

Balsall &
District



Horticultural
Society

July / August 2021

Newsletter

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Dear Members,

My apologies for not getting June's newsletter done. I had significant issues to cope with regarding my mother's care, prior to her passing away on 8th July. Mum, Beryl Wright, was a BDHS member some years ago and used to come to meetings with the late Jean Harvey, also of Fen End.

I did manage to get to most of the Berkswell Open Gardens, although sadly not to Meriden's Open Gardens. I felt that members Flick Wheeler, with husband Geoff, and Angela & Ken Shaw, did our society proud on June 27th. It was also lovely to see many of our members en route around the parish of Berkswell, facilitating a 'catch up' after being so restricted all these long months.

We have just had our last Zoom speaker meeting. Hopefully, we will be back in the Village Hall to continue our speaker programme on 30th September. There are Narcissus 'Jack Snipe' bulbs to give out somewhere along the line for next year's Daffodil Competition!

Do not forget our Member's Social Evening on July 29th, 6.30pm, at Yew Tree Barn, Baulk Lane, Berkswell, CV7 7BD (Angela & Ken Shaw's). **Please note, we need an idea of numbers wishing to attend and you are asked to contact Helen Jones on helen@manorfarmknowle.co.uk or 01564 772645.** There is **NO** parking in Baulk Lane. Cars should be parked on Spencer's Lane, unless the field behind Angela & Ken's is available again. Refreshments will be provided and please bring your own chair if possible. There will also be a raffle and a plant stall (donations of **LABELLED** plants welcome but please take them home if unsold, as Angela does not have room to keep them until the Show).

Thank you to Wendy Jenkinson for obtaining some publicity in the summer edition of Balsall & Berkswell's Bugle magazine, by writing an article about our Society. Two new members have joined us, so welcome to Ann Fenton and Tania Stretton.

With best wishes,
Marion

SPEAKER REPORTS

Buttercups in our Gardens – Howard Drury

On 27th May, our Zoom presentation was given by an associate of John Massey of Ashwood Nursery. Howard trained at Edinburgh Botanic Garden and he gardens in Kings Heath. His presentation centred on the Ranunculaceae family (Buttercups & Crowfoot), which is both diverse and huge (over 2000 known species of flowering plants). They are distributed worldwide, though mostly found in cooler regions and are fond of damp conditions. Some are poisonous and some are used in medicine. All are herbaceous apart from many clematis. They have 5 coloured tepals, rather than distinct petals & sepals. Leaves are often divided, and their roots are deep. Their seeds vary from the berries of Actaea, to the capsules of Aconitum, to the follicles of Hellebores, and the achenes of Pulsatilla, Hepatica and Anemone.

With such a huge family, Howard did not have time to describe all 43 genera. The largest genera are:

Ranunculus number some 600 species and are often associated with moist conditions. Not all are yellow, and some prefer sun whilst others need shade. The larvae of several butterflies can be found on these plants. Some of this genus, such as the Creeping Buttercup and the Lesser Celandine, are 'garden thugs', whilst other species are favourites of flower arrangers.

Clematis are a genus of 300 species. There are 1000s of named cultivars. Many clematis come from China & Japan with others native of the USA & Europe. One can have a clematis in flower for much of the year, depending on which group the clematis is in. It is important to keep clematis roots in the shade. The lighter the colour of the flower, the more likely the sun can scorch and fade it. Clematis can be grown through shrubs & trees, as well as up trellis and other supports. There are some small enough to be grown in containers – Raymond Evison’s Clematis Nursery in Guernsey introduced patio clematis. Howard has a simple way to remember when to prune clematis. Those flowering before 1st August, prune after flowering as a tidy up, with a more severe “renewal prune” every 5 years. Those flowering after 1st August, prune growth hard in the spring just above the 1st pair of good strong buds.

Delphinium also number around 300 species. There are single and double flowers. The alkaloids contained within the plant are toxic to both humans and livestock.

Thalictrum (now known as Anemonella) hails from the USA and is commonly known as Rue. It is a tuberous, clump – forming herbaceous perennial, with single or double flowers appearing from May.

Aconitum is one of the infamous poisonous Ranunculaceae. There are over 250 species, and it comes from the open pasture of the Northern Hemisphere. These like deep, moisture retentive soils and good light. The toxic alkaloids have given rise to such names as Wolf’s bane, Queen of Poisons, Devil’s Helmet & Monkshood.

Howard also discussed the following genera, but space here precludes any further elaboration; Actaea (Baneberry / Bugbane), Adonis (Pheasant’s Eye), Anemonoides (Anemone), Anemonopsis (False Anemone), Aquilegia (Columbine), Caltha (Marsh Marigold), Eranthis (Winter Aconite), Glaucidium (Japanese Wood Poppy), Helleborus (Hellebore), Hepatica (Liverwort), Pulsatilla (Pasque Flower), Trollius (Globe Flower).

Create a Garden for all Seasons – Adam Pasco

On 24th June, our Zoom presentation was by the former Editor of Gardener’s World magazine, from its launch in 1991 until 2013. Adam has over 30yrs experience as a gardening journalist, broadcaster, consultant, and lecturer. He used images of his own garden in Peterborough, as well as many others from around the country, to illustrate his talk. He described his own style as ‘cottage garden’, providing colour and continuity throughout the year. Every now and then it is worth taking stock, especially of herbaceous borders. Perennials can be rejuvenated by lifting, dividing, and discarding their old centres.

Adam presented 10 ways to create the all-seasons garden.

1. Use plants with structure and form, which continue this through to the winter months too.

Examples: Cornus controversa ‘Variegata’ (AGM) or the Wedding Cake Tree, clipped Box, Yew, clipped or as hedging, and the architectural Cardoon (Cynara cardunculus AGM).

2. Pick plants with a long season of interest.

Examples: Spanish Dagger (Yucca gloriosa ‘Variegata’) in a pot with bedding underneath, Cordylines, containers of succulents.

3. Use plants in combinations for continuity of colour. Plant in threes or fives in herbaceous borders, in repeating blocks of colour.

Examples: Nepeta racemosa, Phlox russeliana (AGM) which also has good structure in the autumn & winter. In dry shade for spring borders, consider hardy geraniums (a favourite of Adam’s), Brunnera macrophylla ‘Jack Frost’, Epimedium frolnleiten.

4. Add features and focal points that are not plants.

Examples: seating, pergolas & partitions with climbers, painted fencing, water features where water is pumped through, changes in levels with steps & walls, pedestal pots & urns, chimney pot planters, the stone snails at Raymond Blanc’s Le Manoir aux Quats’ Saisons. Adam loves big pots of hostas and agapanthus on his patio.

5. Create stunning seasonal displays.

Examples: Hidcote's 'Red Border', Angelsey Abbey's winter grove of Himalayan Silver Birch with their stunning white trunks, Cleome through the year in smaller gardens.

6. Add value across the seasons.

Examples: Adam's own raised bed for ericaceous lovers containing Camellias (Feb/March), Skimmia confusa, Rhododendron 'Curlew' (April), Rhododendron yakushimanum (May), Azalea 'Sheila' (May), Kalmia latifolia (June), & mophead Hydrangeas through to the autumn. Parterres containing colour. The Tibetan Cherry (Prunus serrula) which gives spring blossom, coppery brown bark, yellow autumn foliage.

7. Excite the senses. As well as colour, consider scent throughout the year, especially by seating.

Examples: Christmas Box (Sarcococca), Wintersweet (Chimonanthus praecox), Lilies, Nemesis 'Wisley Cream'.

8. Grow something different to the norm of a British garden.

Examples: Sophora microphylla 'Sun King' (AGM), Itea ilicifolia (AGM), Phygelius x rectus 'Moonraker', Ptilotus exaltatus 'Joey'.

9. Welcome in wildlife by providing shelter, food, and water throughout the year. Seek out plants that are rich in nectar and pollen, and which have a long flowering season.

Example: Cotoneaster horizontalis. Alstroemeria inticancha 'Sunshine'.

10. Choose a star plant for every month, plant it, then sit and enjoy!

NOTICEBOARD

- **Sunday 25th July** is the deadline for receipt of entries in July's photographic competition. Pictures in 'landscape' orientation are preferred to 'portrait' as they are easier to put on the website. Send to ange_shaw@hotmail.co.uk.
There is no competition in August.
- **Saturday 7th August** is the Lowsonford, Rowington & District Show at The Fleur de Lys Pub, Lowsonford, on the banks of the Stratford Canal. There is a Horticultural Marquee with similar classes to our own, and some of our members do enter. A trial run, perhaps? David Ashcroft has draft copies of their horticultural schedule if you are interested; dja@krystalservices.plus.com
- **Saturday 4th September** is **OUR ANNUAL SHOW** at St Peters Church Hall, Balsall Common. The Show Schedule and other arrangements are being finalised by David Ashcroft and will be sent to you shortly. Cup winners from our last show in 2019 should return their cups to David Ashcroft at our Social Evening, cleaned of course. That will be an awful lot of elbow grease for a certain Mr Edward Cotterrell!!
- **Saturday 11th September** is The New Fillongley Show at the Heart of England Events Centre, Meriden Rd, Fillongley, CV7 8DX. Again, there is a popular horticultural section open to any gardeners. secretary@fillongleyshow.org.uk / 07928 231460
- **Saturday 11th September** is also the Autumn Festival at Wren Hall, Wroxall, incorporating the Honiley Annual Flower Show. The show schedule will be appearing on the Wren Hall website in the next few weeks. www.wrenhall.org
- **Cancelled for this year** are the Whitacres & Shustoke Show, and the Shrewley Village Show.

Flowers & Foliage

Thank you to David Felthouse for forwarding this to me, after finding it amongst paperwork at home. Many of us will remember his late wife Nancy who was both a keen local flower club and BDHS member. Please unscramble these anagrams of flowers & foliage plants in her memory.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. SCANSSUIR | 14. MINUPELHID |
| 2. LAMPURI | 15. THANCYHEMMRUS |
| 3. RACE | 16. ATINUPSAILA |
| 4. ATRAVEAL | 17. MILALET |
| 5. STARE | 18. GOLDOSIA |
| 6. SORE | 19. MASIMKI |
| 7. MEANIES | 20. OATHS |
| 8. MUSED | 21. HENDOODNORRD |
| 9. ALLURE | 22. SULANUCRAN |
| 10. AMISCORCO | 23. RUMPYHICE |
| 11. OCCURS | 24. GEARHANDY |
| 12. MYCCANEL | 25. PITLU |
| 13. LADAIH | |

Please send your answers to me by **Friday 20th August** on marion.keeley@btinternet.com or via post to The Cottage, Fen End Farm, Oldwich Lane East, Fen End, Near Kenilworth, CV8 1NR.

Answers to May's Puzzle - Weeds Galore!

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|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Dandelion | 7. Horse / Mares Tail |
| 2. Nettle | 8. Groundsel |
| 3. Bindweed | 9. Bramble |
| 4. Shepherd's Purse | 10a. Cleavers |
| 5. Fat Hen | 10b. Goose Grass |
| 6. Ground Elder | 10c. Sticky Willy |

Only 5 members sent in entries, but all were correct. They were Wendy Boulton, Sylvia Farley, David Felthouse, Amanda Ghent & Gill Whitehead.

The winning name pulled from the hat is Wendy Boulton.

Results of the monthly BDHS website Photographic Competition

May	June
1 st Alison Watson (Tulip)	1 st Gill Whitehead (Peony)
2 nd Mary Cotterrell (Apple Blossom)	2 nd David Cotterrell (a Rosebud)
3 rd Gill Whitehead (Clematis)	3 rd Alison Watson (Spotted Orchid)
Commended: Edward Cotterrell (Fuchsia)	Commended: Angela Shaw (Bearded Iris)
NB Commended (or 4 th place) is not awarded any points in this competition	