

Over Kellet and District Horticultural Society

Dig This – February 2017



Early February. If you look closely on shrubs in sheltered locations, forsythia buds are starting to burst with the prospect of brilliant yellow flowers, heralding the start of Spring. In the last couple of weeks, bird song has become more noticeable in the mornings and it is obvious wildlife is preparing for the new season.

Those of you who attended our coffee morning and talk on Saturday 4th February will have heard about all the ways we, as gardeners, can encourage wildlife with reciprocal benefits for the environment. Like me, I expect some of you will be looking for a corner of the garden to put in a pond, even if it is only re-purposing an old sand pit!

The speaker, Malcolm Alderton, included these helpful web addresses at the end of his talk:

Lancashire Wildlife Trust (www.lancswt.org.uk)

The Wildlife Trusts (www.wildlifetrusts.org)

Royal Horticultural Society (www.rhs.org.uk)

Wild About Gardens (www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk)

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/how-you-can-help/wildlife-gardening>

Fact sheets available at:

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-gardening/how-to-get-started>

www.butterfly-conservation.org.uk

www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk

Also, after the meeting Malcolm found this very useful link on Leopard slugs, which are helpful to gardeners. So in answer to the question whether we should kill them off, the simple answer is no.

<https://www.opalexplorenature.org/leopardslug>

Martin May has followed up one of the questions put to Malcolm on invasive ladybirds. He recommends the following web site for more information and reporting sightings:

<http://www.harlequin-survey.org>

Society News

Those of you who attended the Coffee Morning will have heard how, following the AGM in November, the Committee numbered just eight and was without a Membership Secretary and a Treasurer. At one time we thought we could no longer keep the Society going, but these responsibilities have been taken up by Geoff Jackson (Membership Secretary) and Pat Woolstencroft and Marilyn Whinfield (joint Treasurers). Phil Hegarty and I have taken over David Hasted's work organising Talks and Trips. Phil and Geoff are also organising the Altys GrowOrganic bulk purchase this year (see below). The other Officers are Arie Klijn (Chairman) and Verity Clinch (Secretary).

As a result of the depleted Committee we have reluctantly decided that we cannot hold an Annual Show this year. Ordinary members may find it hard to understand that planning and preparation for the next Show has to start almost as the doors close on the previous one. As grateful as we are to the band of helpers who turn up on the Friday and Saturday of Show weekend, that is just the tip of the iceberg.

If more Committee members with time and enthusiasm can be recruited before the AGM in November then the Annual Show might be re-instated for

2018.

Nevertheless, as you will see below, we are making every effort to ensure the Society continues as a thriving, successful and valued organisation.

Membership Subscriptions

There is still much to enjoy from belonging to the Society, and for just £2 a household per year it really is good value.

You may have seen Geoff's notice sent out at the end of January requesting the renewal of subscriptions by the end of February – please try to make Geoff's job easier by promptly renewing – details were in his message. If you did not receive it, please contact me, details at the end of this newsletter.

Membership Benefits

Discounts on the purchase of gardening products are available at a number of local businesses on production of your membership card. We have re-negotiated the discounts for the subscription year 2017/2018. Here is the list in alphabetical order. Please use these firms and support local enterprise:

Bay View Garden Centre, Bolton-le-Sands, 10% – Chris at Bay View says special increased discounts may be available early in the season – worth checking out;

Beetham Nurseries, Milnthorpe, 5% - a huge range of stock, including the excellent Growing Nursery of plants grown by the firm itself;

Carr Bank Garden Centre & Pet Supplies, Sandside Road, Storth, 5% - wide range of garden buildings, saunas and hot tubs;

M D Hanafin & Sons Ltd, Dallam Timber, Milnthorpe, 5% on all timber except garden panels;

Woodcrest Garden Centre (at Greenlands), Tewitfield, 10% - plants, pots, ponds, landscaping & decking specialists.

Altys GrowOrganic

Geoff Jackson and Phil Hegarty have worked together to obtain details of products sold by Altys Horticultural Suppliers, nr Preston. By bulk buying the Society is able to offer members discounts and, for those of you living in Over Kellet village, provide free delivery. The order form went out to OKDHS members on 2nd February and the deadline for orders to be placed is Friday 3rd March. Please make sure you meet that deadline. Delivery due on Saturday 25th March – if you feel strong enough, please volunteer to help with distribution. Again, if you did not receive the order form, please contact me.

OKDHS Talks

Friday 3rd March at 7.30pm 'An Introduction to Alpines' – David Morris, a member of the North Lancashire Alpine Garden Society.

Some folk in Over Kellet have only a small area in which to garden. The use of troughs and other containers to grow plants in miniature is one way of brightening up any corner of a small plot. Alpines can also be used on a larger scale on rockeries and scree slopes. David is an experienced alpine gardener and may bring along materials to demonstrate how to create a trough itself and plant up a small display.

OKDHS Trips

RHS Harlow Carr, Harrogate: 13 May

As was announced at the Coffee Morning we have arranged a whole-day coach trip to the RHS Gardens at Harlow Carr, Harrogate on Saturday 13th May, to coincide with their special Rhododendron weekend of events. Details will be sent out shortly and the deadline for booking will be Monday 27th March. If you are a member of OKDHS or are a personal member of RHS then the only charge will be the £12 coach fare. Otherwise there will be an admission charge to the gardens in addition – but if you contact me before booking I can explain how the charge can be avoided quite legally!

Lake House, Capernwray: June

Final arrangements have yet to be agreed for a visit in private cars to this extensive local garden, possibly in June.

NGS Gardens visit: July

Plans are being made for a whole day visit in private cars to two National Garden Scheme locations within about 40 miles of Over Kellet, to include one which is either open only to groups or by appointment only.

Other talks in the area which members are welcome to attend

Every Club or Society depends on the support of folk attending meetings. In co-operation with other local organisations, here are some events for your calendar:

Thursday 23rd February: 'Working on the Lancaster Canal' - Keith Tassart, 7.30pm Old Boys' School, Bolton-le-Sands (B-le-S Floral & Horticultural Society)

Thursday 9th March: 'Small trees of character and class for the home garden' – Glyn Sherratt, Head Gardener at Holker Hall, 7.30pm, Warton Village Hall (Warton Garden Club)

If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter please contact the compiler: Peter Clinch (734591)