

# East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

March 2019

Trading shed: Sat, Sun, Mon (Tue if Mon is a bank holiday) 09:30 to 11:00.

Wed evenings - April and May only - 18:30 to 19:30. Mobile number: 0738 463 2903.

**Note:** Shed helpers are not all young, big and strong so, if you need to get heavy items, please try to bring someone with you to help you with the lifting.

Web: [www.erhs.org.uk](http://www.erhs.org.uk)

Facebook Group: "East Reading Horticultural Society"

Editor: Tel: 07794 233361, Email: [ERHS@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ERHS@hotmail.co.uk)

{Get your newsletter early (and in colour): ask to be added to the ERHS email list.}



## 1. PROGRAMME EVENTS



### (a) TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2019

The 78<sup>th</sup> AGM was attended by about 45 members. The business was effectively and efficiently dealt with by our president Don Palmer. His lovely pot of tête-à-tête reminded us all that Spring is around the corner and that we should remember that the Summer Show is on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June and not that far away. It was with great regret that the chairman had to announce that our long serving treasurer, Jeff Gardner has decided to stand down as treasurer next year. He has made a very significant contribution to ERHS and will be sorely missed in this role. The chairman expressed the urgent need to recruit a suitably qualified successor. Members then enjoyed a cheese and wine buffet followed by another excellent raffle.

### (b) TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> March, 2019

Our last talk of the 2018-2019 season, in St. Peter's church hall, starting at 8pm, is about **Madame Tussauds** and will be given by Tony Weston. As usual, refreshments will be available and there will be a raffle.

### (c) SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2019

There are still 23 places available on the coach to visit the **RHS show at Bute Park, Cardiff**.

This is the first RHS show of the season and will feature the show gardens and the Regeneration gardens showing the work of recent graduates in landscape architecture and garden design. There will be the 'blossoming flower beds' competition to view and there will be plenty of stalls brimming with plants, gardening products, gifts and great tasting food.

Garden celebrities will be there hosting talks during the day and gardening experts will be available to offer tips and advice. An innovation will feature how horticulture can benefit our lifestyle and have a positive impact on our physical and mental health.

The coach will depart from outside Earley St Peter's church hall car park at 8:30am to arrive in Cardiff by 11am and we will leave Cardiff at 4pm to arrive back in Earley by 6:30pm approximately. The cost of this visit including luxury coach travel, admission ticket and a driver gratuity is £28 per person.

If you and your friends would like to join us, please contact John Peacock on (0118) 986 7303 to book your ticket(s).

Please deliver your payment in a sealed and named envelope to the Trading shed or to 9 Wychwood Close, Earley, *with a contact telephone number*. The closing date for bookings has been extended to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March.

## 2. TRADING MATTERS



The following **seed potatoes** are still available (All varieties of potatoes are 2.5 Kg):

Foremost, Pentland, Javelin, Nicola,	
Desiree, King Edward, Majestic .....	£2.30
Homeguard, Winston, Kestrel, Wilja .....	£2.40
International Kidney .....	£2.50
Lady Christl .....	£2.70
Pink Fir Apple .....	£2.80

**Onion sets:** Red Barron, Sturon, Stuttgarter

**Shallots**

**Garlic**

**Dahlia:** Big Hailstone, Libeccio, Teaset, Apache, Boom Boom Red, Little Rococo Robert, Sylvia, Bishop of Leicester, Bishop of York, Blue Bayou, Edge of Joy, Fire and Ice, Night Butterfly, Pooh, Totally Tangerine

**Hybrid Tea Roses:** Three colours

**Short Stem Lily**

**Begonia:** Cascading and Non-Stop

**Soft fruits:** Gooseberry, Blackcurrant, Raspberry.

### 3. MISCELLANEA

#### (a) Next Committee Meeting:

7:30 p.m. - Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2019, at the CResCent Resource Centre.

#### (b) Shed stewards and assistants for March

2 <sup>nd</sup>	Chris Dodson	Sarah Hart
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mike Smith	Sarah Rose
9 <sup>th</sup>	Gwen Barton	t.b.a.
10 <sup>th</sup>	Malcolm Iosson	Mary Buck
16 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Fewtrell	Ann Leslie
17 <sup>th</sup>	Phil Rogers	Trevor Wilson
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Don Maclean	Sue Jones
24 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Watson	Alan Waite
30 <sup>th</sup>	John Peacock	Carole Peacock
31 <sup>st</sup>	Neal Stockwell	Ray Posselwhite

#### (c) Good news and bad!

The bad news is that, at the AGM, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that the membership fee will rise by £1 to £3 a year from April, after 18 years at £2. The good news is that prices in the trading shed will be reduced by 5%.

However, without doubt, this increased fee will still represent excellent value for our members. The chairman pointed out that, as well as receiving a newsletter every month, members could enjoy a programme of 5 guest speakers during the Autumn to Spring evenings without any charge and, for instance, if you bought one 2.5kg bag of Growmore from the shed at £2.30, your saving would certainly cover your membership fee. He also said that by buying your Suttons seeds through ERHS, you are able to save 50% off the packet price and that represented a significant saving too. The chairman also hoped that as many members as possible would now try to support the shed even more and spread the word around to family and friends too.

THE SHED SAVES YOU MONEY AND IS SIMPLY THE BEST FOR MILES AROUND.

#### (d) Break-in attempt



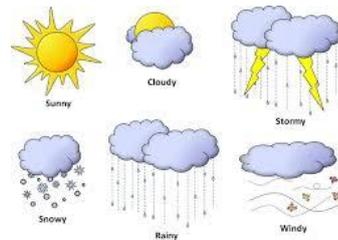
Last month, some lads on bikes tried to kick in the doors of the trading shed. Fortunately, an allotment holder, to whom many thanks are due, spotted them and chased them off. This, though, underlines the need for the gates to be locked at all times

when the trading shed is not open for business. Allotment holders and trading shed stewards, please note.

#### (e) Assistant shed stewards

Mike Smith, who co-ordinates the weekend staffing of the trading shed, is in urgent need of members who could become assistant shed stewards to help with lifting bags of compost and assorted duties. An assistant shed steward might expect to be called upon once a month to serve on a Saturday or Sunday morning from 9:25 to 11:00am. Please contact Mike Smith to offer your services on (0118) 9267606. Thank you for considering helping us out.

#### (f) Things to do in March



Temperatures are rising and some increased bright sunshine means spring is here and there are plenty of jobs to do around the garden:

- **Weed** and tidy borders before mulching with organic matter.
- **Mulching** borders reduces the need to water as much as the mulch helps keep the water from evaporating.
- **Start mowing** once the temperature starts getting to about 5°C+. For the first few cuts set the blades on the highest setting.
- **Reseed** any bare patches on your lawn. Roughen the surface and spread a good mix of lawn seed and potting compost to help germination.
- **Good time** to relocate any shrubs we need to move as they will start taking water at 4/5°C, which is important when moving shrubs. They need to be well watered in after moving. When digging up a shrub, get a large amount of the root ball and, once planted, provide a fleece protection from cold winds and water well.
- **Support** herbaceous perennials. Get staking done early to ensure the plant looks natural as they grow through the support.
- **Plant** early potatoes, dig trenches 2ft apart, add organic matter then place the potatoes 12" apart. Cover with the soil taken out the trench.
- **Prune** roses, both bush and shrub rose. The reason is to build a healthy framework of shoots and help produce flowers. Also apply mulch around the base of roses.
- **It's** a good time of year to apply organic fertilisers as it releases nutrients slower. It will be available when the spring comes, and the plants need it. Choose organic fertilisers like fish blood and bone or pelleted chicken manure, as both will help introduce nutrients back into the soil. Whilst you are fertilising, it is a good chance to weed and dig over borders.
- **Top dress** pot grown shrubs, scrape off the top layer of old compost and apply a fresh layer of new compost.
- **Put out** food for hedgehogs, emerging from hibernation, but avoid bread and milk.

#### 4. WANTED/FOR SALE/FREE

*Members' advertisements are free of charge. Just telephone or email the editor (see newsletter heading.)*

**For Sale:** Offers are invited for a **chicken coop** [sleeps 3 chickens,] plus 3 large feeding dishes and feed. Buyer collects. Please call Dorothy Flint on (0118) 969 1370.

Unless otherwise stated, where items are free, a donation to the Air Ambulance (when you next visit the trading shed) would be appreciated.