocks over the last few years, and this year has planted a new swathe in the Walled Garden and increased the numbers along the Bread Walk. He has also proved himself an expert in welcoming and taking visitors round.

