

East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

May 2020

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.}



Coronavirus situation

Six weeks on

The president, chairman and all the committee trust that you are all coping with this unprecedented and very strange new lifestyle.

April's weather, until today, has been glorious and we are sure that you will all have benefited from going into your garden or visiting your allotments for some daily exercise, tending plants and deriving joy from your efforts.

Had we a wonderful crystal ball we would be delighted to tell you when all this will be back to normal - but sadly we just do not know how this 'lockdown' will affect our future plans. Therefore, we will follow the government's guidance on social distancing and advise you of any developments in the next newsletter.

The committee would be delighted to tell you that the Autumn Show will go ahead on 12th September BUT we do not know at the moment.

So, to everyone, be positive. Sow seeds look for green shoots and let's see where that takes us.

Look after each other.

Everyone at ERHS sends their warmest and kindest good wishes.

1. PROGRAMME EVENTS



SATURDAY 6TH JUNE 2020

The Hidcote Manor trip has been cancelled. We intend to rearrange the two missed talks once things return to normality!

SATURDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ERHS Autumn Show

135 days to go from 1st May.

Of course, we cannot be sure that the September show will be able to take place.

However, it won't do any harm to keep growing, cooking, photographing, etc. in hope!

The show schedule is available now in the shed, or you can email ERHS@hotmail.co.uk to request a copy.

It is also on our web site to download.

2. TRADING MATTERS



Sorry, but the trading shed is closed until further notice.

3. MISCELLANEA

Next Committee Meeting: Monday 8th June 2020. We do not know yet whether this meeting can take place.

New Membership Cards: (As mentioned last month)

Due to the restrictions imposed by the Government and NHS to control the Coronavirus outbreak, it has been necessary to delay the issue of new membership cards and subscription collections until further notice. The cards have been printed, but are still with the printer, awaiting collection.

Once the situation returns to "normal", they will be collected and supplied to local Distributors for issue in the normal way. If you normally renew your membership via a local Distributor, please have your money (£3) ready. There will be an announcement in a future Newsletter to say we are "back in

business", so be prepared for your Distributor to call once that message has been received. Please allow up to a month for this to happen, unless you need to buy anything at the Trading Shed [where you will be asked to show your current membership card.]

For those who renew at the Trading Shed, cards will be available once the Shed reopens for business. There, you will need to show your existing [2019/20] card to renew.

Unable to distribute printed newsletters

They are printed in a local school, which is now closed. If you know of anyone who would normally have a copy distributed, please let them know that any member can ask me to email them a copy and/or ask to join our email list. (Ed.)

How successful have your Suttons seeds been?

We would welcome your input into approximate germination percentages of the seeds you have ordered through ERHS for this 2020 growing season. Please email your findings, whether good or poor, to erhs@hotmail.co.uk.

Example: "Courgette 'Sure Thing' - 70%."

The ERHS committee will find this information extremely useful for future planning. Many thanks.

Things to do this month



Summer bedding plants

Mid-to-late May is the best time to plant out summer bedding plants. Prepare the soil and use some organic compost to fertilize it ready for the new bedding. You do need to keep an eye on the long-term weather forecast when doing this, as a late strong frost can put paid to your hard work. You can keep plants in the greenhouse until the weather improves and move them out towards the end of the month. Just make sure they're well-watered and the greenhouse is well aired, vented and shaded during the day so that these plants don't overheat in warm weather.

The same rules apply to hanging baskets. You can plant these from April onwards, but until the last sign of frost has passed you may want to protect them in the greenhouse. If you don't have one, hold off planting until the end

of May. Line your basket well and add a fertilizer rich compost soil. There are plenty of varieties to choose from, but trailing plants work well for covering the sides of your basket. Water well, add fertilizer weekly and keep any eye out for pests!

Tidy up

You may find you need to clip any hedging and topiary now to keep its shape neat and tidy. The warmer weather will also mean regular mowing of the lawn will be a necessity now and through the summer months. Once a week should be enough. Keep on top this and your garden will look tidy all summer! It's also a good time to take stock of your wooden garden furniture. Choose a dry day to treat, stain or paint in order to prolong the life span.

Deal with weeds

As the temperatures rise your prized plants will spring to life but, unfortunately, so will any unwanted weeds! Pull up any seedlings and dig out perennial weeds to try to get rid of any roots. Time and effort spent here will benefit not only your borders but also your lawn, as May is the ideal time to identify those nasty dandelions and deal with them.

Pond

If you have a pond, pond weed is equally important to deal with and should be removed regularly before it becomes too difficult to manage and harmful to pond life. Make sure you leave any weeds by the side of the pond for a good while before removing just in case any pond life is hiding there! May is a great time to begin stocking ponds with fish, just make sure any aquatic plants have established first.

Keep an eye on growth

Many growing plants may need your attention this month, add plenty of feed to keep them happy. Tall perennials may need support as they start to grow to keep them straight and upright. It is also important to tie up your clematis to control their climbing in the direction you would like them to grow. For rambling roses, try to tie as horizontal as possible as this will restrict the flow of sap and increase side shoots, thus causing more flowers. Spring flowered Montana type clematis need pruning after flowering to keep them tidy.

4. WANTED/FOR SALE/FREE

Members' advertisements are free of charge. Just telephone or email the editor (see newsletter heading.) [The copy deadline for the next newsletter is Wednesday 20th May.](#)

Nothing received this month.

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