

East Reading Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

September 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.}



1. PROGRAMME EVENTS



ERHS events

As you know, we sadly had to tell you, in last month's newsletter, that the following events have all been cancelled, due to the coronavirus situation:

All talks this year,

The Christmas show and Social event,

The Kew Gardens visit to see the Christmas lights.

We will, though, **continue to issue the monthly newsletter**, and will let you know, as soon as possible, when we feel it is safe enough to continue with previously planned, or other, events.

2. TRADING MATTERS



We have our bulb order in place and delivery is expected at end of September, as follows:

Narcissus

King Alfred, Tamara, Sealing Wax, Species, Garden, Jet Fire, February Gold, Quail.

Tulips

Darwin Hybrid, Cardinal Red, Gregii .

Garlic

Rhubarb

More details to follow next month.

Note: Masks must be worn when in the shed.

3. MISCELLANEA

Next Committee Meeting:

None, but committee members are in touch.

Shed stewards and assistants for September

5 th	Gwen Barton	Peter Lynch
6 th	Kay Bridges	Alan Waite
12 th	Mike Smith	Ann Leslie
13 th	Kay Bridges	Trevor Wilson
19 th	Jeff Gardner	Trevor Wilson
20 th	Chris Dodson	Trevor Wilson
26 th	John Peacock	Carol Peacock
27 th	Mike Fewtrell	Bob Campbell

A message from our President

Dear Member,

Notwithstanding my visual impairment and the fact I have to ask Ruth to decipher my scribbling, I feel I must put pen to paper.

On behalf of myself, and all of you, I need to thank John, his Committee, and his band of loyal helpers, who are working so hard to keep this Society going.

I can imagine the frustrations and disappointments that they have suffered, arranging the Show and judges, evening talks, and the trips, only to have to cancel them all. Plus halting supplies for the shed when it had to be shut, and a Treasurer getting worried. And no-one knows when or if things can get back to normal.

I fear some clubs and societies will never recover as people lose interest, but not us gardeners. We are a hardy bunch, always hopeful and looking forward.

Look what we have had to put up with this year - not enough rain, searing heat, crops going straight to seed, and a plague of black fly (which ruined our early runner beans and totally destroyed the broad beans), fading flowers, drooping shrubs and a brown lawn.

At least the soft fruit was good, only very early. We picked autumn raspberries in July, and late chrysanthemums are in bloom in early August. And so that some fellow show competitors can have a giggle, my sweet peas were a disaster!

On top of all this is the lack of social integration forced upon us, so that we couldn't grumble to our friends about it all.

Keep well and stay safe.

Don Palmer.

Update from the Membership Secretary

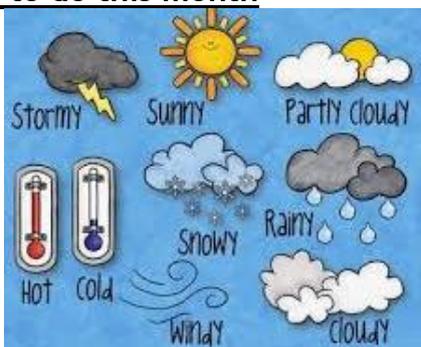
On behalf of the Society, I would like to express my thanks to all members who have renewed their membership this year. However, ERHS is facing a potential loss of up to 40% of its membership compared with last year, as so far over 200 members on last year's list have yet to renew their membership. Although alternative arrangements were put in place to undertake renewals at the trading shed and by post, the majority of renewals has been effected by distributors "knocking on doors" in the usual way. Some distributors were understandably reluctant to do this during the height of the pandemic, but as the situation has improved and restrictions relaxed, more have agreed to undertake to collect renewal subscriptions - and I would like to express my sincere thanks on behalf of ERHS to those who have done so.

If **you** have yet to renew your subscription, and a collector does not call on you in the week following your receipt of this newsletter, please make every effort to renew at the trading shed or by post as described in the July Newsletter. Every member who renews their subscription will help to ensure that ERHS will survive this current crisis, so please "do your bit"!

Don't let this be the last copy of the newsletter you receive! The ERHS Privacy Policy requires that details of non-members are removed from our records, so if you do not renew by the end of September, you will no longer receive copies of the newsletter.

Malcolm losson.

Things to do this month



Beds and borders

- Regularly deadhead herbaceous plants and cut back those that have started to go over unless they are valued for their winter seed heads.
- Trim mounds of Alchemilla mollis, tall hardy geraniums and peonies to remove old, diseased or tatty leaves. A flush of fresh new growth will soon appear.

Trees and shrubs

- Check tree ties and stakes. Tighten any that are loose or relax ties that are biting into stems - as a

rule of thumb, stakes should only be needed to support a tree for 18 months before being removed.

- Plant heathers in soil enriched with composted bark or well-rotted leaf mould.
- Control powdery mildew on roses by spraying shoots covered with the white fungal growth with fungicide. Prevent the disease returning in the future by ensuring soil doesn't dry out and mulching to retaining moisture.
- Give evergreen hedges a final cut to keep them looking good until the spring.
- Clip lavenders lightly with a pair of shears after they've finished flowering to remove spent blooms. Prune again in spring, removing around 1 inch of growth.
- Spread a 7.5cm layer of leaf mould, manure or garden compost around rhododendrons and azaleas.
- Prepare ground for planting new roses. Dig over soil, remove perennial weeds and add plenty of garden compost, manure or another well-rotted, organic material.

In the kitchen garden

- Harvest apples and pears when fruit can be twisted easily from the stems.
- Plant strawberries in weed-free soil that has been given a boost by digging in some well rotted farmyard manure.
- Save the last of your tomatoes from frost - cut off entire bunches of fruit waiting to ripen and place out of direct sunlight indoors. In a week or so they should turn red.
- Plant out spring cabbages 15cm apart in rows 30cm apart. Cover with fine mesh or fleece to prevent birds from eating the leaves.
- Sow early carrots such as 'Amsterdam Forcing' and 'Early Nantes 2' in the ground and cover with a cloche for an early crop next year. Alternatively grow in pots placed in the greenhouse.
- Pick yellowing leaves off Brussels sprouts and ensure stems are staked to prevent them collapsing in windy weather.

Gardening under cover

- Wash shade paint off greenhouses or remove sheets of netting to allow as much light as possible to reach the plants inside.
- Check greenhouse heaters are working properly before the first frosts arrive and replace if faulty.
- Bring houseplants that spent the summer in the garden back indoors before they are damaged by falling temperatures.
- Close greenhouse vents, doors and windows at night to lock in warmth. Open again in the morning to avoid excessive day time temperatures.

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 29th July.](#)

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.