

East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

April 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

Facebook Group: "East Reading Horticultural Society"

Editor: Tel: 07794 233361, Email: 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 19TH MARCH 2019

Many thanks to Tony Weston for his fascinating talk on the surprisingly interesting life of Anna Maria Grosholtz, more commonly known as Madame Tussaud. The talk led us through Madame Tussaud's career from age 6 to 85 as a pioneer of wax-working, including her early life spent working with Dr. Philippe Curtis making wax body parts in Berne, followed by moving to Paris where she worked with both sides of the French Revolution, and finally her 30-year-long travelling show in the UK before settling in the exhibition's familiar spot in London.

(b) SATURDAY 13TH APRIL 2019

The visit to the RHS show at Bute Park, Cardiff: Members should note that the coach leaves from outside Earley St Peters Church Hall car park at 8:30am. We expect to arrive in Cardiff about 11am and plan to leave Cardiff at 4pm arriving back in Earley about 6:30pm. Sorry to say that on this occasion members will have to make their own parking arrangements.

(c) TUESDAY 16TH APRIL 2019

For our last talk until the autumn, we are pleased to welcome back Paul Whittle. He gave us a fantastic talk on his ride on the Toy Railway up to the high parts of India. This time he will be looking at the history of the Aztecs and Incas in Peru and Columbia, including Machu Picchu.

Come at 7:45 for an 8p.m. start in St. Peter's church hall and, as usual, a raffle will be held, and refreshments will be available.

2. TRADING MATTERS



The following seed potatoes are still available in 2.5 Kg bags:

2 x Foremost, 1 x Nicola..... £2.30
4 x Winston..... £2.40
2 x International Kidney..... £2.50

Dahlia: Ten varieties (Big Hailstone, Teaset, Boom Boom Red, Little Robert, Sylvia, Bishop of Leicester, Bishop of York, Blue Bayou, Edge of Joy, Pooh.)

Short Stemmed Lilies

Begonias: Cascading and Non-Stop

Soft fruits: Red currants

Garlic: Munro (reduced to 50p each)

Hybrid Tea Roses: 1 x Yellow (Peace)

Don't forget: The trading shed is open this month and next on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

3. MISCELLANEA

(a) Next Committee Meeting:

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

(b) Shed stewards and assistants for April

6 th	Mike Smith	Sarah Hart
7 th	Kay Bridges	Trevor Wilson
13 th	Mike Fewtrell	t.b.a.
14 th	Kay Bridges	Alan Waite
20 th	Chris Dodson	Sue Jones
21 st	Kay Bridges	Ray Posselwhite
27 th	Jeff Gardner	Ann Leslie
28 th	Jim Watson	Sarah Rose

(c) Assistant shed stewards CORRECTION

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~~ **8 to 10 times a year** 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.

(d) Summer Show - 29th June

90 days to prepare from 1st April.

Loads of time!

Schedules are available at the trading shed, may be requested by email or downloaded from our website (addresses above.)

(e) Things to do in April



1. If you are growing summer vegetables from seed, remember they need to be hardened off before planting them in your garden. Gradually introduce them to outdoor weather and sunlight. Leave them outside on mild days for short periods and increase the exposure daily until they can be left out all day and night. Watch out for signs of stress.

2. Cut back spring flowering shrubs after they have bloomed, then give them a dose of fertilizer. If Azaleas or Camellias are looking a little yellow between the veins, apply some organic feed. Trim dead flowers from spring bulbs but leave the foliage to provide the energy for the bulb next spring.

3. It's time to start weeding. When your plants are just starting to grow, fully developed weeds can choke your budding plants and kill them, so make sure you pull out as many weeds as you can - roots and all. Perennial weeds such as bindweed, couch grass and ground elder should be dealt with sooner rather than later, as they will take over the whole garden if you leave them to it.

4. Later in the month, if you already have your hardy annual seedlings ready to go, it's time to transplant them from their home indoors to their new home in the garden, providing there is no risk of hard frost. Before they're placed into the ground, they need to be hardened off. When you transplant your seedlings, try to do it during the afternoon of a cool and cloudy day. Seedlings will often struggle while making the transition from a climate-controlled window sill or greenhouse to the outside, where the climate won't be as consistent,

so if your plants seem to droop and lose a bit of their strength, continue to water and care for them - they'll regain their strength and continue to grow. Once the ground temperature rises above 6 degrees Celsius, half hardy annuals can be sown directly into a prepared bed.

5. Continue to dead-head Violas and Pansies in containers, they will flower profusely from now until the end of May. Avoid planting summer bedding plants too early, although many plants such as Bacopa, Petunias and Fuchsias are available to buy in many garden centres, they will still need protection from frost and April showers. If you have a greenhouse, they can be kept in a protected environment until they are ready to plant in mid-May, when all danger of frost has passed.

6. Now is the time to take cuttings from overwintered Pelargoniums (commonly known as Geraniums.) A great way to increase your plant stock.

7. Plants that will grow tall this spring and summer need staking to prevent them being damaged or blown down by windy weather. Most of us aren't thinking about supporting a plant that is only a few inches high, and our window of opportunity can easily pass. Peonies will be putting on a growth spurt and coming into leaf, so use sturdy metal circular plant supports to hold the weight of a heavy bloom, and you will be rewarded with a fantastic show of blowsy Peonies come May.

8. If you have a sunny patch of bare ground in your garden, sow a wild flower meadow. Seed mixes are readily available, and it is the perfect way to introduce beneficial insects into the garden.

9. Tomatoes which have been grown from seed can now be potted on into a larger container. Sticks or small bamboo canes can be used for support at this stage. They can be potted into their final growing spot or container in mid-May. Pinch out the tips of any leggy growth and ensure that watering is consistent, and airflow is free around the young plants.

10. The spring cut flower patch will be at its zenith now. Continue to pick later flowering Narcissus and colourful bunches of Tulips for the house. You may be lucky enough to live in a part of the country where the Cow Parsley has begun to make an appearance, along with Bluebells, Honesty and April blossoms; you can create a most striking floral display. From now on, always try to cut flowers early in the morning or in the evening, as warmer temperatures can make flowers wilt quickly. Always have a bucket of cool fresh water on hand if possible.

4. WANTED/FOR SALE/FREE

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

Free to collector: Two wrought iron trough holders: (LxWxH) 24" x 7" x 15" and 17" x 6" x 13". Also 4 plastic troughs 15" x 6".

Please ring (0118) 969 3102 if interested.

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